

# **WORK BASED LEARNING IN EDUWORK.NET PARTNERS' COUNTRIES. RESULTS OF THE FIELD RESEARCH: THE EXPERIENCES OF LEARNERS AND ENTREPRENEURS**

**“Networking of VET providers for improving quality of work based learning at local and transnational level”**

**Project No.609096-EPP-1-2019-1-IT-EPPKA3-VET-NETPAR**



# EDUWORK – FIELD RESEARCH

To understand the state of the art of WBL in partner countries, EDUWORK developed actions to reach and give voice to all major relevant stakeholders in Work Based Learning in VET.



# OUR TARGET

Although different VET models are established and used in European countries, our research tried to collect and identify common issues and good practices to pursue a quality increase in the WBL offer.

For the development of the field research we took into account the following stakeholders:

- Students
- VET centres
- Businesses

# STRUCTURE OF THE FIELD RESEARCH

## Focus Groups

- Students

## Interviews

- VET centres
- Businesses

# EDUWORK – STUDENTS PERSPECTIVE



# FOCUS GROUPS

## Participating Countries:

- Greece
- Italy
- Ireland
- Spain
- UK

Number of students reached: +75

# THE STUDENTS PERSPECTIVE

The Focus Groups developed, centered in 3 main axis:

- WLB experience
- Business-VET synergy
- Ideal scenario

We will synthesize the general feedback received from each axis.

# THE STUDENTS PERSPECTIVE – WBL EXPERIENCE

Overall most students described a **positive experience in WBL**. However there were some students that stated they didn't had the opportunity to apply knowledge from their studies.

Most WBL **experiences came from the VET center side**.

## Logistics

- Students reinforced the **importance of the presentation phase** in the company.
- They mentioned also the importance of complying with the defined schedule. Some businesses required them to be active when they had class times. **The effort to reconcile work and study emerges.**





# THE STUDENTS PERSPECTIVE – BUSINESS-VET CONNECTION

Regarding VET centers:

- Students either chose or **demanded more practical content connected with their professions.**
- There was a general alignment from the students with the expectations and the tools offered to test themselves in the labor market.
- Students really valued positioning services from the side of the VET centre.
- **Already during COVID**, students, complained that the e-learning process in place didn't cover their learning needs and the lack of resources to have a good WBL experience from home.

# THE STUDENTS PERSPECTIVE – BUSINESS-VET CONNECTION

Regarding businesses:

- Agreed that the ideal WBL onset should be progressive until a **good degree of autonomy is achieved.**
- In general, students gain knowledge and experience, despite **preferring to be in different areas of work during their experience.**
- Most students valued **the opportunity to turn their WBL experience in a job position.**
- The **position of an individual mentor is highly appreciated.**
- **Some employees used trainees as workers** and didn't had the education culture of a WBL experience.
- Some WBL experiences had no connection with the curriculum.



# THE STUDENTS PERSPECTIVE – IDEAL SCENARIO

There were different mentions for the ideal scenario, here we compile the most relevant:

- Prioritize practice over theory.
- More defined and followed scheduling.
- More clear and transparent information on the composition and retribution of the WBL experience.
- Working in different areas to have an overall realistic view of different tasks.
- A consistent follow-up.
- A black-list of business providers that don't comply with the plan.
- Less bureaucracy and more digitalization

# EDUWORK – VET CENTRE PERSPECTIVE



# INTERVIEWS TO VET CENTRES

## Participating Countries:

- Italy
- Ireland
- Spain
- UK

The feedback received from VET centres was almost exclusively Principals, with an exception of a coordinator of internships.

# THE VET PERSPECTIVE

The interviews developed, centered in 3 main axis:

- WLB experience
- Business-VET synergy
- Ideal scenario

We will synthesize the general feedback received from each axis.

# THE VET PERSPECTIVE – WBL EXPERIENCE

Overall, there is a very positive perspective of WBL. It makes students see the relevant part of theory when practicing.

Some VET centres consider WBL as a main pillar for VET education, not conceiving any possible substitute.

Regarding **follow-up**, there are different approaches, although all coincide that is a **key part of an WBL experience**.

In general there are no students that drop-out, except in cases of illnesses or physical injuries.



# THE VET PERSPECTIVE – BUSINESS – VET CONNECTION

There are different synergies established, although, in general, they are relationships inside the circle of influence of the VET center.

Most VET centers agree that the synergy between Business and VET center is under constant development and evaluation. Ideally, Businesses are involved before the start to understand if the VET WBL program meets the industry standards.

WBL experiences abroad are still a challenge for many centers.

Regarding the engagement of the business side, there are good and bad experiences. There are also VET centers who show businesses students' track record and other who don't.





# THE VET PERSPECTIVE – IDEAL SCENARIO

Build a profile of each particular business and the way they work, their needs and what they are looking for. Creating a CRM for potential WBL businesses.

To have a constant Course Coordinator that is there for the students. Increase the number of visits to the Company and the follow-up process.

To develop an Alumni association and track the apprentices with a destination survey.

Creating a more digitalized and less bureaucratic framework to establish WBL experiences.



# EDUWORK – BUSINESS PERSPECTIVE



# INTERVIEWS TO BUSINESSES

## Participating Countries:

- Italy
- Ireland
- Spain
- UK

## The feedback received from businesses came from:

- HR Management
- Product Management
- General Management
- Export Management

# THE BUSINESS PERSPECTIVE – WBL EXPERIENCE

Overall, the level of satisfaction with WBL is high, a great opportunity for professional and personal growth for students, and for businesses to renew themselves and to find trainable human resources that are generally hard to find.

It requires a high level of commitment from Human Resources for the company. This commitment should be connected with a tutor of the specific department of the student. It is very time consuming.

For many cases, the selection process is still done within a personal and familiar network.

There are cases that mentioned that the choice of the VET center does not match the needs exposed by the business. There is a need of better engagement between the parties. **There is a need to close the gap between what VET providers offer and what employers really want.** Some employers create their own WBL project.



# THE BUSINESS PERSPECTIVE – BUSINESS – VET CONNECTION

It is of general agreement that, if there is **trust with the educational center** for the type of education it offers and profile it send to the business, and the **synergy between both parties is proactive**, it is a major competitive advantage that fosters innovation for the business.

**Follow-up is key.** There are mentions of an information gap for the business, which becomes problematic when understanding the business responsibilities and expectations.

Some businesses state that WBL should be redesigned, **involving and starting from the companies as main character and not only as a guest.**

There are mentions that, if the business doesn't have well established relationships with VET, it is very hard to create a quality WBL experience, since **there is not a clear model to copy or adapt.**



# THE BUSINESS PERSPECTIVE – IDEAL SCENARIO

There is a general agreement that the ideal scenario is a **proactive synergy with a close follow-up for the student**. Different proposals are mentioned, such as:

**Plan courses in VET centres** (for example on health and safety, foreign language, Office package, CV building) **that facilitate access to the world of work.**

**A compensation system between companies and schools** should be created in order to guarantee the best training for young people.

**Customization of the WBL experiences**, ideally custom-built for each student. More **soft-skill centered**.



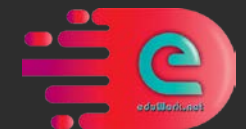
# THE BUSINESS PERSPECTIVE – IDEAL SCENARIO

**Reinforcing the consciousness of the students choice** when choosing a business.

To have **more presence in the VET centres** through conferences, meetings, fairs, to show the possibilities in the territory and to generate realistic expectations.

To have an **established position in the company that handles WBL** to dissipate mismatches and fulfil expectations.

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ATTENTION





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