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of Vocational Training



**European
Commission**

**Guiding principles
on professional development of trainers
in vocational education and training**

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Executive summary

These guiding principles are a contribution of the European Commission, Cedefop and the thematic working group on professional development of trainers in vocational education and training (VET) to the objective set in the Bruges communiqué of collecting good practice and developing guiding principles on the changing roles, competences and professional development of VET teachers and trainers (Council of the European Union; European Commission, 2010).

The aim of the European Commission was to provide policy pointers on how to support VET trainers in companies in developing their competences. The pointers are mainly addressed to education and training policy- and decision-makers, illustrated by concrete examples of practice from the Member States. Those can be further translated into actions for all involved stakeholders, depending on national situations and contexts.

Work-based learning (WBL), apprenticeship in particular, has gained increased attention at EU and national levels as one of the remedies for boosting employment and growth in Europe and reducing skills gaps and mismatch. The document points to the key role of trainers in companies as main actors in ensuring high quality work-based learning.

In initial VET (apprenticeship schemes, alternate models and practical classes in VET schools), tutors, instructors, mentors and VET teachers provide work-based training parallel to the school and/or theory-based training, thus ensuring the link between education and real working life. The stronger the link, the easier is job-seeking and job offering, which contributes to raising young people's employability. In continuing VET (CVET), full-time in-company trainers, skilled workers and owners of SMEs help newcomers integrate into the work environment and cater for updating and upgrading the skills of their co-workers, contributing in such a way to raising productivity and competitiveness of the companies.

The paper argues that competent trainers in companies can also contribute to ensuring that students will stay in education, that young and older, employed and unemployed, will come back to learning, thus, helping reduce the risk of social exclusion of vulnerable groups.

The objectives of the paper are:

- first, to attract attention to and increase knowledge of what these key agents between the worlds of education and work are and what makes them 'trainers'.

After presenting the general context, the paper discusses the diversity of situations, titles, functions and roles of in-company trainers across Member States and focuses on **two groups of specialists who provide training in companies**: trainers who perform training tasks as the major part of their occupational role and employees whose occupational role includes a particular training-related function (for example, owners, general managers, supervisors and skilled workers). It also points out the common understanding that at least **four groups of competences** are important to a different extent for trainers in VET, including those who train in companies: technical/subject-related; company-specific; pedagogical-didactical and transversal;

- second, to discuss existing practice and provide suggestions on how to support in-company trainers so they have opportunities to update their competences throughout their careers.

The paper then identifies examples, areas and approaches in which interventions, or lack of such, have significant influence on in-company trainers so that stakeholders across companies, sectors and countries have reference points to look for further actions. Examples of competence requirements and profiles of VET trainers from Belgium, Finland, Germany and the Netherlands are presented in detail in the annex.

To sum up, the following **guiding principles for professional development of in-company trainers in VET** have been formulated.

- ⇒ Trainers are lifelong learners: recognise their identity and work; support their lifelong learning.
- ⇒ Companies' support is crucial for trainers' CPD: raise awareness of benefits and get companies on board in supporting training and trainers.
- ⇒ Trainers' competence development benefits from a systematic approach: define what trainers need, provide training and learning opportunities, recognise competences.
- ⇒ Supporting trainers in companies is a shared responsibility: ensure effective cooperation and coordination.
- ⇒ Competent trainers in companies matter: make them part of a broader agenda and use all available funds and programmes.

Guiding principles at a glance

1. Trainers are lifelong learners: recognise their identity and work; support their lifelong learning.

Most work-based learning is done by skilled workers who train in addition to their main work while mainly full-time trainers develop strong trainer identity. However, all trainers should be recognised and supported as lifelong learners. Policy action and initiatives of various players (sectoral organisations, employers and trainers' associations) should aim at developing and encouraging lifelong learning attitudes of in-company trainers. Reflective practice should become part of their regular professional activities. EU and national authorities should consider awareness-raising campaigns and awards with the motto 'EU, be proud of your trainers!' to acknowledge successful training companies and their trainers.

2. Companies' support is crucial for trainers' competence development: raise awareness of benefits and get companies on board in supporting training and trainers.

Companies' active involvement and participation are crucial for the success of initiatives aimed at increasing apprenticeship opportunities and improving work-based learning in continuing vocational training (CVET). Policies should envisage and provide support to companies who wish to train apprentices or develop skills of their employees.

2.1. Small and medium-sized enterprises are important players: provide targeted support.

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are important players in VET and lifelong learning and need targeted support. SMEs depend more on external support mechanisms and SME-friendly environments. Support measures should help SMEs to overcome external and internal barriers and compensate for their limited capacity to identify and respond to their learning needs, where competence development of those who train others in the workplace can be part.

3. Trainers' competence development benefits from a systematic approach: define what trainers need, provide training and learning opportunities, recognise competences.

If a country aims at better recognition of in-company trainers' work and their better professionalisation, a systematic approach should be considered. Three main elements form the support system for trainers' professional development: qualification or competence standards and availability of qualifications or certificates; flexible and relevant training provision; opportunities to get competences validated and recognised.

3.1. Qualification or competence standards (profiles) are sound reference points for the trainers' professional development.

Qualification or competence standards (profiles) for trainers in companies serve as sound reference points for the trainers' professional development, more specifically - for training programmes and validation of prior learning. Regulations should set only minimum requirements to guarantee the quality of training; all other options could be available as add-ons. Trainer qualifications should be linked to the national qualifications frameworks.

3.2. Trainers should benefit from various and flexible training provision.

Trainers should have access to various and flexible training programmes that provide opportunities to develop their competences, update existing ones to the required level or to close competence gaps. This is especially needed if the requirements are set at regulatory level. In this case, training programmes should be provided by the State or the relevant social partner. Competence development should cover all areas of competence. The respective programmes should be closer linked to real working contexts and tasks of trainers in companies.

3.3. Validation of trainers' competences should be an integral part of any support system.

Validation of the competences acquired through professional practice should be an integral part of any support system for the competence development of trainers in companies. Policy action should support creating and expanding opportunities for validation and certification of trainers' prior learning and competences acquired at work as valid alternatives to formal training.

4. Supporting trainers in companies is a shared responsibility: ensure effective cooperation and coordination.

Effective cooperation and shared responsibility of all stakeholders is the main success factor to effective support for professional development of trainers in companies. The EU, national authorities, sectoral organisations, social partners, VET institutions/providers, companies and trainers themselves have a role to play. Responsibilities and actions should be clearly distributed among all, using to the maximum their mandates, expertise and roles in providing learning in enterprises. The education and training sector at national and regional levels should open up; training should reach out to companies. A coordinating body with a leadership role is crucial.

5. Competent trainers in companies matter: make them part of a broader agenda and use all available funds and programmes.

Competent and qualified trainers ensure high-quality workplace training that can help achieve national benchmarks and goals for employment and growth. Support for in-company trainers should be part of a broader agenda and national priorities for employment and economic growth, more specifically, of lifelong learning, VET and skills development strategies, policies and reform processes. Sustainable use of available EU funds (for example, the European Social Fund (ESF), Erasmus+, etc.) should be targeted at competence development of in-company trainers; the EU can provide special provisions/allocations within such programmes for training staff in companies in most critical skills and areas, for example, for apprentice tutors in SMEs. These guiding principles should be taken forward in the Bruges review and in the work of the Education and training 2020 (ET2020) technical groups, especially, on apprenticeship and adult learning. Synergies should be ensured with the work at EU and national levels on VET teachers and adult learning professionals.

Action points at a glance

EU and national policy-making and framework for implementation:

- take forward the guiding principles for future cooperation in VET (Bruges short-term deliverables, thematic groups, ET2020 priorities and EU initiatives);
- support embedding trainers' competence development in national legislation and financial incentives/strategies/social partners and sectoral agreements;
- ensure competence development (and if needed – further profiling) of skilled workers with training functions in national systems when introducing/improving WBL;
- set a framework for minimum standards/qualifications for VET trainers;
- install incentives to involve and support companies in competence development of trainers;
- 'open up' formal education for training trainers and validation of their non-formal and informal learning;
- create one-stop-shop information services and nominate coordination bodies.

Provision (VET providers and companies):

- follow all the steps of competence development: define training needs based on trainer profiles/standard/qualifications; ensure various and flexible training provision; validate learning outcomes;
- build partnerships and share responsibilities for competence development curricula and training programmes for trainers;
- use commonly agreed and piloted tools: guidelines, methodological handbooks;
- with authorities and social partners, introduce/improve quality assurance and validation of trainers' skills;
- compensate limited capacity of SMEs by networking, partnerships, training centres and alliances;
- introduce 'learning enabling functions' in companies: innovation officers, counsellors, education advisors.

Awareness raising, research and communication:

- use EU events (summits, Euroskills, European Business Forum, etc.) and national campaigns to nominate and award EU training companies and best VET trainers;
- make research evidence and examples of good practice known to companies;
- provide common virtual knowledge and resource centre space (for example, EPALE platform);
- raise awareness of available opportunities for training, mobility and validation of competences;
- communicate and consult on latest developments at EU and national levels - European principles, tools and initiatives.

1. Introduction

1.1. Context

Europe's economic growth will result from higher productivity and innovation, but it will not happen without citizens who have the right knowledge, skills and competences (European Commission, 2012c). European enterprises need:

- new (highly-) skilled workforce with new knowledge, skills and competences, innovative thinking and capacity entering from education and training systems;
- existing workforce constantly updating and upgrading their knowledge, skills and competences to adapt to social, technological and sectoral developments in business.

So far, this has remained a challenge for most Member States.

Many young people cannot find jobs with skills acquired in education and training while at the labour market there are many unfilled positions. Many adults lack basic skills (between 5 to 28% are at lowest levels of literacy and between 8 to 32% have lowest levels in numeracy, OECD, 2013a), do not participate in training and reduce even more their chances of getting a job. These and other groups that cannot gain from educational provision are not only at risk of unemployment but also of social exclusion. Such developments in times of dynamic globalisation, fast technological changes and in ageing societies in Europe question Europe's potential to recover from the crisis and to ensure its future based on high productiveness, innovation and growth.

There is no single answer on how to resume growth, yet – a lot can be done across European countries in companies, by educational and training providers, at national, local and sectoral levels. One solution high on the European agenda is work-based learning (WBL) with its capacity to bring skills supply and demand closer together and address skills mismatch and skills gaps. Traineeships are more and more viewed by policy-makers as effective mechanisms of school-to-work transition, especially those that are part of vocational curricula (European Commission; Hadjivassiliou et al., 2012).

A key factor to high quality work-based learning is skilled workers and positioned trainers who train, instruct and guide young apprentices or co-workers. Their quality and competences are among the strategic objectives of European cooperation in VET (Council of the European Union; European Commission, 2010).

The Bruges communiqué (Council of the European Union; European Commission, 2010) invited Member States to improve initial and continuing training for VET trainers by flexible training provision and investment so they have opportunities to acquire the right set of competences and be prepared to take up broader and more complex training-related tasks they face today. In its communication 'Rethinking education: investing in skills for better socioeconomic outcomes' (European Commission, 2012c), the European Commission pointed to the need to establish a competence framework or professional profile for trainers in initial (IVET) and continuing VET (CVET).

Improving competence and professional development of in-company trainers has been on the EU policy agenda for some years. Trainers in companies contribute to developing better skills and competences of the young and adults, which is important for creating a more equitable, cohesive, sustainable and competitive Europe. They are important agents in increasing participation rates of adults in lifelong learning, an EU benchmark for 2020. Enterprises in Europe also believe that the EU can potentially play an important role in promoting competence development in enterprises and in ensuring better quality trainers (European Commission; Danish Technological Institute, 2012).

1.2. The thematic working group (TWG) on professional development of VET trainers

To contribute to EU 2020 within the strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training (ET2020), in 2011, DG Education and Culture and Cedefop set up the thematic working group (TWG) with the mandate to collect examples of good practice and develop guiding principles on the changing roles, competences and professional development of trainers in VET, as indicated in the Bruges communiqué (Council of the European Union; European Commission, 2010). Some 23 countries (21 Member States plus Turkey and Switzerland), European social partners (ETUC) and VET providers (EUproVET) took part in activities of the group, peer learning being the main method of learning and exchange of experience. The group focused on trainers in companies, operating in both IVET and CVET, in the following situations: workplace tutors, mentors, instructors and company owners in apprenticeship schemes; schoolteachers with training functions during the work-related part of VET provision; trainers with training as their main function – part-time or full-time and skilled workers with training functions.

The TWG worked on the following broad thematic areas:

- status of trainers in VET, changing roles and corresponding competence requirements linked to lifelong learning and employment policy priorities and to work organisation changes in enterprises ([PLA 1](#))⁽¹⁾;
- professional development of VET trainers in companies, career paths and recognition, for example, through occupational profiles and standards, certification and validation of their on-the-job learning ([PLA 2](#));
- support for identifying learning needs and opportunities for continuing professional development of trainers in SMEs ([PLA 3](#)).

Overall, exchange of experience, collection of examples of good practice and reflections of the group revealed that a lot of work has been done in many countries in supporting

⁽¹⁾ Peer learning was the main method of learning and exchange of experience among the participating countries. Three peer learning activities (PLA) took place: [In-company trainers: competence requirements, certification and validation](#), Alkmaar (Netherlands), September 2012; [Effective approaches and support to continuing professional development of in-company trainers](#), Louvain-la-Neuve (Belgium), May 2013; [Support to trainers competence development in SMEs](#), Strasbourg (France) and Offenburg (Germany), October 2013 (See Annex 4 for more information).

professional development and professionalisation of trainers, especially in initial VET (IVET): various legislative provisions, national and local approaches, programmes, initiatives and projects have been elaborated. At the same time, approaches vary from country to country and across sectors. Some countries focus on maintaining and even raising the quality and efficiency of training considering in the first place measures addressing trainers in the framework of the whole provision. Others work to improve, diversify and upgrade existing structures to target work-based learning with the reinforced role of trainers linked to this. In some others, the reform process towards 'dualisation of VET provision led to introducing a qualification of trainer or developing new profiles for trainers and training provision for trainers.

Based on the examined policy solutions and implementation in participating countries, some common guiding principles on how to support competence development of in-company trainers were identified. The guiding principles are mainly addressed to education and training policy- and decision-makers but can be translated into actions for all stakeholders depending on national situations and contexts.

1.3. The *Guiding principles in a broader policy context: why do they matter?*

The *Guiding principles on professional development of trainers in vocational education and training (VET)* will contribute to several policy fields, EU initiatives and programmes.

(1) The guiding principles can support immediate policy actions in **trainers' competence development** by:

- (a) drawing attention of all stakeholders to the important role of in-company trainers in skills development and providing relevant support mechanisms for their professionalisation, quality assurance and recognition;
- (b) making existing policy options and models public and learning from one another and making use of European cooperation in VET. This may encourage countries reforming their VET systems to develop competence profiles and opportunities for professional development of trainers in companies and to take advantage of work done, further explore and move approaches forward.

(2) Guiding principles support European cooperation that can help **enterprises develop systematic support for quality training and trainers**.

The paper's policy messages and conclusions will be widely disseminated among policy-makers and key stakeholders at national and EU levels. The findings will be provided online to reach a wider audience of training decision-makers and practitioners; a promotion action will be undertaken, using available networks and resources and mainstreaming results in the work of future working groups at EU level.

(3) The guiding principles can contribute to EU, national and bilateral measures and initiatives **addressing skills aspects** as one of the challenges in the current crisis and long-term objectives for creating jobs and growth. Supporting trainers' competence

development and professionalisation is becoming more and more important as a means to:

- (a) equip people with job-specific and transversal skills that contribute to increased productivity and innovation of European enterprises and address skill mismatches (European Commission, 2010b);
- (b) help improve employability of young people and ensure their school-to-work transitions through apprenticeship, especially within the European youth employment package (European Commission, 2012a) and the European alliance for apprenticeship;
- (c) improve training opportunities for working adults, including incentives for training by companies and make lifelong learning a reality for all. Some 83.4% of all non-formal learning in EU-27 was job-related, pointing to high importance and potential of in-company training (European Commission, 2012c).

Especially with expansion of apprenticeships in national initiatives, more companies will need support to ensure development and improvement of competences of potential apprentice tutors and this will require serious policy attention and State-supported structures.

(4) The guiding principles are relevant to the overall process of **policy analyses and reporting** supporting reforms and modernisation across Member States.

In 2013, 12 countries (Bulgaria, Spain, France, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Sweden and UK) received country-specific recommendations (CSRs) that directly refer to implementation of a youth guarantee scheme which entails the offer of a job and good-quality apprenticeship or a traineeship. Some countries (Greece, Spain, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Malta, Portugal, Slovakia, Sweden and UK) report comprehensive policy initiatives that integrate a range of measures similar to those implemented under the youth guarantee scheme; two thirds of countries (Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Germany, Greece, Spain, France, Italy, Cyprus, Latvia, Hungary, Malta, Austria, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Sweden, and UK) report policy measures to improve school-to-work transition by further developing work experience opportunities. Countries also receive recommendations related to lifelong learning and adult learning (European Commission, 2013). Most of the follow-up actions of these recommendations and initiatives will have an impact on the roles and competence development of training specialists in VET and adult learning.

2. What makes a trainer in VET

Increased focus on work-based learning, its quality and outcomes leads to awareness of the key role those who provide formal and non-formal training in companies play. This calls for opportunities for trainers to acquire the right set of competences and be prepared for more complex and challenging tasks.

⇒ At the same time, there is no unified approach or definition of an in-company trainer or VET trainer.

2.1. Defining VET trainers

In **initial VET**, the following professionals provide training in workplace environments to apprentices and young students in work placements:

- (a) qualified trainers of apprentices or learners in alternance schemes, apprenticeship masters (apprenticeship-type) (Austria, Finland, France, Germany, Netherlands, Sweden, Switzerland);
- (b) skilled workers who oversee practical training of students in the workplace, workplace tutors, mentors, supervisors (Finland, Germany, Netherlands, Poland, Switzerland);
- (c) teachers and/or trainers conducting practical classes in VET schools, for example, in school laboratories or workshops (Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Estonia, Germany, Spain, Poland, Portugal).

In **continuing VET**, in most countries one encounters:

- (a) full-time in-company trainers in large companies;
- (b) skilled workers or owners of SMEs performing training-related functions, for example, induction of new employees to the company and/or training other employees;
- (c) VET teachers/trainers in school-based contexts (if CVET is provided through VET schools, for example, in Poland); and
- (d) external trainers who usually work as freelancers or for training providers.

For the purpose of the paper, an '**in-company trainer**' applies to:

- (a) a comparatively small group of in-company trainers who perform training tasks as the major part of their occupational role – full-time or part-time;
- (b) a comparatively large group of employees, whose occupational role includes a particular training-related function (owner, general manager, supervisor, skilled worker).

2.2. Functions, tasks and competences of in-company trainers in a changing context

There is a huge variety of trainers' functions, profiles, titles and roles across EU Member States, according to their positions in companies (part-time/full-time; IVET/CVET;

external/internal, etc.). This results in diversified requirements for competences composition in different situations.

However, analyses available across countries reveal that in spite of national differences, a pool of trainers' competences, based on typical tasks and common areas of competence requirements can be established.

Typical common tasks of trainers in VET are: selecting appropriate training methods for developing practical skills in a real work situation, planning and implementing training, assessing and providing feedback for trainees. Generally, trainers are also expected to ensure a link between the worlds of work and education, though often this link is the responsibility of a school and its teachers.

Nowadays, trainers often need to go beyond conveying vocational knowledge and skills and supporting workers in practical learning. This requires enriching the role of an 'instructor' with coaching and mentoring, providing guidance and stimulating learning culture in enterprises (Cedefop, 2011). In addition, the whole context of training provision is changing due to structural and systemic developments, including demographic shifts, migration, globalisation of business, evolving expectations of individualised and tailor-made offers. Hence, it is important to ensure that trainers are well prepared to work in such a demanding context and respond to high and diverse requirements. Essential is they possess high professional, pedagogical and transversal skills and competences, are aware of markets/work processes, and are able to participate in professional networks (European Commission, 2012c).

⇒ At least **four groups of competences** are considered important to a different extent for trainers in VET, including those who train in companies (Cedefop, 2013b):

(a) competences related to their specific **technical domain**, sector.

There is no common approach to defining such competences; most examples imply that trainers possess a qualification in a specific field in which they train. Strong subject-specific or vocational skills are usually one of the reasons why employees are assigned to train apprentices or other staff in a company. Knowing developments in the industry and sector is important for in-company trainer capacity to help companies to look forward, identify emerging needs and address future challenges;

(b) competences related to serving a **company's** strategy and improving its competitiveness through training.

Trainers should know very well their company's core business, structure, activities, working methods, processes and strategies as well as its skills needs and gaps. It should be noted though that awareness of company strategy can mostly be acquired internally. More ways to develop company-related competences should be explored in the future;

(c) **pedagogical/didactical competence**, training-related competences.

In most cases, trainers are expected to have a good command of pedagogy, including some proof of competence or relevant training, theory of learning and/or understand teaching and learning approaches. Depending on their responsibilities, they can be expected to know how to design training programmes and courses and carry out training needs analysis. The continuing shift towards learning outcomes in training requires trainers to be aware of this approach and able to apply it in their work. Optionally, trainers can be expected to design or develop training materials.

Pedagogical competence also includes skills related to practical implementation of training: time planning, distribution of content, creating a positive and inclusive learning environment, observing and understanding group dynamics, group management, and selecting methods appropriate to specific learner abilities and needs, including special education needs.

Assessment of learner progress and learning outcomes is growing in importance and is becoming an important part of trainers' work. Trainers should be aware of summative and formative assessment methods, able to choose the most appropriate assessment methods for the training delivered and learning objectives, as well as provide feedback to learners on their progress and develop further learning;

(d) **transversal competences** that help trainers support the learning process (for example, social and interpersonal competences, conflict management, multicultural awareness, critical thinking skills, communication skills, ICT skills).

This group of competences is not specific to the training role of trainers but cuts across various activities and tasks and can support completing such tasks more effectively.

To face heterogeneous groups of learners, trainers need to have social and interpersonal competences, conflict management, understanding multiculturalism, critical thinking, and communication skills. Social competences were identified as the most important for a trainer to have (European Commission; Institute of Technology and Education, 2008). Trainers should also be able to use ICT to support learning and engage in networking and communities of practice. Autonomy, responsibility and ability to work in teams and cooperate with other professionals are also among expected competences and skills.

As agents of lifelong learning, trainers should possess self-reflection and an ability to identify their own strengths and weaknesses; ability to assess their own teaching; and responsibility for continuing professional development and further learning.

The combination and level for each group of competences needed for trainers in specific settings (for example, an apprentice master or a trainer of employees) would differ as well as some sets being of greater concern to various stakeholders (for example, technical competence can be of higher importance for an employer while multicultural awareness or pedagogical skills can be considered more important by the State).

To expect that all categories of trainers should possess the same sets and levels of competences might present too much of challenge or even be unrealistic. Practice shows that this concern is addressed (Germany, Belgium). However, it might be worth looking at alternative ways to ensure availability of all competences, for example, through teamwork.

Further research on the impact (effect) of trainers' competences on learners' and employees' competences and skills and also on companies' performance and productivity and innovation is also needed.

3. How to support in-company trainers: guiding principles

The requirements and expectations regarding the set and level of trainers' competences from the learners' and companies' perspectives in today's challenging tasks call for providing respective professional development opportunities. This means establishing effective support mechanisms addressing three important conditions:

⇒ **trainers are active lifelong learners**

This can happen if trainers are recognised and their contribution to quality learning is acknowledged; if they receive appropriate support and have access to all available options;

⇒ **companies are active and interested in providing training and supporting their trainers**

This implies that companies are aware of the importance of learning and see the benefits (see Annex 2 for a summary of benefits of work-based learning); they associate continuing professional development with higher quality outcomes of provided training, more specifically, when trained employees apply their newly-acquired or updated skills for the company's productivity and competitiveness;

⇒ **all stakeholders at all levels cooperate in a coordinated manner and support for trainers is systematic**

This condition requires clear and adequate expectations defined in qualification and competence standards; relevant and flexible training opportunities are provided; there are opportunities of validating competences acquired at work. It also implies that roles and responsibilities are clearly distributed among all stakeholders, including trainers, and coordinated.

The guiding principles for professional development of in-company trainers that follow explain how the three conditions mentioned above can be met to ensure that trainers have comprehensive opportunities to develop their competences to face today's challenging tasks. The guiding principles are illustrated with examples of good practice from participating countries.

3.1. Trainers are lifelong learners: recognise their identity and work, support their lifelong learning

⇒ Most work-based learning is done by skilled workers who train in addition to their main work while mainly full-time trainers develop strong trainer identities. However, all trainers should be recognised and supported as lifelong learners. Policy action and initiatives of various players (sectoral organisations, employers and trainers' associations) should aim at developing lifelong learning attitudes of in-company trainers. Reflective practice should become part of their regular professional activities. EU and national authorities should consider awareness-raising campaigns and awards with the motto 'EU, be proud of your trainers!' to acknowledge

successful training companies and their trainers, for example, jointly with Euroskills competitions.

The main driver for continuing learning of in-company trainers is their intrinsic motivation to be better trainers, and most trainers participate in continuing professional development, many on their own initiative (Kirpal and Wittig, 2009). 'Reflection on one's work, responsibility for and capacity to identify learning and development need and follow it up' (Cedefop, 2013b) should be put forward more in trainers' work.

Trainers usually have a strong identity with their field but not with the professional trainer community. They are neither informed nor do they look for information about available opportunities for certification, validation of competences acquired on the job, and professional development. The main challenge is to recognise and help trainers realise their professional identity issue as trainers (especially skilled workers who train other employees). This will help reaching out to them for trainer-targeted programmes.

Well-planned and comprehensive awareness-raising approaches by all relevant actors should inform trainers of all opportunities:

- (a) in-company trainers should be aware of and be able to use financial and non-financial provisions and incentives for lifelong learning available in their countries;
- (b) VET trainers should be among the target groups for communication and involvement in national qualification frameworks; learning outcomes approach; ECVET, EQAVET. Developments in national qualification frameworks affect trainers' work in companies as they need to be aware of qualification requirements and focus on the knowledge, skills and competences that trainees need to acquire, rather than on spending a certain time in training (Cedefop, 2013b);
- (c) national agencies responsible for European programmes in education and training, for example, Erasmus+, should look for ways to inform and encourage companies and in-company trainers to use better mobility and cooperation opportunities provided by these programmes;
- (d) one-stop-shop information services should be explored, and possibly provided by the coordinating body, depending on the national context;
- (e) to assure knowledge-sharing and continuous quality, trainers should be encouraged to participate in self-developed or nationally/internationally set-up networks;
- (f) different learning opportunities, including those available for VET teachers as well as for adult educators, should be brought to the attention of trainers in enterprises. More synergy is needed in work on IVET and CVET trainers as well as on adult learning professionals in terms of qualifications, competences, training paths, especially in countries where such systems are evolving or reforming or where the division is not as distinct (where the same trainers can provide both IVET and CVET). For example, the thematic working group on quality in adult

learning suggested in their mandate that 'national authorities, involving all stakeholders, work towards establishing staff requirements and developing opportunities for initial and further training of teachers in adult learning'.

In most countries, trainers' attendance at continuous professional development (CPD) is voluntary (Austria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Hungary (CVET), Latvia, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia) while teachers and trainers in school-based schemes have to update their competences regularly.

- In **Wallonia** (Belgium), teachers and trainers in IVET are obliged to update their vocational knowledge and competence. A tutor needs to have at least five years of professional experience and a 40-hour training from an external public provider.
- In **Lithuania**, each teacher in IVET must upgrade their qualifications and is entitled to five days of continuing training per year.
- In **Bulgaria**, all teaching staff, including trainers, should participate in CPD; they have the right to use 30 calendar days every third year for professional development as paid training leave.
- In **Hungary**, teachers and trainers in public institutions have to undertake in-service training at least once in seven years (80% of costs covered by the State).
- In **Czech Republic**, continuing vocational training of IVET instructors is compulsory within the company in which they are employed and for the qualification which they need for the job but not for trainer's activities (Cedefop, 2010).
- In **Germany**, receiving certification from the BDVT, trainers (working mainly in CVET) adhere to constant updating of competences (though it is not required by any regulation) (Cedefop, 2013b).

Renewal of certificates can be considered as another way of ensuring that trainers maintain and update their competences: some certificates are limited in duration and need to be renewed after three or five years (for example, Greece and Austria, Cedefop, 2013b).

3.2. Companies' support is crucial for trainers' CPD: raise awareness of benefits and get companies on board in supporting training and trainers

⇒ Companies' active involvement and participation are crucial for the success of initiatives aimed at increasing apprenticeship opportunities and improving work-based learning in CVET. Policies should envisage and provide support to companies wishing to train apprentices or develop their employees' skills.

Work on developing and increasing support for trainers CPD cannot 'be separated from serious awareness-raising of companies of benefits of training to their productivity, innovation and growth (see Annex 2 for a summary of benefits of work-based learning) and the role of in-company trainers in ensuring high quality training. Companies should understand how trained employees who apply newly-acquired skills are beneficial for

their productivity. Recognising and promoting the experience of those who have benefited and raising awareness of those companies that can benefit from supporting training are effective means of involving them.

Taking apprentices is a good way for companies to acquire workers with the right mix of skills for their company needs and to lower recruitment costs through screening potential employees, as well as in the long term, to influence the content and organisation of VET to meet future needs. It is also a way to get a reputation of a training (learning) company.

Internal training is used as much as possible to develop necessary competences, including general and basic skills by European enterprises that also rely on improving the competences of existing staff rather than recruiting new staff as a general strategy to ensure the right mix of skills (European Commission; Danish Technological Institute, 2012). Workplace learning represents the main form of training in SMEs.

In some countries, employees have a right for continuing training and employers have to provide training for their employees. But there are generally no legislative requirements regarding the competences of those who provide training in companies. Professional development of in-company trainers depends entirely on the company's training policy and can only succeed if supported by employers. Companies that understand that highly competent trainers ensure quality training for their employees support competence development of their trainers. Making examples of good practice known to companies can lead to better understanding and support for their trainers.

In **France**, as part of collective agreements and legal provision a proportion of the payroll fund should be dedicated to training of employees. Many companies are interested in increasing returns on their investment in training. So, they motivate their trainers to take part in training programmes amply supplied by various providers. There are also possibilities to get one of many available trainer certificates. At the same time, there is no specific system in requirements or provision of training.

The Koskisen Oy wood company (**Finland**) developed a training programme for its trainers in cooperation with a further education institution. This helped provide a customised programme based both on company needs and national qualification recommendations. It also secured financial subsidies as the training is delivered by a public institution (Cedefop, 2013b). Investing in trainers resulted in increased completion of formal qualifications by its employees (not only trainers), thus, establishing the relationship between quality trainers and quality training outcomes in the company.

The Sparkassenakademie (**Austria**) trains bank employees who want to be trainers in line with company needs, a competence profile is used to develop this training. The training based on a common reference tool increased coherence of employee training across all branches of the bank (Cedefop, 2013b).

Raising awareness about available options for training, validation and certification, even if it is voluntary, its outcomes and benefits among training practitioners, companies, social partners and sectoral organisations, and professional associations is very

important to ensure that CPD opportunities are used not only by the training (lifelong learning) sector, but also by trade, services and industry (Cedefop, 2013b).

As training and certification are voluntary in most cases, they bear certain costs, which vary significantly across countries. For those employed in companies, employers can bear part or all costs, award a grant or release staff from work to participate in training and certification (Cedefop, 2013b).

3.2.1. Small and medium-sized enterprises are important players: provide targeted support

⇒ Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are important players in VET and lifelong learning and need targeted support. SMEs depend more on external support mechanisms and SME-friendly environments. Support measures should help SMEs to overcome external and internal barriers and compensate for the limited capacity of SMEs to identify and respond to their learning needs, where competence development of those who train others in the workplace can be part.

SMEs have to comply with the same requirements if they wish to provide apprenticeship or CVET as large companies. For example, in Austria, every company – even a one-person company – can train apprentices if it guarantees that they are assisted appropriately (required by the Vocational Training Act (*Berufsausbildungsgesetz, BAG*)). They can benefit from generally available provisions for competence development but specific measures are also needed.

Developing SMEs' training capacity should be part of incentives for SMEs (both financial and non-financial) to provide learning at the workplace within the broader context of the SME-promoting strategies and policies of Member States within the Small Business Act activities.

Public measures to support training by SMEs should aim at providing flexible solutions and ensure quick provision of the necessary competences, simultaneously, focusing on areas that stimulate and offer SMEs a way to systematise their training practices. In supporting those who train in SMEs, the importance of informal training should be acknowledged and taken into account. Approaches should go well beyond the formal training perspective (mostly relevant for IVET). The potential that exists to develop a pathway for informal skills to be recognised by qualifications, including those of in-company trainers, should be better explored and promoted (Council of the European Union, 2012).

An interesting approach is emerging to entrust skilled employees with a learning-enabling function in a company. Not specifically a trainer, this 'enabler' or 'counsellor' or 'tutor' will identify the need for training and skills development in a company and can make suggestions for applicable solutions. Due to limited personnel and financial resources of many SMEs, this can prove an effective solution for implementing a continuous and ongoing practice of HR and skills development policies. But it is crucial

that the person entrusted with this role be prepared sufficiently and trained for the 'enabling' role (European Commission; ORSEU, 2009).

In the **Netherlands**, government-funded innovation projects led to creation of the innovation officer scheme where SMEs get a public grant to hire an innovation officer, an employee whose main responsibility is to improve innovation in a company (European Commission; PricewaterhouseCoopers et al, 2013).

In **Iceland**, a concept of a training planner was developed by the [Starfafl vocational training fund](#) to aid SMEs in finding relevant training for their staff to increase competitiveness. Training planners are external HR consultants lent to a company by a large training provider. They work with the company to assess training and learning needs, examine the competences needed for the jobs, and design a tailored programme and learning activities for the company. The cost of the consultancy can be shared by the provider and the company. The training provider has overall responsibility for implementation of the training programme ⁽²⁾.

3.3. Trainers' competence development benefits from a systematic approach: define what trainers need, provide training and learning opportunities, recognise competences

- ⇒ If a country aims at better recognition of in-company trainers' work and their better professionalisation, a systematic approach should be considered. Three main elements form the support system for trainers' CPD:
- qualification or competence standards and availability of qualifications or certificates;
 - flexible and relevant training provision;
 - opportunities to get competences validated and recognised.

Continuing professional development of in-company trainers serves to improve trainers' work and/or provides an opportunity to get a qualification, either required by legislation or not. A systematic approach ensures quality and coherence of qualifications and training programmes and maximises the effect of multifaceted efforts of various actors that have developed in recent years. It brings information on all initiatives together and makes all parties aware of what others are doing. The entire system depends very much on effective cooperation of all stakeholders involved.

Finland presents a good example of a systematic approach to continuing professional development of workplace instructors through a national approach that addresses most of the principles outlined below.

- The relationship between quality of VET and competences of tutors is reflected in the national guidelines on quality of VET.
- Competence profiles of and training for workplace instructors of young students

⁽²⁾ TWG PLA 3. [Support to trainers competence development in SMEs](#), Strasbourg (France) and Offenburg (Germany), October 2013.

were developed with support from the ESF.

- The National Board of Education supports the training programme for workplace instructors as part of the government strategy to promote work-based learning and skill demonstrations. Training of trainers has been an important element of all projects.
- The State supports it through projects and guidelines: the new guidelines (2012) recommend that as many people involved in workplace instruction as possible should participate in training (to date, approximately 50% of trainers have been trained).
- Training of workplace instructors (skilled workers who take care of young workers) is the responsibility of training providers, more specifically, VET teachers who educate in-company instructors on the qualification requirements. Training providers are encouraged to make links with SMEs.
- Providers of workplace instructor training are responsible for ensuring that training is personally tailored to each participant, based on whether the participant primarily instructs and assesses students in vocational upper secondary education and training, students in preparatory training for competence-based qualifications, or students in apprenticeship training.
- Currently, in the Finnish development plan for education and research (2011-16), measures to ensure sufficient training of on-the-job instructors include: creation of a permanent funding model, alternative ways of training and nationally developed training content.
- Training content is developed at national level. Providers receive guidelines that are not mandatory but all providers use them to ensure quality and coherence of training.
- The materials are available in Finnish (and Swedish), the English version will be available too:
 - [National guidelines of training programme for trainers](#) (in Finnish);
 - [Guide on implementing workplace instructor training](#);
 - [Competence map for workplace instructors](#);
 - [Guide for implementation of vocational teachers' work placement periods](#).

Existing research and findings from the TWG show there is no unified approach to requirements, certification and validation of competences of VET trainers in companies across countries and sectors, neither in initial (IVET) nor in continuing (CVET) vocational training. However, certain commonalities can be observed.

The following three points describe the three elements of a systematic approach.

3.3.1. Qualification or competence standards (profiles) are sound reference points for trainers' CPD systems

⇒ Qualification or competence standards (profiles) for trainers in companies serve as sound reference points for trainers' professional development, more specifically, training programmes and validation of prior learning. Regulations should set only minimum requirements to guarantee the quality of training; all other options should

be available as add-ons. Trainer qualifications should be linked to national qualifications frameworks.

Competence standards or recognised qualifications are more likely to be developed if support is initiated and led by national education and training authorities. Many countries worked in the last years to develop trainer qualifications, competence standards and profiles, professional labels, both in IVET and CVET (see Annex 3 for examples of competence standards and profiles).

Competence requirements or expectations are expressed in various documents, such as national occupational standards, qualification standards, competence standards and frameworks, codes of practice of professional associations, company-specific job descriptions and the like. Getting a recognised certificate can lead to better trainers' professional recognition and higher esteem and demonstrate their competences to employers.

Competence standards serve a dual purpose: they are a reference point for building curricula for trainers and for assessing the competences they gained on the job. They can help individuals aspiring to become or practising trainers to understand better their role and expectations of employers and society at large. Competence standards can be powerful communication tools between learners, trainers and companies for transparency and comparability of competences of in-company trainers to support learners and companies. When defining competence standards, a cross-sectoral approach, focusing on pedagogical and transversal competences can be applied to strengthen trainer identity and overcome possible sectoral differences and variations in terms of technical skills and competence requirements.

Qualification or competence requirements are more likely to be explicitly stipulated when workplace learning is part of a vocational training programme (for example, Austria, Denmark, Germany, Netherlands); this refers to apprenticeship schemes, which are regulated by law. Required levels of qualification and competence could differ. In some countries (Portugal, Spain, Switzerland), trainers from companies can teach specific areas in vocational schools, however, in other countries this is not possible because pedagogical, psychological and methodological preparation to work as a teacher is required. In countries with more school-based systems (for example, Cyprus, Estonia, Finland, Malta, Poland, Portugal), trainers in practical classes in school or workshops are more likely to have to comply with the requirements for teachers.

Regulations should set only minimum requirements to guarantee the quality of training. Imposing additional regulatory requirements might not be the most effective solution, especially, for SMEs where simplification of regulatory frameworks is one of the key concepts of support. However, advanced qualifications and certificates should be available as add-ons for those willing to get a trainer qualification or have their trainer competences recognised.

In **Germany**, according to legislation, the responsible trainers should have necessary vocational qualifications and educational qualifications according to the [Ordinance \(regulation\) on trainer aptitude](#) (AEVO), which is acquired through an examination. AEVO is a minimum requirement and is supported by enterprises too.

Since 2009, there are two new qualifications for trainers (apart from AEVO), which are not mandatory but provide a possibility to upgrade their qualifications: the certified vocational pedagogue for initial and continuing training (*Geprüfter Aus- und Weiterbildungspädagoge, AWP*) and the certified vocational pedagogue (*Geprüfter Berufspädagoge/Geprüfte Berufspädagogin, BP*), an advanced training qualification, including professional skills in education and management. The occupational profiles of a certified pedagogue in IVET and CVET and a certified vocational education pedagogue include, among others:

- design of individual and group learning processes and training programmes,
- online tutoring,
- development of teaching materials,
- ability to identify skills of trainees,
- ability to plan vocational training activities,
- be aware of nationally-recognised qualifications,
- organise a network for collaborative learning,
- leadership skills.

The examples from **Germany** present the case in which tutors and trainers should be professionally and personally qualified. Trainers in companies should be registered by the company with the competent body as a trainer responsible for training. Responsible trainers can also be company owners and master craftsmen. One element in the master craftsman ('Meister') exam assesses the Meister's ability to conduct training. At national level the Skilled Crafts Act stipulates that if entrepreneurs do not possess the respective skills to organise and conduct training in their company, they need to provide trainers who can deliver training for staff. Trainers' pedagogical competences are proven by the AEVO exam (the Ordinance on trainer's aptitude), described above.

In **Wallonia (Belgium)**, the FormaForm (training of trainers, 'Formation des formateurs') provides training to both new and experienced instructors, based on a competence profile, common to all participating providers, that includes eight key activities and relevant competences, among them:

- positioning in the organisational framework;
- developing training programmes;
- developing, implementing and facilitating training activities;
- evaluating acquisition;
- evaluating and adapting the programme;
- managing one's own professional development.

In **the UK**, the certificate in learning and development practice (CLDP) is a qualification launched by the Chartered Institute of Professional Development that provides current and aspiring trainers to gain knowledge and skills for training and development. It puts emphasis on competences in a specific area and includes six domains: professional values and practice; learning and teaching; planning for learning; assessment of learning; access; and progression. It is used in all sectors, especially in financial and

retail and by local authorities.

In **France**, a trainer diploma will be developed under the responsibility of the Ministry of Education. Currently, a tutor (*maître d'apprentissage*) is compulsory even in SMEs and craftsmen workshops. Generally, this employee is not trained to train but has responsibilities for the trainee (following the Labour law and also providing assessment/feedback on the trainee's performance). The new reform foresees compulsory training for trainers in companies (40 hours) so that they understand the essence of VET programmes.

Trainer qualifications (adult trainer, trainer of adult education, trainer in further education and training sector, etc.) should be linked to the national qualifications framework (Ireland, UK) (Cedefop, 2013b). A better link with work on NQFs in countries would open up possibilities for developing and formalising qualifications of trainers in CVET and, as a result, better professionalisation⁽³⁾.

The link to NQFs can give trainer qualifications higher value and bring them closer to their academic counterparts. For example, placing the master craftsman (one of the qualifications that an apprentice tutor can have) at the same qualification level as an academic Bachelor in **Germany** or at Level 6 of EQF in the **Netherlands** are promising examples.

Another interesting possibility is emerging from developments in NQFs. Some countries (Belgium (potentially), Netherlands, Sweden) are opening up their NQFs to privately-provided or non-formal qualifications. For example, in the Netherlands, if a provider, for example a private company, wants to submit a qualification for inclusion, an accreditation (or in Dutch 'validation') has to take place. This possibility can give additional value to training provided in companies, increase its comparability at European level and link it to labour market reality and to the work of in-company trainers.

3.3.2. Trainers should benefit from varied and flexible training provision

⇒ Trainers should have access to varied and flexible training programmes that provide opportunities to develop their competences, update existing ones to the required level or close competence gaps. This is especially needed if requirements are set at regulatory level. In this case, training programmes should be provided by the State or relevant social partner. Competence development should cover all areas of competence. CPD programmes should be closer linked to real working contexts and tasks of trainers in companies.

⁽³⁾From 2013, 24 national qualifications frameworks are formally adopted, either through NQF-targeted laws or decrees or through amendments to existing legislation: targeted NQF laws have been passed by national parliaments in Belgium (Flanders), Czech Republic, Estonia, France, Ireland and Montenegro. Decrees have been adopted in Bulgaria, Hungary, Latvia, Malta, the Netherlands and Portugal. Laws and decrees on NQFs have been prepared – and are awaiting formal adoption – in Croatia, Finland, Norway, Slovenia and Sweden. Existing legislation has been amended in Denmark and is planned in Hungary, Poland and Slovakia (Cedefop, 2013a).

In most countries, development of competence profiles and standards is accompanied by training provision. Most typical competence development for in-company trainers nowadays is still training programmes, formal or non-formal.

Training for trainer competences can be delivered separately or as part of training for main vocational qualifications. Development of national qualification frameworks opens up an opportunity to revise vocational qualifications to include training-related competences and build relevant modules as 'initial training' to prepare future workers to take up training functions at their workplaces, either to work with apprentices or train other employees.

In **Finland**, all qualifications acquired in initial VET include an optional module 'Workplace instructor training'. Similar modules are included in some further and specialist vocational qualifications: content of qualifications is defined by the relevant branches; some branches will include a trainer module when the qualifications (designed before 2010) are revised and updated.

In **Germany, Austria, Slovenia**, preparing for the master craftsman ('Meister') exams includes developing an ability to conduct training, which is further assessed at the exam. Thus, training competences are part of vocational qualifications.

In **Denmark**, pedagogical training for VET trainers is provided as in-service training. The National Centre for Vocational Pedagogy (*Nationalt Center for Erhvervspædagogik* – NCE) offers a two-year diploma programme in vocational pedagogy (*Diplomuddannelsen I Erhvervspædagogik*), introduced in 2010. It is based on interaction between theory and practice (Cedefop, 2010).

In **Romania**, a national standard was developed to coordinate better and guarantee a standardised approach to training of trainers working with adult learners. Since 2010, only trainers certified according to the standard can deliver all nationally-accredited training (Cedefop, 2013b). The standard is also the basis for validating and certifying competences acquired in non-formal and informal contexts.

Austria and the UK developed comprehensive initial training programmes for trainers; although they are not specifically targeted at in-company trainers, the latter can benefit from them (Cedefop, 2013b).

Ideally, continuing training programmes for trainers should cover all groups of competences required (see Chapter 4). Most policies and initiatives analysed so far aim to improve trainer understanding of teaching and learning methodologies, especially as regards adult learning, and enable them to use methods appropriate to the specific groups of learners they work with. Based on the assumption that trainers are usually highly skilled and have an appropriate qualification in their specialisation (for example, a master craftsman), it is considered that trainers in enterprises mostly lack pedagogical and transversal competences. A survey of trainers (Kirpal and Wittig, 2009) showed though that trainers spend most CPD time on technical skills and knowledge of their subject, pedagogical skills and social skills.

There is no unified approach to the content or length of training programmes. These depend on various factors: certification requirements, trainer tasks and responsibilities, type of provision (for example, modules), previous experience and qualification, content of training. Training programmes for in-company trainers can be provided by various private and public institutions:

- trainer colleges, teacher training institutions, in-service training institutions (Austria, Poland, Slovakia);
- universities and higher education institutions (Austria, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Italy, Malta);
- public bodies (Cyprus, Denmark, Spain) or public VET providers-trainer employers (Belgium (Wallonia), Bulgaria, Finland, France, Malta);
- municipalities (Bulgaria, Sweden);
- professional associations (Czech Republic, Germany, Slovakia);
- companies (Germany, Finland);
- other providers, for example, adult learning providers (Bulgaria, Cyprus, Sweden, Ireland).

The underpinning trainer qualifications or competence standards help to ensure coherence of programmes provided by all the above.

Non-formal and informal learning's role where trainers acquire their competences should be better acknowledged. A survey of trainers (Kirpal and Wittig, 2009) showed that trainers use different ways and modes for continuing learning: individual self-study being most frequently used (20%); participation at conferences, development days and events (18.5%); work experience (17%); formal courses (16%); e-learning (13%); learning in a team (8%).

Challenges for in-company trainers to participate in CPD are the impossibility to be away from the workplace for long periods to attend training and lack of support from employers.

Flexible provision and relating training content to needs of trainers in companies can address this challenge.

- (a) Short-term non-formal courses and programmes by training providers or professional associations

Many lead to certificates that might not be recognised nationally, but can be recognised by employers, thus, giving trainers a possibility for career development within a company.

In **Austria**, regionally-organised [trainer academies](#) ('Ausbilderakademien') are an example of successful support for continuing training and professionalisation of apprenticeship trainers at companies. The certification steps are designed differently in the regions, with a common goal of quality assurance of dual training. The IVET trainer college itself is not a physical training institution but must be seen as an initiative to structure and promote continuing training of apprenticeship trainers. Attendance is

voluntary. IVET trainer colleges have been set up in the provinces of Vorarlberg, Tirol, Carinthia (Kärnten), Styria (Steiermark) and Upper Austria (Oberösterreich). IVET trainer colleges are mostly initiated by a regional economic chamber in cooperation with the Economic Promotion Institute (WIFI). To access programmes, trainers should successfully complete an IVET trainer examination or training for trainers followed by a vocation-specific interview. Those who already train can achieve the following levels: certified apprenticeship trainer (*Zertifizierter Lehrlingsausbilder*); licensed apprenticeship trainer (*Ausgezeichneter Lehrlingsausbilder*); qualified apprenticeship trainer with diploma (*Diplom- Lehrlingsausbilder*).

In **France**, many training providers offer short trainings to trainers. For example, the [Centre Inffo](#) offers five two-day training courses for trainers to update their specific skills and competences: '*Animer une formation*' (delivering training events), '*Construire une action de formation*' (designing training courses), '*La formation ouverte et à distance: approches conceptuelles, initiations techniques et exemples méthodologiques*' (e-learning, conceptual approach, technical introductions and methodological examples), '*Conduire un tutorat de formation à distance*' (conducting a distance tutorship) and '*Utiliser les méthodes ludiques en formation*' (using ludic methods in training). These short trainings do not lead to any qualification.

In the **Czech Republic**, there are educational programmes (courses) focused on trainers' skills outside the formal education system with diverse curricula; certificates from these courses have non-formal force. The programmes might include among others, social and psychological basics of adult learning, planning and organisation of learning activities, methods of teaching and assessment, or communication skills.

(b) Modular curricula

Learning-outcome-based competence standards describing competences in broad areas or groups simplify putting them into training modules, units of various length and amount, thus, ensuring flexibility.

According to a recommendation of the **Finnish** National Board of Education, training for workplace instructors is implemented flexibly, taking into account the current situation and competence needs of employees acting as workplace instructors as well as their knowledge and skills, which are assessed and recognised. A training plan setting learning objectives is designed. Achieving the training objectives takes approximately three weeks. Participants have the option of completing only parts of the training. The training modules do not have a fixed order of completion. Instead, they can be completed in line with participants' needs.

(c) Gradual acquisition of competences by trainers as they gain experience in training

In **Wallonia (Belgium)**, Le Forem, Bruxelles Formation and Ifapme (public providers of VET) train their new trainers based on a competence profile that includes five core competences. Further training is elaborated for additional competences (advanced initial training in the second year of training) and for specific competences of a trainer and a professional (continuing training). Additional competences include ability to inform, provide guidance, identify skill needs, work with heterogeneous groups of learners, and apply new teaching and training methods. Specific competences depend on demand and

changing situations; for example, communication skills, management, certain professional skills can be improved.

(d) Guidelines and didactical tools developed by pedagogical professionals for trainers in companies

National agencies and chambers work to develop tools that specifically target companies and their trainers to explain qualification requirements (in VET programmes) and related sets of competences. They advise on organising learning, assessing learners' competences, and addressing difficult situations. This kind of support is especially valuable for trainers in SMEs.

In **Germany**, the Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (BIBB) developed [guidelines for trainers in SMEs](#) to support skilled workers providing training to make their training tasks easier and better. The guidelines suggest ideas for coping with difficult situations. The guidelines were developed based on input from heads of training, trainers, skilled workers with experience of providing training, lecturers and training experts [link].

In **Austria**, [training practical guidelines](#) for all apprenticeship occupations are provided by the relevant chambers to support apprentice tutors, especially in sectors with few training companies, for example, bricklaying.

In **Estonia**, the Foundation Innove developed guidelines for training for companies.

(e) Informal knowledge-sharing and support in training-related skills (for example, how to prepare and implement project work)

In **Austria**, the chambers took on board informal exchange of experience and peer learning of SMEs' apprentice tutors, who found it most effective. SME tutors meet regularly in a café, for example, to share their concerns and approaches in dealing with young apprentices in their companies.

In **Germany**, vocational trainers attend industry events, fairs, informal meetings with colleagues in the industry to update their knowledge of new developments and technology.

3.3.3. Validation of trainers' competences should be an integral part of any support system

⇒ Validation of competences acquired through professional practice should be an integral part of any support system for competence development of trainers in companies. Policy action should support creating and expanding opportunities for certification and validation of trainers' prior learning and competences acquired at work as valid alternatives to formal training.

Trainers work in very dynamic environments where they gain useful experience that cannot be readily provided through training programmes, which makes its validation a cornerstone of any CPD. Validation should apply also to prior learning acquired in

external institutions and projects as well as through professional practices. The possibility to have this experience validated and recognised is one of the tools to motivate trainers to engage in further learning and can bring more skilled workers who are good at training others to training jobs in companies as well as to part-time training in VET schools. Validation can serve as a basis for exemption from some parts of certification or training and, thus, make trainers' pathways to a qualification shorter (Cedefop, 2013b), should they wish to acquire one.

Validation helps to acknowledge existing competences of in-company trainers and identify better their competence gaps and learning needs; for example, whether they need to acquire new pedagogical methods, learning psychology, group management, multicultural awareness, conflict resolution, and course design.

Validation procedures also promote reflective practice through setting individual learning paths, which at the same time require a lot of commitment on the part of candidates (Greece, France). Going through validation of non-formal and informal learning can be a hands-on learning experience for trainers, which they can apply in their work. They could learn how to work with competence and/or occupational standards, assess learner competences and skills against such standards and identify gaps that should be closed through training. In this way, trainers would be able to help their companies create a stronger link between their internal competence assessment to public validation processes and possibly encourage upgrading qualifications of other employees.

Validation of trainer competences is possible, if countries have validation systems in place. More and more countries establish validation systems of learning outcomes in an informal and non-formal context (Cedefop, 2012); some have already a long experience (for example, France, Netherlands).

In **France**, validation of learning from experience (*validation des acquis de l'expérience, VAE*) is legally defined and regulated. It may lead to award of a full certificate and applies to all diplomas, titles and certificates included in the national register of vocational qualifications (*certifications*). For trainers, on behalf of the Ministry of Labour, the AFPA (*Association pour la formation professionnelle des adultes*, the association for the vocational training of adults) elaborated a qualification for trainers of adult education (*Formateur professionnel d'adultes*, TP FPA) at the French NQF level 3 (Level 5 of the European qualifications framework (EQF)). This is the only professional certificate with State recognition. The qualification can be acquired through a training course or through validation of non-formal and informal learning.

3.4. Supporting trainers in companies is a shared responsibility: ensure effective cooperation and coordination

⇒ Effective cooperation and shared responsibility of all stakeholders is the main success factor to effective support for professional development of trainers in companies. The EU, national authorities, sectoral organisations, social partners, VET

institutions/providers, companies and trainers themselves have a role to play. Responsibilities and actions should be clearly distributed among all, using to the maximum their mandates, expertise and roles in providing learning in enterprises. The education and training sector at national and regional levels should open up; training should reach out to companies. A coordinating body with a leadership role is crucial.

Experience shows that many policies and initiatives targeting trainers in companies, including those as pilot projects, have been recently developed in countries by many actors and at different levels. The greater the level of cooperation between national, regional and local authorities, industry representatives and social partners, companies, training providers, VET institutions and professional organisations, the greater is the likelihood that examples of good practice will be introduced and sustained in member countries.

- (a) **Governments** provide the policy environment, legal frameworks and incentives that enable companies to provide apprenticeships and CVET/LLL, including in SMEs

State (public) funding is significantly involved in encouraging companies to support trainers' competence development. State recognition of the need to support the 'training function' in enterprises creates opportunities for establishing or using existing frameworks more effectively. Publicly-funded training most often implies qualification requirements of trainers. Public funding can also be used to support development of some competences (citizenship, multicultural awareness) as social responsibility. Shared provisions can be considered with State support to develop competences of trainers in companies that provide apprenticeship or work-based learning.

In **Sweden**, support for work-based learning and in-company trainers has been high on the agenda since 2009 as part of national efforts to strengthen apprenticeship. Public funding is increasingly channelled to support school-company partnerships and to train trainers by business sectors, schools responsible for vocational education and training programmes, and other educational bodies. However, providers faced challenges to get in-company trainers to participate and teachers to allocate enough time for planning and carrying out the training. The quality of training was also an issue. To address the challenges, national initiatives were put in place to strengthen local providers through e-learning training for in-company trainers, to reach trainers and to promote cooperation between companies and VET providers. This was done by introducing VET developers who support schools/teachers in their interaction with companies/trainers at local and regional levels, and by providing support material for such interaction.

CVET publicly-funded training programmes for adults, both in employment and unemployed, stimulated efforts at national level to define competence requirements for trainers, develop qualifications and/or certification mechanisms supported by training programmes (Cyprus, Greece). In some countries, competence requirements for trainers are part of quality assurance of training providers (Czech Republic, Malta, Romania). By

accrediting training providers the State ensures compatibility and quality of training. National support programmes usually target pedagogical and transversal competences.

- (b) In many countries, **sectoral organisations** (chambers of industry, commerce, crafts) or **trade unions** play the leading role in implementing national provisions for IVET and CVET.

Employers, sectoral organisations or professional associations of trainers are important partners of the State in improving trainers' professional status in their industries, developing competence profiles and providing relevant training.

In countries with well-established apprenticeship systems, chambers 'accredit' training companies and provide support to companies taking apprentices. The chambers then develop trainer competence standards and provide training to apprentice tutors. Training can be based on a trainer competence standard that a chamber can develop in cooperation with VET or pedagogical experts and VET providers. Their training is highly relevant to sector needs, which includes both updating technical knowledge and skills and developing pedagogical (didactic) competences.

In **Germany**, regional chambers (*Industrie- und Handelskammer - IHKs*) offer training programmes to help candidates to prepare for the trainer's aptitude exam and two advanced trainer qualifications ⁽⁴⁾(see also page 24) available at national level: certified pedagogue in initial and continuing VET and certified vocational pedagogue (Cedefop, 2013). These programmes are based on outcome-oriented curricula developed by the German Association of Chambers in accordance with the national regulation. Programmes can be full-time or part-time and last from six to 30 months and are not mandatory. Chambers or professional associations provide courses to trainers in SMEs.

In the **Netherlands**, centres of expertise accredit companies that provide work placements for students, applying a common set of quality criteria agreed among the sectors. Availability of a competent trainer is one of them. The accreditation system is rather informal and self-regulatory. Centres develop their own qualifications for in-company trainers. But as all qualifications in the country have the same structure, they are easy to communicate among students, schools, companies, centres of expertise, sector organisations and the government. Centres of expertise provide training and instructional materials to trainers in accredited companies or those seeking accreditation. Currently, a reform is under way to transfer all legal tasks of the 17 centres of expertise to one organisation, the Foundation for Cooperation on Vocational Education, Training and the Labour Market (SBB), in which employers and schools have a 50-50% say on formulating the requirements for qualifications in apprenticeship companies and training of trainers in companies. SBB is responsible for cross-regional and cross-sector management and compatibility between vocational education and industry.

In **Austria**, quality training of trainers in enterprises is ensured through close cooperation between companies and VET providers. It is supported by respective chambers and the VET Research Institute.

⁽⁴⁾ Qualifications were introduced by federal law in 2009 to improve career prospects for VET trainers. The certification is not mandatory but are promoted by the chambers (Cedefop, 2013b).

In CVET, sectoral organisations are also those that shape training of trainers outside national (State-funded) provision. They promote good practice and provide incentives for their members to get their competences recognised and certified. They can develop a competence standard or a qualification of a trainer for their specific sector, provide necessary training and raise awareness in their companies of availability of certificates. Employers usually perceive the certificates and training very well. Chambers or professional associations provide courses to trainers in SMEs.

In some countries, sector organisations create databases of certified trainers. Being listed in such databases (usually, on websites) is considered a seal of quality by potential clients (Austria, Germany, Slovakia) (Cedefop, 2013b).

- (c) In school-based contexts, **VET providers** play an important role, being responsible for the content for a qualification (for example, Finland, France) and also for working with trainers in companies (Finland, Estonia).

Cooperation between schools and enterprises serves to improve teachers' knowledge of current work practices and improve trainers' general pedagogical skills and competences.

In **Estonia**, schools provide information, training and counselling to apprentice trainers in companies. For 2013/14, the government allocated additional funds for curricular reform, one of the measures being training in-company trainers better to support students in VET practice. The SME focus is not explicit but as SMEs are the main businesses that provide practice places, they will definitely benefit from it.

See pages 21-22 for an example from Finland.

All actors should look for ways to exchange their views (for example, through sectoral councils) and priorities, synchronise their efforts and distribute responsibilities and provision of training opportunities for trainers most effectively and efficiently. Expanding cooperation beyond IVET but using IVET infrastructure and expertise to support competence development of trainers of adults in companies should be sought. This can be specifically relevant to countries where the division between IVET and CVET in terms of provision is not very distinct.

- ⇒ A coordinating body with a leadership role is crucial. Best results will be achieved if there is **a coordinating body** agreed among and trusted by stakeholders and takes the leading role in supporting companies and their trainers.

There is no single approach that can be recommended; the decision on the right mix of incentives, rights and obligations should be made by participating countries and depends on their national context and traditions (Council of the European Union; European Commission, 2010:

- (a) in some countries, chambers are in a better position to take the leading role (Germany, Austria, Switzerland);

- (b) in others, national agencies would be more trustworthy towards SMEs (for example, agencies for SME development, in Romania there is the National Agency for the Implementation of Projects and Programmes for SMEs as well as the National Council for SMEs);
- (c) while in other countries good cooperation mechanisms between VET systems (providers) and companies allow training providers to take the leading role (Finland, Belgium);
- (d) the regional level role deserves more attention (in France where VET is governed by regions, in the UK where growth strategies are region-led).

3.5. Competent trainers in companies matter: make them part of a broader agenda and use all available funds and programmes

⇒ Competent and qualified trainers ensure high quality workplace training that can help achieve national benchmarks and goals for employment and growth. Support for in-company trainers should be part of a broader agenda and national priorities for employment and economic growth, more specifically for lifelong learning, VET and skills development strategies, policies and reform processes. Sustainable use of available EU funds (for example, the European Social Fund (ESF), Erasmus+, etc.) should be targeted at competence development of in-company trainers; the EU can provide special provisions/allocations within such programmes for training staff in companies in the most critical skills and areas, for example, for apprentice tutors in SMEs. The guiding principles should be taken forward in the Bruges review and in work of Education and training 2020 (ET2020) technical groups, especially on apprenticeships and adult learning. Synergy should be ensured with work at EU and national levels on VET teachers and adult learning professionals.

Competence development and updating skills of training staff in companies should be implemented as part of support for companies in a **broader context of VET reforms and particularly - reinventing and improving apprenticeship** in Europe and improving skills and competences of the workforce for lifelong learning and employability, as well as basic skills. Countries where this is the case, are Estonia, Finland, Malta, Romania, Spain, Sweden.

Support for trainers in companies and workplace instructors and provision of relevant training should be linked closely to **quality assurance measures for learning in the workplace**. In IVET, availability of a qualified staff member to supervise an apprentice or trainee is one of the quality assurance requirements for apprenticeship or traineeship. Competence requirements for tutors, mentors or instructors form part of the requirements against which a company is assessed and accredited to take in apprentices. Minimum requirements for qualifications of tutors are the same in SMEs and large companies (for example, Austria, Belgium, Estonia, Germany, Romania, Turkey, and Switzerland). CVET is as a rule less regulated and much more complex in terms of

positions, functions and requirements for in-company trainers and further quality assurance approaches need to be tried and developed as suitable solutions.

In **Estonia**, an additional budget was allocated by the State in 2013 to improve quality of practical training in VET and to link better VET with labour market needs. It is planned that at least 1 000 in-company trainers will have gone through training and at least 10% of teachers from VET schools will be trained in companies.

In **Finland**, developing and improving competences of SMEs employees are among priorities of the national education and research development plan 2011-16, the Vocational Adult Education Act and the guidelines for entrepreneurship education. Adult learning providers can apply for grants to develop projects that support local and regional enterprises in skill development. Funding is provided by the Ministry of Education and Culture while the Finnish Board of Education and regional centres for economic development, transport and economy assess and manage applications. The budget is approximately EUR 6 million, depending on the government's budget.

Substantial funds from EU programmes have been used for developing competence standards and qualifications of in-company trainers and implementing training programmes for in-company trainers (most notably, Leonardo da Vinci of the lifelong learning programme and the ESF), often as part of pilot projects. Countries renewing and developing their VET systems (for example, Czech Republic, Estonia, Cyprus), especially apprenticeship and increased workplace learning used EU funding extensively. The approach can be used nationally (national authorities, public bodies and VET providers), in specific sectors (social partners, professional associations) or by individual institutions, companies or NGOs, both in initial and continuing VET. In addition, national agencies responsible for Erasmus+, should look for ways to inform and encourage companies and in-company trainers to use better mobility and cooperation opportunities.

In **Poland**, an ESF project conducted by the Ministry of National Education aims to develop and pilot professional in-service training programmes for VET teachers and practical training instructors.

In **Romania**, two qualifications for trainers were developed: a trainer/tutor and a trainer of trainers.

In **Cyprus**, a qualification 'trainer of vocational training' was developed at level 3 of the national system of vocational qualifications (SVQ, has five levels) as part of an ESF project. From January 2013, it is mandatory for trainers providing VET in State-funded schemes. Training will be provided by the Human Resource Development Authority, a national agency for promoting vocational training and human resource development (Cedefop, 2013b).

Pilot projects are often innovative and address gaps in national systems regarding certain competences of trainers in companies, both in IVET and CVET; therefore, they usually start with development of a competence profile, a qualification or a certificate of a trainer. Based on these, promoters elaborate and implement training programmes for a group of trainers in the country, region, municipality, sector, group of companies or

participating institutions. Compared to national initiatives usually linked to a broader agenda, pilot projects tend to focus on trainers, including in-company trainers.

In Wallonia (Belgium, the case of the PLA host), VET reform foresees common training for trainers from different VET providers (European Commission, 2012a). Three major VET providers, Le Forem, Bruxelles Formation and IFAPME, created a partnership project, FormaForm (*'Formation des formateurs'*) to develop and provide in-service training for their trainers. Most trainers are skilled workers and professionals who decide to train in their occupation/profession. FormaForm is working to develop a certificate (*'label'*) of VET trainers to recognise the VET trainer identity. It is planned to make the certificate available to trainers in enterprises as well as providers. The initiative is supported by the ESF (2011-13) and will offer different tools and programmes:

- a common competence standard for trainers (core business activities common to all providers);
- common initial training compulsory for every new trainer (10 modules, 21 days) and a CVET/CPD training programme 'à la carte';
- a catalogue of continuous training.

Reliance on ESF and other external funding raises the sustainability of effort issue. Sustainability action plans and mainstreaming of project results into national systems need to be given proper attention. Uncoordinated effort can lead to a situation where initiatives aimed at training and trainers are discontinued or compete with one another.

Although outcomes are impressive and useful for their VET systems, projects usually cover a limited scope and only train a small group of trainers defined by the project promoters. Disseminating positive outcomes of projects at all levels is another important factor for success. Successful projects should be identified and mainstreamed and become national initiatives or further developed to transfer developed tools to other countries and/or sectors or to train more trainers. In these cases, countries provide national funding to support further implementation of CPD and avoid discontinuation of valuable initiatives once EU funding stops.

In **Estonia**, curricula for in-company trainers were developed and implemented by the Confederation of Employers. Unfortunately, training stopped at the end of the project.

On the contrary, in **Finland**, competence profiles of and training for workplace instructors of young students were developed with support from the ESF. Currently, within the framework of the national development plan for education and research 2011-16, Finland is exploring possibilities for a permanent funding model for training workplace instructors as well as for alternative ways of providing such training, most of which has been developed with the ESF support.

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Annex 2. Benefits of work-based learning

Learner	Development of craftsmanship and deep professional expertise*
	Builds skills and competences required to operate in a workplace including transversal ones: such as communication, team work, problem solving
	(More) Informed career choices
	Develop career management skills
	Improved self-confidence and motivation
	First working experience which facilitates entry to the labour market
Employer	Positive impact on supply of qualified labour
	Addresses skills gaps through tailor made training*
	Positive effect on recruitment and retention
	Improved productivity and performance*
	Positive effects on employed staff development
VET providers	Improved attractiveness of VET programmes
	Better quality of VET programmes and of learning outcomes
	Enhancement of relevance and responsiveness of VET
	Positive effect on teaching staff competences and development
	Better cooperation between VET schools and businesses
Society	Skilled labour force which responds better to the labour market needs
	Positive contribution to youth employment*
	Cost-sharing of VET between the State and employers
	Combined governance of VET*
	Contribution to innovation and creativity
	Has the potential to strengthen social inclusion and improve equal opportunities

* These benefits are in particular attributed to work-based learning approaches where the period of time spent in the workplace is substantial, such as apprenticeship.

Source: European Commission (2013d). [Work-based learning in Europe: practices and policy pointers](#).

Annex 3. Examples of competence requirements and profiles

Much work has been done in many countries to support professional development and professionalisation of trainers in VET. Some countries have developed competence standards, profiles and qualifications of trainers; others are in the process of elaborating them.

First, a generic competence set presents possible competences that in-company trainers, both in IVET and CVET, might be asked to possess. It is based on examples discussed in the thematic working group and those analysed by Cedefop (2013b). The list has an informative purpose and can be used as a starting point by those who embark on developing competence standards or requirements for trainers in VET, including those in companies.

It is important to note that the combination and level for each group of competences needed for trainers in specific settings (for example, an apprentice master or a trainer of employees) would differ. Some sets can also be of greater concern to various stakeholders (for example, technical competence can be of higher importance for an employer while multicultural awareness or pedagogical skills can be considered more important by the State). It should not be expected that all categories of trainers should possess the same sets and levels of competences; however, it might be worth looking at alternative ways to ensure availability of all competences, for example, through teamwork.

The examples from Belgium, Germany and the Netherlands illustrate real combinations of expected competences for trainers working in different training situations.

Generic in-company trainer competence set (Cedefop)

Cedefop (2013) ⁽¹⁾

1. Competences related to technical domains, sectors:

- (a) qualification in training;
- (b) good knowledge of the subject, expertise in the sector;
- (c) experience;
- (d) awareness of legislation and developments in the sector and industry;
- (e) knowledge of qualification requirements;
- (f) awareness of related occupations in the sector.

2. Company specific competences:

- (a) awareness of the company's core business and structure, activities and working methods, strategy and objectives, staff's profile;
- (b) awareness of emerging skills and skill needs of employees in a company.

3. Training-related competences:

- (a) training (learning) needs assessment:
 - (i) ability to assess competences of the staff (apprentices, trainees), identify competence gaps and relevant training (learning) needs,
 - (ii) ability to combine company needs and individual aspirations of learners,
 - (iii) ability to distinguish between short-term and long-term learning needs;

(b) training design:

- (i) ability to design a training programme based on learning objectives and outcomes and learning needs of specific learner groups,
- (ii) ability to assess and select relevant content and methodology,
- (iii) ability to specify theoretical and practical parts of the programme, methodology, evaluation methods, and resources needed,
- (iv) ability to plan the programme time schedule;

(c) training delivery:

- (i) knowledge of training and learning facilitation methods and techniques; group dynamics; learning styles; equal opportunities principles; ethical principles,
- (ii) ability to create a positive and stimulating learning environment,
- (iii) ability to motivate learners to apply their knowledge, skills and competence in workplace situations,
- (iv) ability to select and apply appropriate training methods and techniques and flexibility of approach;

(d) assessment of learning:

- (i) knowledge of formative and summative evaluation methods,
- (ii) ability to assess comprehension and progress of learners,
- (iii) ability to provide feedback and possibly guidance to learners,
- (iv) ability to apply various assessment and evaluation methods and techniques,
- (v) ability to assess the training programme and identify issues for improvement.

4. Transversal competences:

- (a) project management;
- (b) positive attitude;
- (c) ability to work in a team;
- (d) communication skills;
- (e) presentation skills;
- (f) use of ICT to simplify learning;
- (g) critical thinking;
- (h) networking skills;
- (i) multicultural awareness;
 - (i) conflict management,
 - (ii) self-assessment and self-development (learning to learn);
- (j) ability to identify own knowledge and competence gaps and learning needs;
- (k) ability to identify relevant and high-quality training options for updating one's skills and competences.

Practical trainer in a training company in trade (Netherlands)

Kenniscentrum Handel

www.kchandel.nl

Practical trainers supervise trainees in practical vocational training in addition to their normal work. They play an organisational, facilitating and training role to shape the participant's learning process. Based on this role, practical trainers are prepared to make time, space and resources available for supporting and assessing participants. They have an excellent understanding of their own occupational area. Their working and thinking capabilities are at least equivalent to those required for the vocational training that the participant is following. Practical trainers are expected to have relevant work experience in the field, didactical competence, interactive capacity and awareness of organisation of training and the VET system. Centres of expertise (Kenniscentrum) provide modular training to potential trainers from companies in their sector. The modules reflect the required competences. At the intake, the competences of a candidate are assessed. In their work, practical trainers cooperate with the training organisation's traineeship supervisor and the centre of excellence's training adviser.

Core tasks and work processes

1. Organise the trainee's learning process:

- (a) conducts selection interview with the trainee;
- (b) supports the trainee during the orientation period;
- (c) establishes the trainee's baseline situation and learning needs;
- (d) determines the learning activities jointly with the trainee;
- (e) organises learning activities;
- (f) maintains contact with traineeship supervisor and training adviser.

2. Train the trainee:

- (a) trains the trainee on the shop floor;
- (b) monitors and guides the trainee's learning process;
- (c) conducts supervisory or progress discussions with the trainee;
- (d) evaluates the practical vocational education period with the trainee.

3. Assess the trainee's learning results:

- (a) prepares assessment date or assessment period;
- (b) assesses the trainee.

Expected competences

The following competences are important for practical trainers.

1. Guiding:

- (a) gear training methods to trainees and their maturity in performing tasks;
- (b) explain or demonstrate to trainees how they should perform certain tasks;
- (c) monitor whether trainees are performing as agreed;
- (d) give clear instructions if trainees do not meet or are liable not to meet expectations.

2. Analysing:

- (a) determine how training objectives can be achieved by analysing the training organisation's information, the trainee's wishes and what the training company can offer;
- (b) determine, with the trainee, the stage at which the trainee can be assessed;

(c) observe the trainee using assessment criteria and rate these observations.

3. Supervising:

- (a) encourage and support the trainee;
- (b) give clear and constructive feedback;
- (c) motivate the trainee.

4. Following instructions and procedures:

- (a) use official assessment tools and follow associated procedures when assessing trainees.

(1) 5. Learning:

- (a) evaluate the practical vocational education period to identify points for improvement;
- (b) work on points for improvement.

6. Planning and organising:

- (a) agree learning objectives in discussions with the trainee;
- (b) plan learning activities with the trainee, taking account of planning of the business (including commercial planning), availability of people and resources, the trainee's learning objectives and learning style and soundly structured learning activities;
- (c) show discipline by closely monitoring progress of the trainee's learning process;
- (d) decide when intervention in the learning process is needed and accept the possible consequences of this on planning, both for the trainee and the training company.

7. Cooperation and consultation:

- (a) show interest in the trainee by listening attentively, asking questions and observing the trainee;
- (b) after consultation with others where appropriate, discuss observations with the trainee;
- (c) encourage the trainee to think about what the learning process should cover;
- (d) listen to advice from the traineeship supervisor and training adviser and indicate the intended response.

8. Applying expertise:

- (a) explain how things work, demonstrate this or get the trainee to think about matters specific to the occupational field;
- (b) use personal subject knowledge to assess the trainee and arrive at the final rating.

Ordinance on trainer aptitude (AEVO) (Germany)

To provide apprenticeship, a company should designate a responsible trainer who is professionally and personally qualified. The responsible trainer should have necessary vocational and educational qualifications according to the ordinance (regulation) on trainer aptitude (AEVO), which is acquired through an examination. A company is eligible to provide workplace training if at least one person holds an AEVO qualification. Apart from responsible trainers, most workplace training is done by skilled workers who train part-time or as an additional task. Some have an AEVO educational qualification, but the law does not require this. For many skilled workers, AEVO is a possibility to begin a professional career in the company.

Fields of activity and associated competences

1. Assessing vocational training requirements and plan training:

- (a) present and justify the advantages of in-company vocational training;
- (b) participate in training planning activities and decisions, respecting the company's training needs and the legislative background, collective agreements and operational conditions;
- (c) present structures of the VET system and its interfaces;
- (d) choose the occupations to be trained by the company and justify the choice;
- (e) assess the company's suitability for providing IVET for the selected occupation and assess whether and to what extent the training content can be taught outside the training company, particularly as collaborative vocational training, inter-company vocational training or externally;
- (f) assess possibilities of using preparatory measures for the individual;
- (g) coordinate the tasks and responsibilities in the company of the persons who participate in conducting training, taking into account their functions and qualifications.

2. Preparing training and participating in trainees' recruitment:

- (a) develop company's training plans based on training regulations for the particular occupation, geared to work and business processes typical of that occupation;
- (b) take into account possibilities of involving employees' representatives regarding provision of IVET;
- (c) determine the need for cooperation in coordinating content and organisation of training with other institutions, particularly with part-time vocational schools;
- (d) apply criteria and procedures for selection of trainees, taking into account their heterogeneity;
- (e) prepare training contracts and arrange to have the signed contracts registered with the competent body;
- (f) examine possibilities for conducting parts of the training abroad.

3. Conducting training:

- (a) establish learning-conducive conditions and a motivating learning culture, give and receive feedback;
- (b) organise, structure and evaluate the probationary period;
- (c) develop and structure operational learning and work assignments based on the company's training plan and work and business processes typical of the occupation;
- (d) select training methods and materials appropriate for the target group and use them according to the respective situation;
- (e) assist trainees with learning difficulties by individualising their training and through guidance, when necessary use aids that support training and examine

- a possibility of extending the period of training;
- (f) offer trainees additional training options, particularly for additional qualifications, and examine a possibility of shortening duration of training and early admission to the final examination;
- (g) foster trainees' social and personal development, identify problems and conflicts in a timely manner and work towards a solution;
- (h) determine and assess trainee performance, evaluate performance assessments issued by third parties and examination results, conduct appraisal interviews, draw conclusions for the remainder of the training;
- (i) foster intercultural skills.

4. Concluding training:

- (a) prepare trainees for the final examination or journeyman's examination according to examination dates and bring the trainee's training to a successful conclusion;
- (b) ensure that trainees are registered with the competent body for the examinations and indicate to the competent body any particularities relevant to conducting the examination;
- (c) help prepare a written letter of reference based on the trainee's performance assessments;
- (d) inform and advise trainees on development and career paths and possibilities for CVET.

Certified vocational pedagogue (Germany)

(Geprüfter Berufspädagoge/Geprüfte Berufspädagogin)

Since 2009, two new qualifications for trainers have been in place: the certified vocational pedagogue for initial and continuing training (*Geprüfter Aus- und Weiterbildungspädagoge, AWP*) and the certified vocational pedagogue (*Geprüfter Berufspädagoge/Geprüfte Berufspädagogin*). They are not mandatory but provide a possibility to upgrade trainers' qualifications. Certified vocational pedagogue (*Geprüfter Berufspädagoge/Geprüfte Berufspädagogin, BP*) is an advanced training qualification, including professional skills in education and management.

Certified vocational pedagogues are able to organise and implement training measures of various kinds. They counsel, assess and guide trainees during and after the training programme. They identify and integrate new qualifications into work and learning processes. They can introduce and advise on new training methods in their organisations/companies.

The BP qualification is obtained through an exam at a chamber of industry and commerce, but competences of the qualification are not sector-specific. The exam includes written components, an interview with experts, project work, and a presentation. The exam is based on three subsequent modules, A, B and C, each subdivided into fields of action. Modules A and B are mandatory while module C provides for specialisation:

1. Module A concerns core processes of vocational training, learning processes and guidance, planning and management processes;
2. Module B focuses on ability to plan, organise and implement vocational training and ensure its quality in a specific field of vocational training: IVET, CVET and personnel development or counselling;
3. Module C is a project where trainers demonstrate highly specialised know-how for specific pedagogical functions, such as online tutoring, training programme design, exam design, developing teaching materials, and management of training providers ([Cedefop, 2013b](#), pp. 18-21).

Trainer competence framework (Belgium)

FormaForm

<http://www.formaform.be>

In Belgium (Wallonia, Belgium, the case of the PLA host), three major VET providers, Le Forem, Bruxelles Formation and IFAPME, created a partnership project, FormaForm (*Formation des formateurs*) to develop and provide in-service training for their trainers. Most trainers are skilled workers and professionals who decide to train in their occupation/profession. FormaForm developed a trainer 'label' to recognise VET trainers' identity. It is planned to offer the label to trainers in enterprises as well as providers. Based on the label, Formaform train their new trainers in five core competences. Further training is elaborated for additional competences (in the second year of training activities) and for specific competences of a trainer and a professional (continuing training, mainly outsourced).

Expected competences

Trainers are expected to be able to:

1. help to apply the institutional framework,
 - (a) understand the institutional framework of vocational education and training,
 - (b) understand the socioeconomic context of the occupational branch concerned,
 - (c) participate as a trainer in a system,
 - (d) manage pedagogical, administrative and logistics responsibilities,
 - (e) work in a team in a context of internal and external cooperation schemes;
2. develop a training plan (syllabus) based on a programme or framework:
 - (a) use a programme or framework (occupations, assessments, training),
 - (b) structure the training plan (syllabus);
3. design a training/education session(s):
 - (a) define competence-based learning objectives,
 - (b) create and organise learning situations,
 - (c) select and apply pedagogical methods/tools and materials,
 - (d) design teaching aids based on traditional media (whiteboard, word, ppt, etc.),
 - (e) design teaching aids using the possibilities of new information, communication and education technologies,
 - (f) design tools and situations for formative and summative assessment,
 - (g) take into account emotional, social and cognitive aspects which affect learning;
4. implement a training/education session (educational aspect):
 - (a) put the learner in a learning situation,
 - (b) manage the information process;
5. conduct a training/education sequence (interpersonal and communication aspects):
 - (a) communicate in a learning situation, provide feedback,
 - (b) manage group dynamics,
 - (c) manage the social and intercultural aspects of relations,
 - (d) apply conflict resolution techniques,
 - (e) set the rules for the group and define the limits of authority,
 - (f) identify individual difficulties of social, emotional or cultural nature in order to adopt appropriate behaviour or making a referral,
 - (g) create awareness of the communication potential and measure development prospects;

6. assess outcomes:

- (a) implement the formative and summative assessment,
- (b) identify learning difficulties, design and implement remedial measures or, when necessary, refer to a specialist,
- (c) communicate results of formative and summative assessment;

7. assess and adjust training/education measures:

- (a) assess training/education measures,
- (b) make necessary changes/adjustments;

8. manage own continuing training:

- (a) update technical and pedagogical skills and competences,
- (b) analyse own professional practice as a trainer/teacher.

Competence map for workplace instructors (Finland)

Finnish Board of Education

<http://www.oph.fi>

Workplace instructors:

- act as a contact person between the workplace, teacher(s), student or candidate and education provider;
- ensure that the workplace provides a safe learning environment of high quality;
- plan learning at the workplace, vocational skills demonstrations and competence tests jointly with teachers and the student;
- implement instruction and assessment in accordance with the prepared agreements and plans;
- guide and support students and assess their learning;
- assess competences jointly with various stakeholders.

Competence areas (main and specific)

1. Planning of training provided at the workplace, vocational skills demonstrations and competence tests:

- (a) familiar with the qualification structure and forms of education and training provision;
- (b) familiar with the qualification requirements for their own vocational field;
- (c) able to plan training provided at the workplace;
- (d) able to plan vocational skills demonstrations or competence tests jointly with the education provider or organiser of competence tests;
- (e) inform others at the workplace of training arranged there.

2. Instructing the student and assessing learning:

- (a) provide induction to students;
- (b) instruct students in learning;
- (c) assess students' learning.

3. Assessing the student's or candidate's competences:

- (a) assess the student's competences in a vocational skills demonstration or the candidate's competences in a competence test for a competence-based qualification.

4. Personal development as a workplace instructor.

Annex 4. Thematic working group's peer learning activities, 2012-13

The thematic working group held three peer learning activities:

1. [In-company trainers: competence requirements, certification and validation](#), Alkmaar (Netherlands), 19 and 20 September 2012

Participants took stock of in-company trainers and their competence requirements both in initial and continuing VET in participating countries and throughout Europe; reflected on the competences that in-company trainers need to fulfil their changing roles in a lifelong learning context. To improve the status, qualifications and core competences of professional development opportunities for in-company trainers, national and sector-based initiatives have recently evolved in many countries. Some countries (Cyprus, Greece, Romania and the UK) worked to define a profile and create regulations or standards; others (Austria and the UK) have comprehensive initial training programmes for VET trainers. Some others have established accreditation systems for training providers that set out competence requirements for training staff (Romania).

Participants shared examples of competence requirements and profiles from their countries (some are presented in Annex 3).

2. [Effective approaches and support for continuing professional development of in-company trainers](#), Louvain-la-Neuve (Belgium), 28 to 30 May 2013

Participants discussed opportunities for professional development of in-company trainers provided by the State, sectoral, and professional associations and for validation and recognition of prior learning and competences acquired by trainers on the job. Continuing professional development of in-company trainers serves to improve the work of trainers and/or help them to get a qualification, either required by legislation or not. It is best planned and provided if supported by competence standards (profiles) that help identify learning needs of individual trainers and levels of competences they need. Support for trainers in companies and workplace instructors and provision of relevant training should be linked closely to quality assurance measures for learning at the workplace.

3. [Support for trainers' competence development in small and medium-sized enterprises](#), Strasbourg (France) and Offenburg (Germany), 28 to 30 October 2013

Participants focused on specificities and challenges of competence development and examples of support measures to training and trainers in small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). SMEs are important players in vocational training and lifelong learning. They depend very much on external support mechanisms and SME-friendly environments. Structured, long-term, State-funded support and guidance can be provided to SMEs that provide training. They should be supported in a broader context of reinventing and improving apprenticeship in Europe and improving skills and competences of the workforce for lifelong learning and employability.