

Final Project Report



Project Activities and Outcomes

Erasmus+ KA2 Strategic Partnership Project 2015 – 2017
'Work-based training in the school-to-work transition process'
Project No. 2015-1-DE02-KA202-002447



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Foreword

The Strategic Partnership "Work-based Training"¹ has brought together public schools, private vocational training centers and other educational institutions from nine European countries in order to examine the various national school-to-work transition settings in the participating countries and their specific work-based learning approaches. The Erasmus+ project was set up to exchange expertise on work-based learning and training, and to highlight examples of good practice.

In the 2 years of its working time the project managed to complete all the **tasks and products** the partner consortium agreed on in the early stage of application and submission. The activities started with an extensive research on the different national school-to-work transition systems and the publication of a comprehensive Report. Following, a suitable questionnaire was developed to be used in the upcoming Online Survey on work-based training addressed to the 3 target groups basically involved in WBT: teachers, trainers and young students. The Online Survey was completed by more than 550 people and the vast data collected was evaluated and finally lead to the informative Report on Findings. The activities culminated in the creation of a Manual on WBT as the so-called intellectual output of the partnership project.

The activities were accompanied by 7 transnational **project meetings** where the expertise and ideas were exchanged, the observation of work plan and time schedule monitored as well as the next tasks and responsibilities agreed.

Furthermore, the partnership took its transversal tasks of **Evaluation** and the **Dissemination** of results seriously. Various useful management tools were applied in order to constantly monitor the project progress as well as to evaluate its success. Also, various dissemination activities took place in all partner countries order to spread and publicise the project's objectives and the results achieved.

The Final Report at hand documents all the project's activities and results as well as evaluates its success. The first chapter spends time on the presentation of the objectives and the mandate the project stands for. The second chapter introduces the partner consortium more in detail, followed by the documentation of the various project activities in chapter 3. Chapter 4 finally presents the outcomes and deliverables published by the partnership. Last but not least, the final chapter documents the activities realized in the frame of the transversal tasks of evaluation and dissemination and in the context of a conclusion takes the chance to deliver an assessment of the success achieved.

¹ Work-Based Training in the school-to-work transition process (WBT), Erasmus+ KA2 Strategic Partnership 2015-17, Grant Agreement no. 2015-1-DE02-KA202-002447

To learn about the terms and expressions used in the context of work-based learning please refer to the Manual published by the partnership (www.workbasedtraining.eu)

1_Mandate

The WBT partnership project was set up to follow four major objectives, namely:

- Exchanging expertise, collecting examples of good practice
- Making an inventory
- Collecting proposals for improvement
- Summarizing and disseminating of findings

First of all, the partnership was initiated in order to create a forum of pedagogues and responsables to **exchange ideas and expertise** on work-based training issues.



Project website: www.workbasedtraining.eu

Pedagogues in all European countries are struggling hard for a successful preparation of young learners to their future work life. This needs a close link between school and labour market, between theory and practice. Various attempts are made in this respect and approaches to work-based training differ from mere school-based vocational preparation to the stronger involvement of employers including company-based internships and apprenticeships. But however the setting maybe, the challenge for teachers and pedagogues is the same, that is to match theory and practice learning

well in order to secure learning success - especially to students with learning difficulties. If teaching and training fail in this way, young learners will have difficulties to understand the specific learning matters and to integrate in the real work environment.

Against this background, the project considered it as extremely needful to exchange expertise among practitioners – teachers, trainers and responsables – on how to secure the matching of theory and practice learning and how to prepare young students best for their work career. Examples of good practice should be collected and published in a Manual on WBT.

Exchanging expertise requires the sound knowledge and understanding of the specific school-to-work transition settings and the various work-based training approaches. Therefore, the project planned some time for the **research** of the specific conditions in the partner countries and the creation of an inventory on work-based training in Europe.

Furthermore, the project was to **collect proposals for improvement** of work-based training from those mostly involved in school-to-work transition, namely teachers, trainers and young students. Proposals should be collected by an online survey conducted in all partner countries sampling the degree of satisfaction with the specific system and asking for suggestions on how to make it better.

Last but not least, the project aimed to **summarize the findings** deriving from the survey in a useful Manual and to disseminate the results among stakeholders involved in WBT issues – pedagogues, school responsables, employers, decision makers and so forth.

2_Partners

The partnership was founded by private and public educational organizations from nine European countries. In preparation of the project, the coordinator had sent an outline of a project proposal to various educational institutions around Europe. More than 40 organizations showed serious interest and filled a questionnaire explaining their interest and expertise in the topic of WBT. Finally, nine partners were selected reflecting a broad spectrum of public and private educational institutions as well as of schools and consulting agencies.

The project consortium consisted of the following project partners bringing in special expertise on work-based learning issues:

 **ZIB** Zentrum für Integration und Bildung
Lead partner was the Center for Integration and Education in Solingen, Germany. ZIB is a private vocational training center offering various qualification and placement programs for unemployed (young) people, including especially women returners, migrants and elderly people.

 In Bulgaria, project partner was the Regional Enterprise Support Centre in Pleven as a private educational organisation working in the field of adult training, career guidance and counseling and European mobility projects.

 **Anziani e non solo** Società cooperativa
The partner in Italy was the cooperative society Anziani Non Solo in Carpi. ANS is mainly engaged in activities aimed to support employability and skills development for vulnerable target groups with special expertise on the care sector.

 **HERMES**
The Maltese agency Hermes assists learners during their learning and

training path in Malta and abroad. With its extensive network of employers and companies Hermes provides all sorts of work-based learning opportunities to young learners.



The Portuguese private vocational training school Esprominho – Escola Profissional do Minho offers all sorts of educational and training courses to young people as well as to adult learners.



In Slovenia, partner for the second project year was the non-profit organization Poklicni center Obala in Koper active in the fields of education, vocational training and counselling with special expertise in work-based training experiences. Due to in-company reasons, the original partner had to withdraw from the project after 1 year which occurred with the approval by the German NA.



As Swedish partner acted the municipal Centre for Flexible Learning in Söderhamn (CFL Söderhamn, Hälsinglands Utbildningsförbund) who engages with advanced education and training for young and adult learners.



As partner in Romania, the Grigore Moisil Technological High School in Braila participated in the project. The public vocational school offers secondary as well as advanced vocational education and training mostly to young people.



In addition, a partner from Turkey took part in the project. As public vocational school the Anadolu Vocational and Technic School in Afyonkarahisar provides as well secondary and advanced vocational education and training for young and adult learners.

3_Activities

3.1_Work plan

The foreseen tasks and activities of the project were defined in a work plan agreed on originally in the state of application in the beginning of 2015. After approval, the final work plan and time schedule were agreed on by the consortium on occasion of the kick-off meeting in Germany in October 2015 when the project finally took up its work.

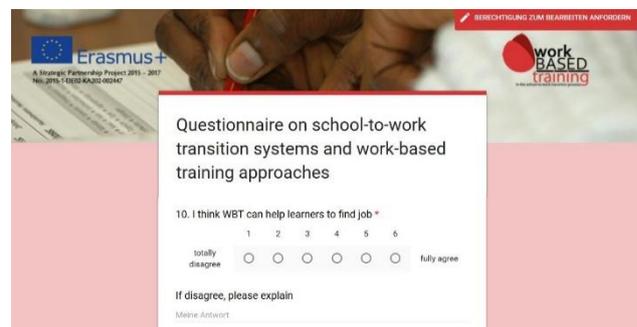
In line with the work plan, the partnership started with a **Research** on the current situation regarding school-to-work transition in the partner countries. The different approaches to lead young people from school to the labour market as well as the role of work-based training in this process were examined and the results published in a detailed overview 'School-to-work transition in Europe'².

The first months also were used to create a colorful **project website** informing on objectives, partners, activities and outcomes. The design was developed and the structure defined. On time, the website was launched on January 1st 2016, initially in English language, later on complemented by a German version.

Furthermore, immediately the consortium gave thought on the transversal tasks of **evaluation and dissemination**. A 'Quality Evaluation Plan' including a Snap Shot Analysis and a Monitoring questionnaire was developed as well as a 'Dissemination and Communication Plan' as obligatory tools for the project partners.

Next, an **Online Survey** on school-to-work transition and work-based learning was to be initi-

ated and implemented in all nine partner countries. The survey was intended to address the main stakeholder groups involved in handling the smooth transition from school to the labour market: teachers and pedagogues, trainers and instructors, students and apprentices. The aim was to get a deeper understanding of the benefits as well as the needs and gaps within the various national transition settings, and to learn about the degree of satisfaction with the specific process, thus identifying areas for further advancement and development of work-based training approaches. Accordingly, appropriate questionnaires were developed, the translation made into the partner languages and finally integrated into the project website as the gateway to the survey.



Access to Online Survey via project website

The Online Survey went into effective on 1st of May, 2016 – two months ahead of time as originally planned. This early start was agreed since partners feared problems because of interference with summer holiday regulations in their countries. In consequence, the online survey lasted 5 months instead of 3, till the end of September 2016.

All in all, 562 questionnaires were collected, generally 20 questionnaires per target group per

² All products are available for download from the project website www.workbasedtraining.eu

country. Besides the statistical information, each questionnaire contained 20 to 40 statements that were to be rated by the interviewee on a scale from 1 to 6 as well as open questions to be used for suggestions of improvement. This of course created a vast amount of data to be evaluated. The tremendous task took a couple of months' of intensive work. Finally, the evaluation of the results lead to the informative **Report on Findings** summarizing the data in a Comparative Study followed by specific Country Reports. The Report finalized in February 2017 and for download on the project website.

As final activity, from spring 2017 on the partners concentrated on the production of a **Manual on Work-based Training** combining all the experience made during the 2-year project and summarizing the conclusions the consortium came to. First, the Manual tries to clarify the terminology giving answers to the question what work-based learning and related terms actually mean. The definition is followed by a short overview on the school-to-work conditions in the nine partner countries in order to understand the progress and obstacles regarding the implementation of successful work-based learning approaches. A great part of the Manual then deals with the major findings we draw from the online survey carried out leading to our conclusions and proposals for improvement of school-to-work transition and work-based learning approaches. Furthermore, the partners collected various **examples of good practice** in order to show that - regardless the transition system - there are numerous attempts to successfully prepare young people to the labour market and to make them fit for their future job.

Besides these regular tasks, the partners took the opportunity at various occasions to inform about the aims and the progress of the project

and to **disseminate the results** and outcomes (see chapter 5.2). Finally, the project work was completed in August 2017.

3.2_Transnational meetings

Besides the various activities carried out to meet the goals of the work plan agreed on, there were seven transnational project meetings held in order to exchange expertise and experiences on work-based training issues, to monitor the progress made and to agree on the next steps to be taken and the correspondent responsibilities.



The project's work started with a **kick-off meeting in Germany** in the beginning of October, 2015. This initial meeting was to get to know each other and learn about the partner organisations and their interest and special expertise in the topic of work-based learning and training. The different national school-to-work transition settings were discussed and the experience in work-based training methods presented. Furthermore, the final work plan and time schedule were discussed and agreed, defining the responsibilities of each partner organisation. Finally, a partner agreement was signed by all partner organisations.



The next project meeting was to revise the research on the national work-based training approaches undertaken in the month Oct to Dec 2015 by the partners. The meeting took place in **Slovenia** in January 2016. The group worked on the Overview summarizing the findings of the research on WBT. Furthermore, the partners developed a first outline of the questionnaire on WBT to be used in the upcoming online survey.



The third transnational meeting was held in **Romania** in April 2016. The meeting focused completely on the up-coming Online Survey on work-based learning wherein

teachers, trainers and young students are to be asked on their perception of the specific school-to-work transition system and the different WBT approaches. After having agreed on the basic questions at the previous meeting in Slovenia and after the following discussions in the partner organisations, numerous changes and amendments had been made. The meeting was mainly to agree on the 'fine tuning' of the questionnaires and to discuss the technical issues involved.



In June 2016 the consortium met in Söderhamn in **Sweden**. The main focus of this meeting was laid on the ongoing Online Survey on WBT which was set in function on 1st of May. The meeting mainly was to monitor and secure the smooth running of the online survey and to work on the up-coming evaluation of the collected data. Since there are three questionnaires addressed to the different target groups of teachers, trainers and students with a pool of 20 to 40 questions, it was necessary to agree on a selection of most relevant questions where the evaluation should focus on. This selection was made in a fruitful group work session and a decision was made. Furthermore, it was agreed on how the data will be edited and formatted for the survey report.



The fifth meeting in October 2016 in **Portugal** was to review the status of implementation of the online survey and to collect first evaluation data. At this stage, 470 out of foreseen 540 questionnaires were collected and the number allowed a first look on the qualitative input received. The partners gave an overview on the answers to the six key questions collected in their specific countries and exchanged ideas on first conclusions to be drawn. Furthermore, the group specified how to evaluate the data in detail and how to summarize the findings in a meaningful Report. It was agreed

create a Project Report comparing the answers given to the key questions between the different countries as well as a Country Report which allows a closer look to answers given to questions more relevant and important to the specific school-to-work transition system of the country.



A project meeting in **Malta** in February 2017 focused completely on the Evaluation of Findings deriving from the extensive data collected. Each partner organisation presented the results and findings of its country following the questions: What was expected? What was surprising? What are the main proposals for improvement made by teachers, trainers and students? What would be our proposals to the relevant authorities in our country? Furthermore, the group worked on the up-coming Manual on WBT as the main intellectual output of the project. The group agreed on the possible content, the structure and schedule of product which will summarize the main findings of the online survey, present conclusions and recommendations for improvement of work-based training and illustrate examples of good practice.



The final project meeting as closing event took place in **Italy** instead of in Turkey as it was foreseen in the original work plan. The shift was due to concerns regarding the ongoing state of emergency and the unstable situation in the country. The final meeting was to review all works in respect of the completion of the 2-year project and to agree on the responsibilities and deadlines. The tasks included the finalization of the Manual on WBT and the translation into the partner languages as well as the finalization of the transversal tasks of evaluation and dissemination and furthermore, the fulfillment of organizational requirements in regard of activities and costs evidences, times heets and alike.

4_Outcomes

4.1_General outcomes

In its 2-year lifetime, the project met all the requirements agreed on in the work plan and the according time schedule. To rank among the achievements are the following outcomes:

- All foreseen activities were realized, especially the research on WBT, the implementation and evaluation of the online survey and the production of a Manual with proposals for advancement.
- The project website went online on time as scheduled and acted as a vivid and regularly updated resource of information in two languages (English and German).
- All planned transnational project meetings were successfully implemented and took place in a fruitful and productive atmosphere.
- The project meetings acted as an excellent opportunity to exchange of expertise and experience on work-based training methods leading to a compendium of examples of good practice as part of the Manual.
- Monitoring, evaluation and dissemination activities were conducted as intended and defined in the work plan.
- The spreading of project's results and findings of the online survey among stakeholders were secured on regional, national and international levels by various activities such as presentations on conferences and network meetings and by distributing various information materials like leaflets, newsletters and so on.

4.2_Deliverables

As foreseen in the work plan, the partnership has published the following deliverables allotted

to stakeholders and the general interested public:

(1) **Survey Report** "School-to-work transition in Europe and the approach to work-based training". This report was published in early 2016 following the research on WBT conducted by the partners. 92 pages.

(2) **Questionnaire and Compendium of Terms** on school-to-work transition and work-based training. This publication contains the questionnaires used for the online survey on WBT in all nine partner languages. It is completed by a compendium of WBT-related terms. 66 pages.

(3) **Report on Findings** "Evaluation of Online Survey". The report documents the findings deriving from the evaluation of the data collected in the online survey. It contains a Comparative Study followed by specific Country Reports. The Report was finalized in February 2017 and comprises plenty of statistics and diagrams for all countries. 78 pages.

(4) **Manual** on Work-based Training. The Manual summarizes all the experiences and findings made within this 2-year project. It reflects the conclusions the partnership came to and offers general and country-specific proposals for improvement of school-to-work transition and work-based learning approaches. Besides the English version, the 65-page Manual was translated into all 9 partner languages and was completed by various Examples of good practice.

(5) **Final Project Report**

All deliverables are ready for download from the project website <http://www.workbased-training.eu/en/outcomes/>. They will be available for 2 years after the project's completion.

5_Transversal tasks

5.1_Evaluation

The constant monitoring of the project was of importance to the partnership consortium. It developed different tools to secure the regular monitoring and evaluation of the project's progress. Among the tools employed were the following means:

- **Monitoring questionnaires** were applied among project partners every 6 months in order to learn about the degree of satisfaction regarding the implementation of the project and the results of the project meetings.
- The evaluation of the questionnaires led to 4 subsequent **Monitoring Reports**, composed by the Turkish partners.
- A **Snap Shot Analysis** was applied by the coordinator as accompanying management tool in order to monitor the progress of the work and the degree of finalization.
- Right at the beginning, a **Quality Evaluation Plan** was developed defining the monitoring tools to be applied as well as the qualitative and quantitative indicators for success to be achieved.
- After completion of the first project year, the results of the monitoring process and the observance of the indicators for success led to the **Interim Evaluation Report** which laid in the responsibility of the Portuguese partner.
- At last, at the end of the project the **Final Evaluation Report** was prepared by the Portuguese summarizing the findings of the evaluation process and recording the degree of achievements according to the indicators set.

All tools and products are deposited on the internal site of the webpage for documentary reasons.

5.2_Dissemination

Not less important than observing the evaluation and monitoring process was the constant observance of the results of the various dissemination activities the consortium agreed on. There were the following tools applied:

- At the beginning, each partner prepared a **National Dissemination Plan** recording the various activities planned during the 2-year project time in its country.
- The national plans were brought together by the Slovenian partner to a general **Communication and Dissemination Plan** defining the various dissemination activities on regional, national and even international level as well as determining the standards for the communication with stakeholders. These standards secured the project's identity and included the use of a project logo and templates for publications and presentations.
- To support the activities of the partners, various **dissemination material** was prepared such as leaflets, roll-up banner and alike.
- At the end of the project, a **Dissemination and Exploitation Report** was prepared which records all the activities actually realized and documents the results in target numbers and the response received.

The Report with its results of the dissemination process can be reviewed from the internal site of the webpage.

6_Conclusions

If one wants to assess the success of the WBT project one should take into consideration the following results:

- The partnership consisted of a **consortium** of educational organisations whose staff and responsables were highly committed to the project work and contributed - by different point of views - to the results with fundamental input. Communication and cooperation proceeded smoothly throughout the project lifetime.
- All the **activities** were successfully implemented according to the agreed work plan and in compliance with the foreseen time schedule. This especially refers to the main tasks of conducting an international research on WBT, the implementation of an Online Survey and the subsequent evaluation of data as well as the production of a Manual on work-based learning. The full implementation of the tasks is also proofed by the applied Snap Shot Analysis.
- Its major goal of exchanging expertise among teachers, trainers and responsables was fully met. The transnational **project meetings** took place in a very productive atmosphere and acted an excellent forum for exchanging expertise on WBL issues and own experiences with work-based training methods. As a result of the fruitful exchange of views, the collection of examples of good practice were added to the Manual. The various Monitoring Reports also reveal the high degree of satisfaction of partners with the process and the results of the different project meetings.
- The Monitoring Reports also records a high degree of satisfaction of partners with the **management of the project**. Tasks, objectives

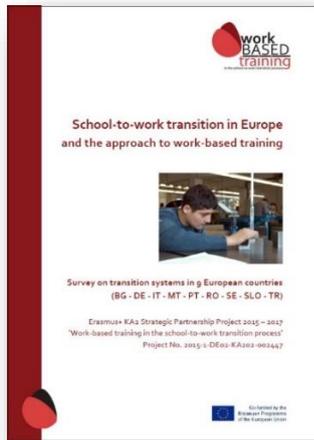
and responsibilities were communicated by the coordinator in time. The detailed minutes of every project meetings secured the agreed tasks and the deadlines to be observed. Thus, each partner knew well in advance what and when to contribute.

- The progress of the work was constantly monitored and the **evaluation of the project** secured. Various evaluating tools were applied and indicators for success early defined. The achieved results in respect of the quantitative indicators as defined in the Quality Evaluation Plan were met and in most cases even exceeded by numbers. Also, the achieved results regarding the qualitative indicators are in compliance with the original plan. The Final Evaluation Report also supports the view that almost all the goals were achieved and that the project was successful in this respect.

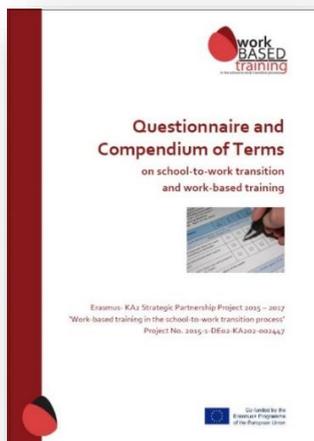
- Furthermore, the partnership undertook tremendous effort in **disseminating the project's results** among stake holders affected by work-based learning issues not only in the region but also throughout Europe. The Dissemination and Exploitation Report lists the numerous occasions and events where partner took the chance to present the project and to report the outcomes achieved. This especially refers to the interesting findings deriving from the online survey conducted.

As a result, the overall assessment of the project is that it is seen by the partners and the coordinator as very successful. Not only that communication and cooperation was excellent throughout the project work, the objectives set in the application and the results agreed on were fully met.

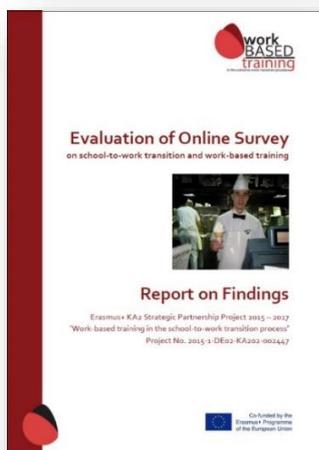
Annex: Project Outcomes



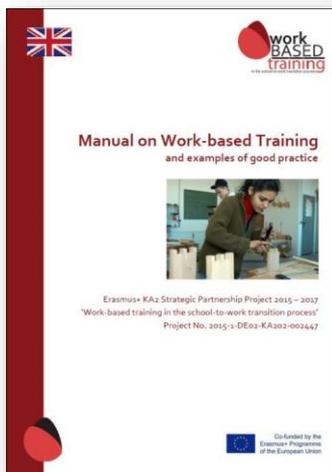
School-to-work transition in Europe and the approach to work-based training, Survey on the transition systems in 9 European countries, 92 pages, February 2016



Questionnaire and Compendium of Terms on school-to-work transition and work-based training, 66 pages, May/June 2016

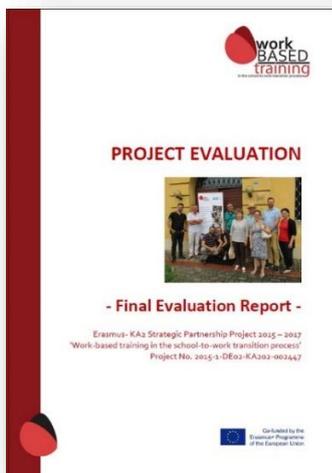


Evaluation of Online Survey on school-to-work transition and work-based training, Report on Findings, 77 pages, January 2017

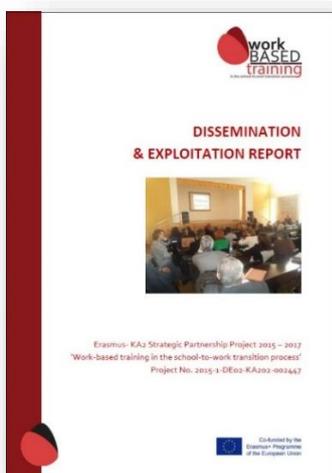


Manual on Work-based Training and examples of good practice, 65 pages, July 2017

Available in following languages: Bulgarian, English, German, Italian, Portuguese, Romanian, Slovenian, Swedish, Turkish



Project Evaluation, Final Project Report, 18 pages, August 2017



Dissemination and Exploitation Report, 24 pages, August 2017

August 2017

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