Exchanging Practices in Institutional Performance Evaluation in Vocational Education & Training

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Ankara İl Milli Eğitim Müdürlüğü (Ankara Provincial Directorate for National Education-Project Coordination Unit)
Atatürk Anadolu Lisesi Yanı, AR-GE Merkezi, Projeler Koordinasyon Birimi, Beşevler/ANKARA
Contact Person: Rukiye PEKER
Telephone: +90 312 221 02 17
Fax: + 90 312 212 17 36
E-mail: rukiyepkr@gmail.com http://www.ankara.meb.gov.tr

Lancaster & Morecambe College
Morecambe Road Post code: LA1 2TY Lancaster/ UK
Contact Person: John PERRY
Telephone: + 44 / 1524 521216, + 44 / 1524 66215
Fax: + 44 / 1524 843078
E-mail : j.perry@lmc.ac.uk, http://www.lmc.ac.uk

Zukunftsbau GmbH
Strelitzer Strasse 60 Post Code: 10115 Berlin/GERMANY
Contact Person: Dr. Klaus Jürgen BUNKE
Telephone: +49/30/44368820
Fax: +49/30/44368888
E-mail: kjbunke@zukunftsbau.de, http://www.zukunftsbau.de/

German Romanian Foundation Center For Vocational Training and Development Timisoara
Calea Aradului Nr. 56, Postcode: 300291 Timişoara/ROMANIA
Contact Person: Nicolae CERNEI
Telephone: + 40 / 256 426780, + 40 / 256 495774
Fax: + 40 / 256 495774
E-mail: ncernei@frgtim.ro, http://www.frgtim.ro

Znanie Association – Sofia
83, Vladaiska Street Postcode: 1606 Sofia/ BULGARIA
Contact Person: Valentina Georgieva
Telephone: + 359 / 2 9522596
Fax: + 359 / 2 9522596
E-mail : projects@znanie-bg.org, http://www.znanie-bg.org

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INTRODUCTION

Leonardo Da Vinci partnership project "Exchanging Practices in Institutional Performance Evaluation in Vocational Education & Training" shortly titled "EVALU-VET" which was prepared by R&D Department, EU Unit subordinate to Ankara Provincial Directorate for National Education was found as "Supportable Project" by National Agency.

The partners of EVALU-VET are:

- ✓ Ankara National Education Directorate- Turkey
- ✓ Lancaster & Morecambe College – England
- ✓ Zukunftsbau GmbH- Germany
- ✓ FRG Vocational Education Center - Romania
- ✓ Znanie Association– Bulgaria

Within the scope of the project the performance assessment applications of the partner countries were compared and the objective was to form common performance assessment criteria for the in the vocational and technical training organizations. At the same time efforts were spent to contribute to the target about increasing the attraction and quality of the "Vocational and Technical Training Organizations" as published in the December 2006 Helsinki Bulletin.

In reference to the LdV partnership project on "Performance Evaluation Vocational and Technical Training Organizations" the opportunities were given to conduct an analysis for needs, to compare and share the implemented practices.

Within the framework of the EVALU-VET partnership project, the preliminary work to form a multilateral partnership project with the aim to increase the quality and competition of the Vocational and Technical Training Organizations and to develop an impartial, measurable and applicable model to evaluate organizational performances.

Although we come from different cultural, social and historical backgrounds we learned that there is a lot we can learn from each other through experience. We joined our similarities and differences and created synergy. We accepted as a richness the different expertise and competencies the project's partnerships have and the project outcomes and outputs that are produced with quality.

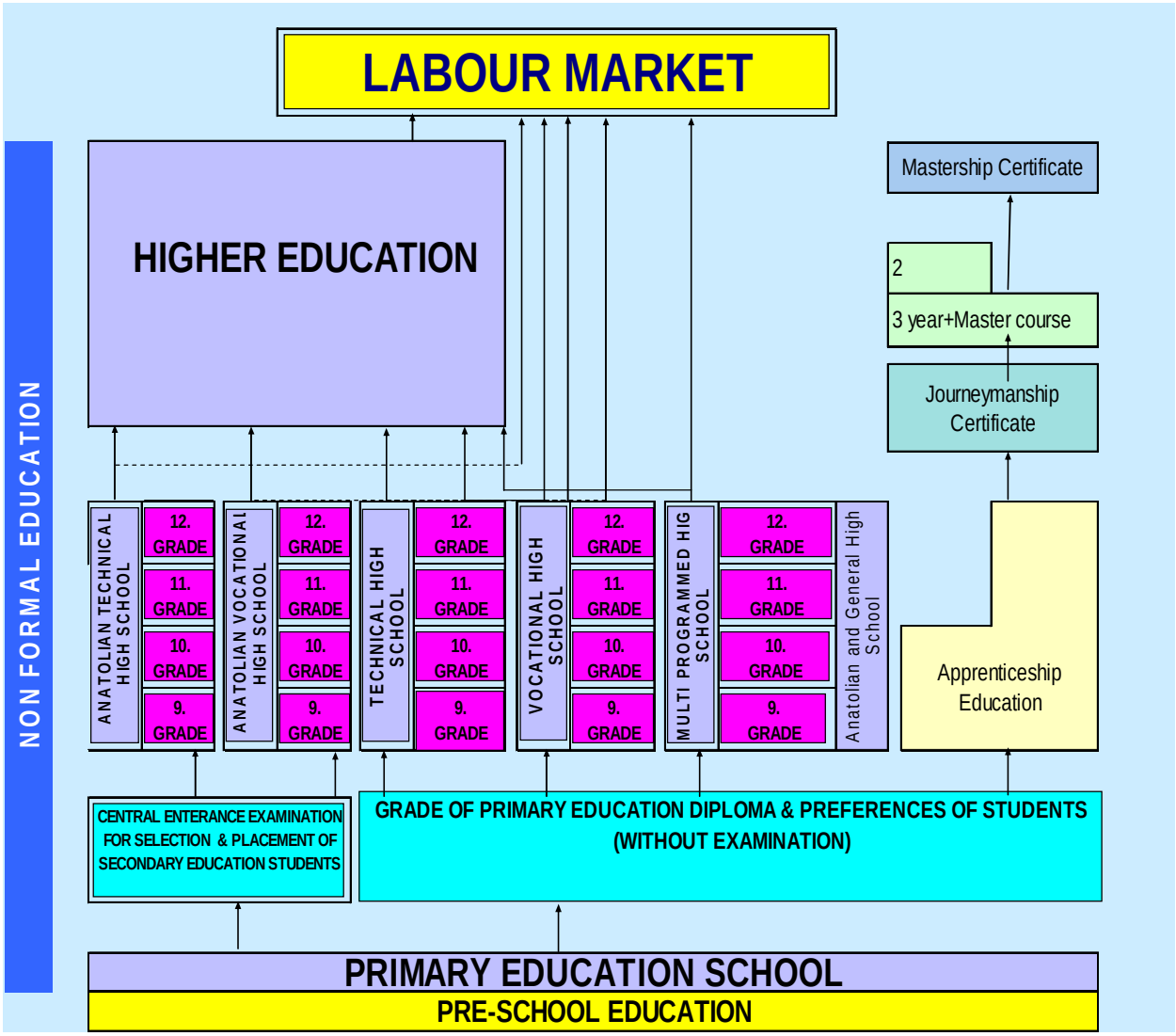
Within the framework of the project, we are very pleased to share the work report with you on the Exchanging Practices Institutional Performance Evaluation in Vocational and Technical Training, which we believe our vocational education institutions will benefit from.

PART 1: TURKEY

1. GENERAL STRUCTURE

The Ministry of National Education (MoNE) is responsible for administering the education system from pre-school to secondary level, including general secondary and vocational education and training. The Council for Higher Education (YOK) administers the post-secondary system, which includes two-year vocational, four-year University and Open University courses. The Council is an autonomous body reporting directly to the President of the Republic of Turkey. There are six General Directorates or Departments that appear to have direct responsibility for secondary education;

- Secondary Education, (Academic)
- Technical Education for Girls
- Technical Education for Boys,
- Trade and Tourism Education,
- Apprenticeship and Non-Formal Education
- Department of Health Affairs



2. INSTITUTIONAL PERFORMANCE IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING IN TURKEY

VET system has a structure which is based on occupational standards and is supported by modular programmes. The VET system in Turkey is still being implemented within the scope of Law on Vocational and Technical Training numbered 3308 and revised as 4702. Comprehensive modular training programmes based on occupational standards are currently implemented in all vocational and technical secondary institutions. However, the Vocational Qualifications Authority (VQA) has not launched its activities fully and the certification system is not yet active. The VQA are now working on the necessary actions to launch these activities at the earliest possible time. Once these activities are put into implementation, it is expected that at each stage, the successful individuals will be rewarded with regionally and nationally validated certifications, which contain vocational qualifications and is supported constantly by a data base, which ensures quality assurance at each stage of the system and which constantly upgrades itself.

When we focus on the details of this structure, we see that the key elements of the new model in Vocational education consist of the following:

1. Occupational Standards
2. Vocational Competencies
3. Modular Curriculum
4. Evaluation
5. Certification
6. Quality Assurance
7. Management Systems

As the first step towards 12-year uninterrupted education, as targeted in both the development plan and in other documents for many years, the MoNE introduced the 8-year compulsory basic education in 1997 and then introduced new programmes through increasing the duration of secondary education to 4 years in 2004. Primary Education Programmes were revised by Support to Basic Education Project since 2003-2004 schooling year and will be implemented gradually by the year 2009 countrywide.

As for secondary education, new programmes have been started to be implemented. In this direction, grade 9 has been recognized as a common grade in all secondary education institutions and the preparatory grade has been removed. In this context, one more chance has been given to grade 9 students for the choice of their vocation (academic or vocational education), thus enabling them to choose the vocation with which they will be happy in the future. The programme has been designed as a 4-year cycle. The courses of grade 9 students are common in all general, vocational and technical secondary education institutions. At the end of grade 9, students choose their field of interest and proceed with their education in that field, from grade10. When the basic structure of the programme was being designed, it was planned to teach common courses and field common courses to grade 9 and 10 students, and branch-specific courses to grade 11 and 12 students. When determining the contents of these courses, the basic competencies expected from national and international labour force, sectoral researches and vocational competencies were taken into consideration.

The courses aimed at giving the common competencies for all branches in a given field are mainly taught in grades 10 and 11. The courses involving the competences needed for the branches leading up to diploma are given in grade 12. At the end of grade 10, the branches are chosen by taking into consideration the regional and sectoral needs, the equipment, teaching staff and physical capacity of the school, as well as the vocational competencies of students. Regional employment opportunities are also taken into account in the choice of fields and branches by students.

Each school may reflect the industry expectations, changing conditions and evolution of vocations to the programmes. In the course which involves the modules relating to all branches in the field common courses in grade 10; the branch-specific modules which may be introduced in the school may be applied primarily. As necessary, the vocation-specific courses, modules and module contents may be revised and improved.

Weekly Course schedules indicate Common Subjects, Field/Branch Subjects and Optional Subjects. Field/Branch subjects consisting of modules. The total learning period needed for teaching the contents of each module in these course subjects has been planned as 40 hours. This period includes the studies under the guidance of the teacher as well as the self-studies of students. For instance, a module designed as "40/32" indicates a 32-hour study under the guidance of the teacher and an 8-hour independent self-study of the student.

The students who complete the programme and graduate may choose to proceed in the labour market or may carry on with tertiary education. The competencies acquired by students who leave the programme in any year will be used in the certificate programmes.

The programmes have been prepared according to occupational standards, educational standards and vocational competencies, in line with the international vocational classification. In practice, these standards and competencies must be taken into account continuously. The vocational and Anatolia vocational secondary schools included in the framework teaching programmes and weekly course schedules cover all secondary education institutions which implement programmes that end up with vocational and technical diploma, such as girls vocational school, industrial vocational school, commerce vocational school, communication vocational school, hotel and tourism vocational school, etc.

Weekly course schedules, subjects, contents of modules and practical notes are provided in the framework teaching programmes and programme books. Another characteristic of the new programme approach is the modular system. A module may be used in grade 10 in one field, and in grade 11 in another. The modules involving generic skills are taken by all students. Thus, a module which has been prepared for a given field is also available for common use by other fields as well.

2.1 Financing and Expenditures

The Government is giving a high priority to increasing budgetary support for education, and, as a consequence in 2004 the budget of the MoNE was the largest of all public agencies, equivalent to
8.4% of the national budget, but nevertheless it still receives 3.6% of GDP. In 2007, 21 % of the total education expenditure was allocated to the TVET expenditure. Vocational education is funded by the government. There is also a contribution from the private sector in several

fields ranging from improvement of physical capacity of schools, internship of students and technical training of teachers in the sector.

2.2 Role of the Private Sector

In order to raise the qualified labour force that will respond to the needs of Turkish labour market and to achieve the planned targets, there is a need to boost the dialogue and cooperation among the state, labour organizations, professional chambers and nongovernmental organizations in a coordinated manner. Various legal arrangements have been introduced through law no. 3308 to enable the students of vocational education to receive practical training in the industry. Within the framework of this law, students receive practical training in the industry. The private sector contributes to vocational education in this respect.

2.3 The Students of VET Systems

Vocational and technical secondary education involves different types of schools in addition to vocational training centres, Open Education and other private schools. Among these schools, students are admitted to Anadolu Vocational Secondary Schools and Anadolu Technical Secondary Schools through based on their success scores in the OKS exam. Success scores or other criteria are not required for other types of schools.

2.4 Vocational Qualifications Authority (VQA)

VQA law which will establish NQF system, came into force September 2006 with the Law numbered 5544 and supports SVET Project (Strengthening the Vocational Education and Training System in Turkey) financed by EU to contribute to increase the relevance of VET to employment.

The objective of this Law is to determine the basis of national qualifications in technical and vocational fields based on national and international occupational standards, to establish the Vocational Qualification Authority in order to establish and execute the national qualifications system necessary for performing the activities concerning supervision, assessment, evaluation, documentation and certification, to determine its principles and to assure the arrangement of the issues related to National Qualifications Framework.

3. QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM

There is a need to raise a qualified labour force equipped with the knowledge, skills and attitudes constituting the fundamental element of national development and industrialization. The knowledge and skills of a qualified labour force are the basics of economic success.

In order to increase the quality of vocational education and employ graduates, labour market and skills analyses have been conducted, curricula have been upgraded, modular programmes have been developed and in-service training programmes have been organized towards teachers in vocational education. Thus, significant progress has been achieved in the vocational and technical education system through the EU supported projects.

The improvement of the quality of vocational education and it becoming an attractive option for students will facilitate entry to the labour market. In this regard, a successful vocational education system will play a key role in offering opportunities to both the young population and the sectors which need a skilled labour force.

3.1 EFQM (European Quality Management Foundation) Model in the Ministry of Education

Total Quality Management (TQM) Applications in our country are carried out based on an excellence model developed by the European Framework Quality Management (EFQM). A system of quality assurance is supported and to be embedded in the educational institutions of Ministry of National Education (MoNE) (February 2002-2533 official gazette) and experts are trained to transfer the necessary knowledge to the institutions. The mission of the MoNE is to provide individuals and society constant and developing education, strategic management and re-engineering by adopting a system of TQM.

3.2 Total Quality Management Applications and Reward Directive

Evaluations in VET Institutions are done by the inspectors. Except from the inspectors, in the scope of Project of planned improvement of school and total quality management applications, assessment criteria of institutional performance were developed with EFQM Model.

3.3 Applications of EFQM Excellence

In this model, both studies of teams and institutions are assessed in the context of developed criteria and indicators. Throughout Turkey, teams and institutions which qualify are determined and rewarded. All schools in Turkey can take part in this process of reward. Schools and institutions can apply for the reward process for the team category reporting the applications on solving any problems which they faced during the year. They can apply for the institution category with the report of applications done in their institutions according to the 9 criteria in the Excellence Model.

3.4 Evaluation and Variety of Awards

A three staged evaluation is done, formed in two categories. One of the categories is ‘year’s quality team category’ and other is ‘year’s quality school/institutions category’. Province and districts determine the awards which are going to be given to the teams. The schools and institutions which are placed in the evaluation by the ministry are awarded with a quality certificate whilst the teams awarded with certificates of appreciation.

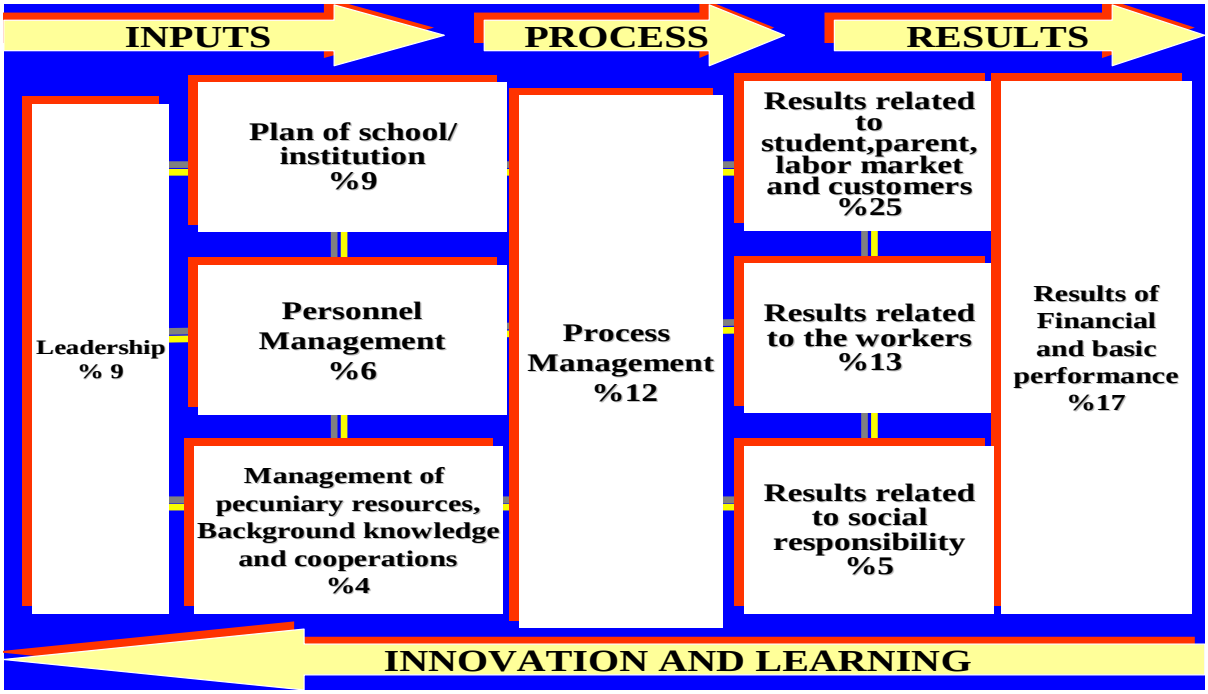
3.5 Report of the institution and evaluation of the institutional performance

The Excellence Model consists of 9 criteria.

These are; 1.Leadership, 2.Plan of school/institution, 3.Personnel management, 4.Management of physical resources, background knowledge and co operations, 5.Process management, 6.Results related to the student, parent, enterprises and customers 7. Results related to the workers, 8. Results related to social responsibility, 9.Financial and basic

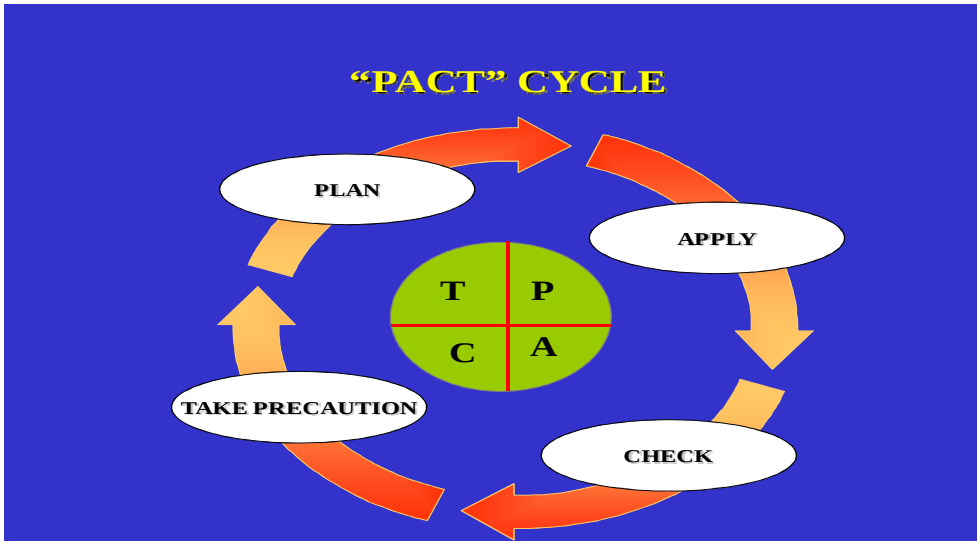
performance results. The first 5 consist of input criteria and the last four consist of result criteria. While evaluating the input criteria the question “how” is used. Such as; how effective is the leadership in the institutions? How is the policy of the institution determined?

While evaluating the result criteria the question “what” is used. For example; what is the complacency of the workers? What are the results of basic performance?



3.6 Applications of planned school development

The aim of the school development application is to embrace constant development and disseminate the understanding of an efficient school to all general and vocational education institutions.

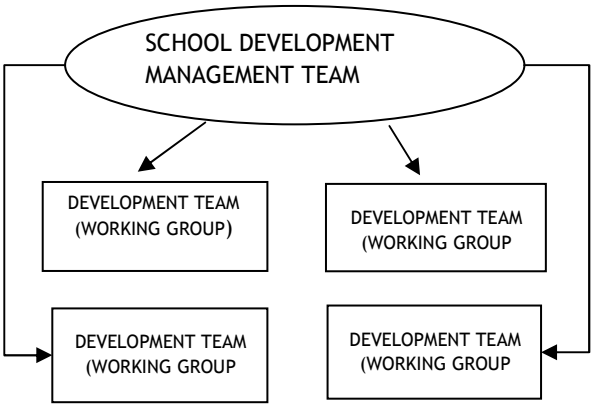


School Development Activities;

- School, parent and environment relationships
- Equipment, accoutrement and human resources of the school
- Teachers in-class activities
- Teaching methods and techniques
- Using efficient assessment and evaluation techniques (Students' projects, homework, monitoring, examinations and so on) includes developing these fields.
- The School Development Management Team consists of manager, teacher, student, support personnel, parent, representative of NGOs and headman.

This team develops the strategic plan of the school and determines the vision and mission of the school. It also evaluates the strategic targets of the institution and tries to realize the vision of the institution in the light of targets determined by the founded sub-teams.

ORGANIZATION OF QUALITY IN SCHOOL



3.7 Strengths and Weaknesses of the Quality Assurance System

Strengths

1. Develops the cooperation of manager, teacher and student.
2. System supports creativity.
3. Students can take responsibility and duties in solving the problems of the institution.
4. Problems can be solved schematically and with feedback.
5. Personnel use assessment and evaluation instruments.
6. Improvement in the educational institutions, reorganization providing changing in culture, increase in the quality of education, brings diversity and flexibility in the subjects and programmes of the education, to provide improvement on capability of long term thinking.
7. Provides the concept of efficiency and productivity in the system of education.
8. Increases the quality of understanding of education management by processes and data.
9. Strengthens the cooperation with stakeholders via benchmarking.
10. Understanding of working with strategic targets becomes embedded within culture of institution.

11. All the stakeholders have information about the pricing of products and service.
12. Personnel of the institution can improve themselves individually.
13. Products and service are measurable.
14. Increases the motivation of personnel with appreciation and awards.
15. Understanding of QM meets the needs of other people who live in society.
16. Increase in the prestige and performance of the institution.
17. Creates public awareness.
18. Decreasing costs.
19. Constant improvement on the quality of products and service.

Weaknesses

1. Lack of proper leadership.
   - Can lead to the prevention of proper leadership since the managers of institutions have difficulty in adopting and understanding quality assurance or they don't have enough information about it.
2. Management does not have appropriate understanding of quality assurance.
   - Management does not give enough support to the team work or participate in it.
3. Fail to provide appropriate level of staffing or personnel.
   - Opposition of personnel in the understanding of quality assurance for political or cultural reasons etc.
4. Necessary constant education isn't provided to accomplish cultural change.
   - Necessary education on quality assurance isn't able to be given to the managers of the institutions and personnel due to the lack of space and financial resources.
5. Resistance to change.
   - Reasons for resistance of the management can be defined as follows:
   - Change is seen as threat to the authority of the managers
   - Management believes they have no problem with the quality of product and service.
   - Resistance for the change may arise from the personnel.
   - No desire in the personnel to update their usual teaching methods and techniques.
6. Exceed expectations in a short time.
   - It is impossible to solve existing problems all at the same time and try to change necessary cultural changes.
   - TQM is not changing to be accomplished in a short time.
7. Inadequate planning.
   - Inadequate planning and non existence of an implemented plan and not sharing the plan with all the personnel.
   - Failing to pass the vision, mission and the target to the personnel.
8. Not selecting efficient measurement techniques.
   - Lack of experienced key staff for self evaluation and problem solving techniques.
   - Lack of knowledge of trainers and managers about the subject.
9. Lack of teamwork.
   - Unwillingness and inexperience of trainees and managers in teamwork

10. Quality systems are not adopted in educational institutions appropriately.

4. LESSON LEARNT FROM THE OTHER EUROPEAN PARTNERS

Zukunftsbau is an accredited vocational company for disadvantaged young people and long term unemployed people with the aim of integration into society and labour market. Our visit to Berlin was very informative. We were informed by the Ministry of Education about Quality Assurance applications in Berlin. LQW is the quality assurance system which is commonly used by VET providers in Berlin. The VET institutions we visited had a good atmosphere, large area and the staff was very helpful. The VET system they use is impressive and they provide education for all needs.

Lancaster & Morecambe College is a medium sized VET and Further Education College. With lots of facilities for the VET learner it is quite impressive. It has a diverse range of provision serving the local area from a Sports Academy to courses in Animal Care. It has a pleasant atmosphere with highly qualified trainers. The EFQM Excellence Model is applied by the quality assurance department in the college. Self assessment is also well used for qualified education.

FRG Centre for Vocational Training promotes and develops vocational education in the field of construction to unemployed people, repatriated people, young-middle and higher level graduates. The trainers are keen on the evaluation of learners' and improvements in their skills. There are three distinct authorities with responsibilities in Quality Assurance for VET in Romania; National Agency for Quality Assurance in initial education coordinated by the Ministry of Education, National Centre for Technical and Education Department, National Adult Training Board, a tripartite social partnership.

Znanie Association is non-profit organization providing non-formal education for all age groups. The efforts of the trainers in the VET school we visited were impressive considering the physical condition of the building. The students were also respectful and active in the classes. For quality assurance NAVET procedures are followed for continuing VET providers.

PART 2: UK

1. GENERAL STRUCTURE

Education in England is overseen by the Department for Children, Schools and Families and the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills. Local authorities take responsibility for implementing policy for public education and state schools.
Full-time education is compulsory for all children aged between 5 and 16 (inclusive). Students may then continue their secondary studies for a further two years (sixth form), leading most typically to an A level qualification, although other qualifications and courses exist. The leaving age for compulsory education was raised to 18 by the Education and Skills Act 2008, taking effect in 2013 for 17 year olds and 2015 for 18 year olds. State-provided schools are free of charge to students, but parents may choose to educate their children by any suitable means.
State-run schools and colleges are financed through national taxation, and take pupils free of charge between the ages of 3 and 18. Approximately 93% of English schoolchildren attend such schools. A significant minority of state-funded schools are faith schools. Nearly 90% of state-funded secondary schools are specialist schools, receiving extra funding to develop one or more subjects in which the school specialises. Small but increasing numbers of parents are choosing Elective Home Education.

<table>
<tr><th>Age on 1st Sept</th><th>Year</th><th>Curriculum stage</th><th colspan="3">Schools</th></tr>
<tr><td>3</td><td>Nursery</td><td rowspan="2">Foundation Stage</td><td colspan="3">Nursery school</td></tr>
<tr><td>4</td><td>Reception</td><td rowspan="3">Infant school</td><td rowspan="6">Primary school</td><td rowspan="3">First school</td></tr>
<tr><td>5</td><td>Year 1</td><td rowspan="2">Key Stage 1</td></tr>
<tr><td>6</td><td>Year 2</td></tr>
<tr><td>7</td><td>Year 3</td><td rowspan="4">Key Stage 2</td><td rowspan="4">Junior school</td></tr>
<tr><td>8</td><td>Year 4</td></tr>
<tr><td>9</td><td>Year 5</td><td rowspan="4">Middle school</td></tr>
<tr><td>10</td><td>Year 6</td></tr>
<tr><td>11</td><td>Year 7</td><td rowspan="3">Key Stage 3</td><td rowspan="4">Secondary school</td><td rowspan="5">Secondary school with sixth form</td></tr>
<tr><td>12</td><td>Year 8</td></tr>
<tr><td>13</td><td>Year 9</td><td rowspan="5">Upper school or High school</td></tr>
<tr><td>14</td><td>Year 10</td><td rowspan="2">Key Stage 4 / GCSE</td></tr>
<tr><td>15</td><td>Year 11</td></tr>
<tr><td>16</td><td>Year 12</td><td rowspan="2">Sixth form / A level</td><td rowspan="2">Sixth form college</td></tr>
<tr><td>17</td><td>Year 13</td></tr>
</table>

Since 2001, FE in England has been managed by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC), the largest government agency funding education provision. The LSC has a budget of £13 billion

and is organised on a regional basis through around 47 local councils. The LSC has a particular mission to improve and expand further education provision, driven by the UK government's desire to increase standards in post-16 student retention and achievement, particularly in skills-based vocational provision in FE colleges. The Learning and Skills Improvement Service (LSIS - formerly the Quality Improvement Agency and Centre for Excellence in Leadership) provides strategic and policy support, while the Learning and Skills Network offers training and consultancy.
Colleges in England that are regarded as part of the FE sector include:

- General FE and tertiary colleges
- Sixth form colleges
- Specialist colleges (mainly colleges of agriculture and horticulture and colleges of drama and dance)
- Adult education institutes

In addition, FE courses may be offered in the school sector, both in sixth form (16-19) schools, or, more commonly, sixth forms within schools.
Teachers working in FE in England are required to gain professional status, known as Qualified Teacher Learning and Skills (QTLS). The first stage of QTLS is an initial 'passport to teaching' module. The second stage is full teacher training, which would typically take up to five years to complete. The qualification covers both taught and practical skills, and also requires teachers to undertake 30 hours of continuous professional development (CPD) per year.
Good quality teaching is indicated by the award of the Training Quality Standard, an initiative to improve the quality of provision for vocational education, while all colleges and FE providers are subject to regular inspections by Ofsted.

2. INSTITUTIONAL PERFORMANCE IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING IN THE UK

2.1 Ofsted Inspection

Ofsted is the Office for Standards in Education, Children’s Services and Skills. They regulate and inspect to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. The Education and Inspections Act, which established the new Ofsted, specifically requires that Ofsted should:

- Promote service improvement
- Ensure services focus on the interests of their users
- See that services are efficient, effective and promote value for money.

2.2 Purposes of Inspection

The overall aim of inspection is to evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of the provision of education and training in meeting the needs of learners.
Inspection arrangements, together with other government initiatives, are intended to accelerate the pace of quality improvement in the FE and skills sector.
The main purposes of inspection are to:

- provide users with information; this informs their choices and preferences about the effectiveness of the providers they use or may use in the future

- help bring about improvement by identifying strengths and areas for improvement, highlighting good practice and judging what steps need to be taken to improve provision further
- provide the relevant Secretaries of State and other stakeholders with an independent public account of the quality of education and training, the standards achieved and the efficiency with which resources are managed
- make judgements that may inform Comprehensive Area Assessments in each local area.

2.3 How Does Inspection Promote Improvement?

The inspection of a provider promotes improvement by:

- setting expectations; the criteria and characteristics set out in the inspection framework and guidance illustrate the quality and effectiveness of provision expected of providers
- increasing the provider's confidence by endorsing its own view of its effectiveness when that is accurate, and offering a professional challenge (and the impetus to act) where improvement is needed
- recommending priorities for future action by the provider and, when appropriate, checking subsequent progress
- fostering constructive dialogue between inspectors and the senior leaders and staff of the provider
- complementing the provider's self-assessment and promoting its rigour, thereby enhancing the provider's capacity to improve its provision.

2.4 What are the Types of Inspection Activity?

The following table sets out the frequency and type of inspection. The type of inspection activity will be proportionate to risk and selected according to the level of performance of the college or provider.

Inspection type	Criteria	Aims and publication arrangements
Interim assessment	Within three years of the last inspection if no inspection is planned.	To review a provider's performance. Based on the evidence used for the annual selection process, this is desk based. The outcome will be summarised in a letter to the provider, published on the Ofsted website.
Inspection	Depending on the results of the annual selection process: providers graded satisfactory overall will normally be inspected within four years of their previous inspection; new providers will be inspected between one and	To inspect the provider's government-funded provision against all aspects of the Common Inspection Framework 2009. To inspect and grade a sample of subject areas. To carry out a single inspection event where possible: for example, an FE college with boarding and nursery provision. To inspect with an increased emphasis on

	four years of securing the contract; high-performing providers will have up to six years between inspections.	teaching and learning, the learner journey, users' views, value for money, Every Child Matters themes, vulnerability, safeguarding and equality and diversity. A report will be published on the Ofsted website.
Focused monitoring visit	Normally within two years of their last inspection for providers judged to be satisfactory for overall effectiveness and satisfactory or inadequate for capacity to improve. All providers may have focused visit(s) based on outcomes of the annual process for selecting providers; for example, to inspect areas of provision that are new or that give some cause for concern.	To monitor a provider's progress in improving aspects of its work according to themes identified during the annual process for selecting providers for inspection. To inspect with an increased focus on capacity to improve, teaching and learning, and users' views. To inspect and make progress judgements about the provider's self-assessment and improvement planning process and additional identified themes, such as performance in a subject area or a type of programme. To inspect new areas of work such as Train to Gain or a subject area. To include, where applicable, good practice or survey inspections. A report will be published on the Ofsted website.
Survey inspection visits	Survey inspection visits will take place at a selected number of colleges and providers each year, including those judged outstanding or good.	To explore a specific aspect of a provider's work as part of a programme of surveys based on topics linked to national priorities. A letter will be sent to the provider and will be published on the Ofsted website.

2.5 How do Providers Prepare for their Inspection?

The lead inspector will confirm the range of documents that will be required for the inspection. The evidence should consist of working documents, not information prepared specifically for the inspection. As inspection is based on collecting first-hand evidence, documentation is kept to a minimum. The lead inspector will use the planning meeting to agree how the following documents will be available to inspectors:

- strategic and operational business plans
- development plan, operating statements, subject area plans, staff development plans and action plans arising from inspection, programme review or self-assessment
- details of staff qualifications and experience and of staff development activity over the last two years
- evidence of compliance with the relevant safeguarding requirements, for example an up-to-date list of Criminal Records Bureau checks
- reports from internal and external verifiers

- records of observations of teaching, learning and assessment or information and advice sessions
- timetables and schedules of activity involving learners (showing locations and staff)
- complete and up-to-date data on learner numbers and learners' achievements
- minutes from key meetings
- evidence of the effectiveness of learner support activities.

The provider will inform all staff, current learners, employers and other users about the forthcoming inspection, emphasising that inspectors may visit any sessions involving learners either on the provider's premises or at other locations, including learners' workplaces. Inspectors will have previously identified a number of off-site learners and employers to observe and/or interview and the nominee should ensure they are notified of this. Inspectors may also have identified other users and partners of the provider they wish to meet.
The provider should inform inspectors if any learner, employer, member of staff or partner has any communication support needs or of any sensitivities or issues affecting individual learners.
Learners' work should be made available. Inspectors will normally need to see completed work as well as work in progress. The lead inspector will agree with the nominee the most appropriate method for ensuring availability of learners' work. This should include:

- inspectors identifying the work of specific learners
- asking all learners to have their current work with them during inspection
- requesting samples of work from a particular programme or group of learners.
- The report contains all the judgements and includes a commentary on:
- the provider's main strengths, including any areas of outstanding practice, and the main areas for improvement
- the provider's capacity to improve
- how well groups of learners achieve and enjoy their learning
- outcomes for different groups of learners
- the effectiveness with which leaders and managers, including governors:
- communicate ambition and drive improvement
- promote equality and tackle discrimination
- ensure that safeguarding procedures are effective.

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2.6 The Framework for Excellence

The **Framework for Excellence** (FfE) is the Government's performance assessment tool for further education colleges and post-16 education and training providers who receive funding from the Learning and Skills Council. The FfE has been designed in consultation with the sector and our partners including the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS), the Department of Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) and Ofsted.

Category	Indicator
Learner and qualification success	Success rates
Learner views	Learner views
Learner destinations	Learner destinations (including a statement of volume of employment outcomes)
Responsiveness to employers	Employer views
	Amount of training (statement of volume for information; not graded)
	Training Quality Standard
Financial health and management	Financial health
	Financial management and control evaluation
Resource efficiency	Funding per successful outcome

2.7 Overview of Standards, Qualifications and Sector Qualification Strategy

The Standards and Qualifications team at Lifelong Learning UK (LLUK) works closely with employers and stakeholders across the UK to develop standards and qualifications in the lifelong learning sector. The Lifelong Learning UK's Sector Qualification Strategy (SQS) is a UK initiative to develop a cohesive approach to qualifications. The SQS was developed in consultation with employers and stakeholders in each of the four countries and the final product consists of an overarching UK strategy. National action plans align to the strategy which includes an ongoing process for monitoring and updating qualifications.

www.lluk.org

2.8 About the IfL

The Institute for Learning (IfL) is the professional body for teachers, trainers and assessors across further education (FE), including adult and community learning, emergency and public services, FE colleges, the armed services, the voluntary sector and work-based learning. Their vision is that membership will be served well by IfL and that FE practitioners will be truly recognised for excellent teaching and training for learners. With more than 180,000 members (as at the end of January 2009), IfL represents the range and diversity of teachers and trainers involved in delivering teaching, training and learning across the FE and skills sector.

3 Quality Assurance System in VET

3.1 LMC - Self-Assessment Process and Scope of Self-Assessment

LMC is informed about the quality of teaching and learning through lesson observations and has improved aspects of teaching with good support from Senior Lecturers for Teaching and Learning, Key Skills and Support for Students. Governors closely monitor educational standards in the college and have a good oversight of curriculum and standards. The Curriculum Management team meets regularly and the Principal and Deputy Principal and Director of Quality Improvement and Marketing conduct termly faculty progress reviews.

Quality improvement is linked to a comprehensive programme of continuous professional development. All quality processes are underpinned by an annually reviewed quality strategy.
Self-assessment continues to be an involving and sharing activity encompassing all staff. It has provided opportunities for sharing good practice, extensive professional development and team building and has been well received and supported by staff. Connections are thus made between the self-assessment report and strategic development plan (and quality improvement and development plans of each faculty/section) and also with the College's staff Annual Review and Development system (ARD) whereby quality improvement targets are included as required on staff's personal development targets for the year. The outcomes from self-assessment thereby are connected to strategic planning and annual review and development, thus becoming an essential and integral part of the college's planning cycle. The Governors and Senior Management Team review the mission and corporate objectives which informs the college's strategic development plan. All staff are involved in the strategic planning process.
Staff are trained annually and updated in self-assessment. Course teams complete their self-assessment reports and quality improvement and development plans in July on a designated day and these feed into the curriculum self-assessments. All programme areas and service sections complete a quality improvement and development plan from their self-assessment and from the college's strategic objectives.
Programme area self-assessment reports, quality improvement and development plans are validated in the autumn term by the Senior Management Team and Governors. Discussions cover the judgements made through self-assessment, quality improvement and development plans and the quality of the report. The meeting also focuses on what needs to be done to make improvements. The self-assessment grade is agreed at these meetings.
The self assessment process has resulted in the college identifying, at all levels of the organisation, a number of key strengths and areas for development. This has formed the basis for a much strengthened quality improvement planning cycle. Action plans contain specific and measurable targets which are monitored termly.

3.2 Teaching Observations

Teaching and learning are the most important parts of the LMC's work; it is right, therefore, that the College has mechanisms which enable judgements to be made about whether effective teaching and learning are taking place and to support staff, particularly teachers new to the college.
The work that is currently being carried out, as part of the whole self-assessment process and the observations of the learning environment that are an integral part of the process, will be used to improve and monitor the standards of teaching and learning in the College. College policy is that all staff – full-time, fractional and part-time are observed teaching at least once per year. In addition, all new staff will be observed within six weeks of starting employment. All observations will be graded and used in self-assessments and in discussions on target setting at the Annual Review and Development meeting. This policy is in place for vocational and non vocational teachers alike.

3.3 Vocational Quality Assurance

To ensure national standards are consistently met within vocational programmes, and that all our candidates have access to fair and reliable assessment of a consistent quality the college operates a system of internal verification.

Each programme will have a named Internal Verifier who is responsible for the quality of assessment within that programme. Internal Verifiers will be supported by the Lead Internal Verifier.
All designated Internal Verifiers will carry out the role and responsibilities outlined in the NVQ Code of Practice. The NVQ Code of Practice is a minimum requirement of quality standards for LMC.
The Director of Quality Improvement has specific responsibility for supporting, developing and monitoring the performance of all College Internal Verifiers, primarily through external verification reports.
Internal verification is ongoing throughout the programme, including formative and summative sampling of assessment. Its purpose is to ensure that the assessment process is consistent and robust. Specifically:

- To ensure assessment materials are fit for purpose
- To ensure consistent and reliable assessment decisions through sampling
- To maintain quality and standards within the assessment practice
- To identify the development needs of Assessors
- To ensure Assessors are using appropriate documentation
- To disseminate awarding body information to Assessors
- To ensure awarding body guidance and codes of practice are adhered to
- To liaise with External Verifiers / Moderators and awarding bodies
- Internal Verifiers for NVQ programmes will hold or be working towards accredited assessor and verifier qualifications
- To confirm that assessment matrices are in place and that individual assessment briefs are internally checked before being distributed to learners, where assessment is not prescribed by the awarding body.
- Evidence requirements are met, appropriate standards maintained and assessment is valid, reliable and fair.

Where IV takes place in the workplace, any health and safety issues which are noted during the IV visit should be reported to the Faculty's Health and Safety representative to action as appropriate
The outcomes and any actions resulting from internal verification / moderation are normally followed up and resolved in course meetings or in the Faculty's regular internal verification / moderation meetings. Where appropriate, appeals will be recorded and forwarded on to the External Verifier, in line with awarding body requirements.

3.4 The Role of The Internal Verifier

The role as an Internal Verifier is the management of quality. The primary role of the IV is to act in accordance with college documentation and guidance set out in the NVQ Code of Practice. It is the responsibility of the IV to build and maintain the IV file. There are three main aspects to the role:

- verifying assessment
- developing and supporting Assessors
- managing the quality of NVQ delivery and assessment

Role	Responsibility
Supporting and developing Assessors	Guiding, supporting and ensuring the continuing professional development (including occupational updating) of the team of Assessors through staff development Issuing awarding body and college documentation Informing awarding body of changes to assessment team Holding regular meetings Providing continuous professional development opportunities Supporting and developing, counter-signing new IVs
Monitoring the performance of assessors	Checking qualifications (occupational competence, Assessor A/V units) Observing to monitor assessment practice Checking the quality and accuracy of assessment plans Checking assessor records/reports standardising assessment / assignments Moderating by sampling assessments and standardising assessment judgments Resolving disputes and appeals Providing feedback Holding regular meetings
Administering the assessment process	Checking and holding a file with information for each Assessor Registering or checking the registration of candidates Checking candidates against Assessors Checking assessment schedules

3.5 Strengths of the Quality Assurance System

- Improvement in the educational institutions, reorganization providing changing in culture, increase in the quality of education, brings diversity and flexibility in the subjects and programmes of the education, to provide improvement on capability of long term thinking
- Increases the quality of understanding of education management by processes and data.
- Strengthens the cooperation with stakeholders via benchmarking.
- Understanding of working with strategic targets becomes embedded within culture of institution.
- Stimulates change and CPD.
- Inclusive – Diverse curriculum and range of levels.
- Professionalisation of FE – Embedded processes for internal performance.
- Self assessment.
- Improved Management Information Systems (MIS)
- Towards Self regulation.
- Collaboration through peer review and College networks.
- Improved Value for money measures.
- Flexible and adaptable because of annual funding changes.

3.6 Weaknesses of the Quality Assurance System

- Data driven judgement leads to focus on numbers not quality 'massaging the Data'.
- Inspectors are hard to find and out of touch.
- Shift in examinations away from EV process (EV not effective) but is also led by business.
- Funding constraints – Academic favoured over vocational education and reinforces pro academic system
- Recruitment of staff to FE, FE is not an attractive sector – suffering rigid pay scales.
- Literacy and numeracy levels.
- System vulnerable to change of Government. (Funding body and inspectorate are divorced from each other)

4. LESSON LEARNED FROM THE OTHER EUROPEAN PARTNERS

The first visit to Ankara, Turkey was the opportunity to meet the new partners and establish/clarify aspects of the project for all involved. It was surprising to see the similarities between the British Ofsted system and that of Turkey. In addition it was also interesting to identify the similarities between the dual system of Germany and that of Bulgaria and Romania. One of the significant lessons learnt was that both Bulgaria and Romania had styled their system on that of Germany seeing that as something to be emulated.

During the visit we attended two educational/training establishments, Çankaya İMKB Otelcilik ve Turizm Meslek Lisesi and Nevzat Ayaz Kız Meslek Lisesi (Vocational school for girls) looking at the structure of their vocational training focusing on age requirements, qualifications accredited and their selection/streaming systems. These establishments focused specifically on training in the Tourism & Hospitality industry, Hair & Beauty, Art & Design as well as ICT. The compulsory element of the education system ensures that some young people are directed, at approx 14 years of age, into a vocational area based on their ability.

FRG is a Vocational Educational and Training provider in Timisoara, Romania. It develops and delivers high quality training in VET specialising in the sector of construction to the unemployed people, disaffected youth as well as higher level graduates. It also offers other programmes to raise skills in other areas as required by the local economy and job market such as IT. It can react quickly to adapt to local and national trends and establish cross border partnerships. It seems there are three agencies with responsibilities in Quality Assurance for VET in Romania; The National Agency for Quality Assurance in association with the Ministry of Education, The National Centre for Technical and Education and The National Adult Training Board.

Although Znanie Association in Bulgaria is a not-for-profit organization providing non-formal education for all age groups, the efforts and the skills of the trainers were impressive considering the physical atmosphere of the facilities. The students were also diligent, respectful and active in the classes that were attended. Their quality assurance systems are NAVET procedures and followed in VET.

This was an interesting comparison to learn about the three pathways of vocational training and the dual system in Germany. It was obvious that they had well structured systems for evaluating performance and some key similarities with our own system. The difference between the internal systems of quality management of the partners was interesting. Bulgaria is obviously moving toward this but has still a lot to do, although attitudes were seen to be improving with regard to quality assurance.

The concept of compliance with legislation and of the role of Government inspectors was also an issue that we learned about. It was interesting to note that the cost of the quality assurance systems has been an issue at some point with each partner

It was beneficial to share good practice of the different systems used to self assess and to see that we share similar problems relating to retention of students. We learnt also about how private providers of VET in each system often fall under different or indeed no quality management systems where it is not mandatory e.g. Romania

It was good to see that all partners were working toward common standards of documentation and self assessment even though some partners felt they had someway to go compared to other partner systems.

PART 3: GERMANY

1. THE SYSTEM OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING IN GERMANY

1.1 Basic principles of vocational training in Germany

Education stakeholders in Germany all agree that vocational education and training should involve a number of relevant aspects.

Vocational education and training should, according to this agreement, be offered to all school-leavers who do not move on to higher education and be organised according to uniform national qualification standards. Vocational education and training should open access to mobility and life-long learning throughout Europe and ensure vocational competence which ranges from employability to personal and social development. Vocational education and training should therefore provide specialised skills, personal skills as well as social-, and methodological skills and allow trainees to inform themselves, plan, decide, perform, control and evaluate.

Vocational training can take three general paths, which are the following:

- The dual vocational system: Training occurs in companies and part-time vocational schools, an approximate number of 350 occupations is recognised.
- Full time vocational schools: in this case, training is school-based and includes work-placements. This type of training is often applied in health-, social- and educational services.
- The transitional system: preparation for vocational training is combined with vocational training in external training centres.

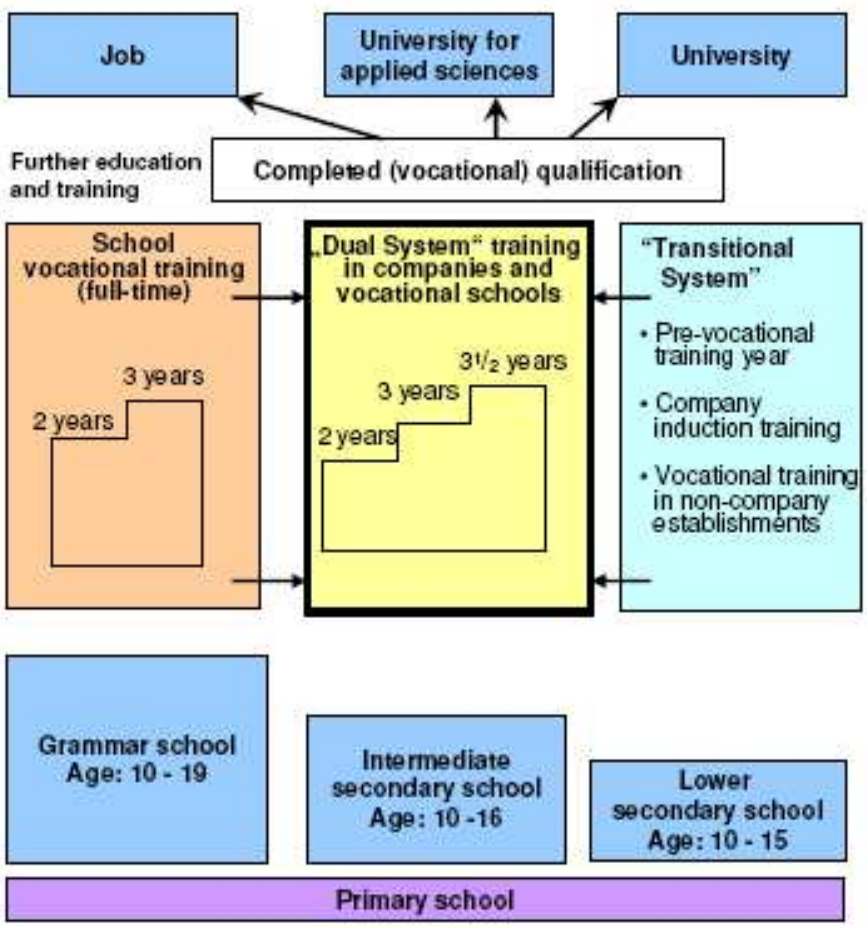
In general, approximately 65% of all school leavers move on to vocational education and training, about 25% go on to universities and 10% to unskilled labour. Of the 65% moving on to vocational training, 66% are enrolled in the dual system, 27% in vocational schools and 7% in external training centres. 50.6% of all trainees will be working in industry and commerce, 35% in skilled trades, 8.6% in liberal trades, 2.7% in civil service, 2.3% in agriculture and 0.8% in other professions.

17% of all German enterprises have a number of 1-9 employees and 16.9% of these provide training. Companies of 10-40 employees make up 30% of all German enterprises and 47.5% of them also provide training. Of bigger companies (34% of all) having a total number of 50-499 employees, 69.9% have trainees while 90.7% of the huge enterprises (19% of the total number of enterprises) provide vocational training opportunities.

Dual training, which, as was mentioned before, is the most popular of all training opportunities, is mainly provided at the company's workplace, within the context of a training contract and on the basis of training regulations. The dual part consists of support by teaching

in a part-time vocational school, where general- and vocational knowledge is taught within the framework of compulsory education and on the basis of a framework curriculum.

In-company training relies on a traineeship contract, training regulations and the Vocational Training Act. In addition to that, it involves trainers, chambers or other responsible agencies which are giving advice and monitoring and of course the firms providing training which provide the necessary financing as stakeholders. School training is based on compulsory vocational education, set curricula, the education acts of the federal states, and involves vocational school teachers. It receives advice and is monitored by the presidents of the regional administrations or boards of education and is financed by the Federal States' administrations, meaning districts and municipalities.



1.2 The Dual system of vocational education and training: Corporatist regulation on the 'principle of consensus'

Responsibilities for German vocational education and training are divided and are taken on by four stakeholders.

- The German Federal Government recognizes training occupations according to the existing regulations
- The 'Länder' (states) issue criteria for vocational schools
- Employers and Unions: propose changes in vocational education and training

- The chambers supervise training in companies, register training contracts and administer training examinations

Training regulations envision a stately recognition of the occupation as well as a recognized title of the occupation. The duration of the training needs to be defined and a profile of minimum requirements of the training occupation needs to be followed. In addition to that, an overall training plan, a syllabus and time schedule, as well as predefined examination-requirements are needed to fulfil training regulations.

1.3 Challenges for the German vocational education and training system

Changes in the industries and society, demographic development and change and European trends require modernization and structural improvement of the vocational education and training system in Germany:

- The general attractiveness of vocational training needs to be increased, applying measures for the improvement of permeability within the VET system and the interlinking of VET with other educational areas as for example university education.
- A training culture in innovative and growing areas such as optical-technologies, bio-technologies, health services and micro-system technologies needs to be developed
- The transitional system needs to be improved by optimizing training preparations for disadvantaged school-leavers and promoting qualifications for semi- and unskilled adults.
- In addition to that, a greater openness for Europe should be achieved by developing a German Qualifications Framework compatible with the EQF as well as pilot projects to test a VET credit-point system which is compatible with ECVET.

2. INSTITUTIONAL PERFORMANCE IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING IN GERMANY

2.1 Authorities with responsibilities for quality assurance in VET

On the ‘Länder’ level, the chambers of industry and commerce and the crafts chambers, have important competencies. They are responsible for advising and monitoring companies offering training within their districts, as well as for reviewing the suitability of such companies and the abilities of their training instructors. They are also charged with registering training agreements and establishing examination boards for intermediate and final examinations in VET.

In contrast, the Federal government is responsible for in company, non-school VET. The

Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) is generally responsible here, and also for coordination, including central coordination of the Vocational Education and Training Act and fundamental issues of VET policy. In addition to that, new training directives can be adopted only by agreement with the BMBF. Due to this division of responsibilities, a procedure for VET has been developed, which ensures close coordination and cooperation between the Federal Government and the ‘Länder’, involving the social partners.

The format and level of education and qualifications in VET in schools and higher education lie in the responsibility of the states. However, industry is closely involved in the development of regulations and guidelines for vocational training in the dual system.

Industry works collaboratively with the federal government to develop vocational training regulations, specify trainee occupations and the period of training. Industry also works with state governments to develop a curriculum which describes the skills and knowledge to be developed as a result of the training. The BiBB (Federal Agency at the Federal Institute for VET) performs an advisory role.

The role of the chambers of industry is to provide advice to companies, register trainees, certify the technical aptitude of trainers and to hold examinations. When trainees have completed their training, they will undertake examinations set by these chambers.

Such activities allow industry to have a powerful influence on curriculum. The chambers also monitor the performance of companies providing training within their districts or regions and review their ability to provide or continue to provide training.

Quality assurance in Germany has traditionally been acquired through state supervision and monitoring of education and training. More recent concepts of quality assurance based on meeting specific accreditation and performance standards are gradually being introduced. Nevertheless, by monitoring the extent to which training companies are able to provide or continue to provide training in the dual system, the chambers have always joined the government in assuring the quality of programs and services. They have also been involved in registering apprentices and certifying the technical aptitude of trainers.

The principles of the recently adopted Common Quality Assurance Framework among the

European Union member states are also applied in Germany. Germany’s Vocational Training Act (BBiG) contains a comprehensive apparatus for assuring the quality of VET. It ranges from national standards for initial vocational training and examinations, as defined in the Federal government's initial and further training regulations, to responsibilities of the competent bodies for ensuring the professional aptitude of trainers and the quality of in company VET.

3. QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEMS IN VET

3.1 General information

Concepts of quality assurance and quality development within educational institutions are at the very beginning of development in Germany. They only have been introduced since the 1990s. The task of quality assurance in educational institutions is to plan, realize, evaluate, improve and to certify learning processes and competence acquiring processes.

As mentioned before, due to the dual system, VET in Germany is based on in-company training and on school training. In both institutions, different problems for introducing concepts of quality assurance occur:

Problems for in-company training	Problems for school training:
• constantly high rates of trainees dropping out of apprenticeships • insufficient planning of in-company training • inadequate qualification of trainers	• bureaucratic management mode • inadequate teamwork of teachers • inadequate response to the needs of companies

The focus of quality management in vocational schools is to strengthen their role in the dual system of VET. They are to be developed as "regional competence centres" within "learning regions". Vocational schools as competence centres are flexible management-lead service providers which respond to the changing demands of the local market for education by developing appropriate educational opportunities.

Roughly there are three types of quality assurance in educational institutions:

- "Controlling of education" tries to measure the benefit of education by quantitative relations between input- and output variables in accordance to entrepreneurial target-settings.
- "Quality management" evaluates the processes of production and service according to formal criteria of performance.
- "Evaluation of learning processes" is an empirical based documentation and assessment usually carried out by external experts.

"Input", "process", "output" and "outcome" are the four main dimensions of quality management in VET institutions in Germany. Each of these quality dimensions is described by indicators (e.g. items that are to be empirically observed). The indicators are related to standards of quality. The standards indicate which minimum state should be reached so that the criterion of quality is fulfilled:

- "Input" includes the material, financial- and human resources, the qualification of trainers and the legal regulations of VET. The basic question for quality management is which basic conditions a learning institution has to fulfil and which legal and economic framework is necessary for successful learning.
- "Process" means the characteristics of the learning process and the didactic concepts, which have to be arranged in the VET institution in order to reach the targeted qualifications.
- "Output" means the rate of successful graduates within a VET institution.
- "Outcome" means the future use of qualifications in the labour market and the success in a career. The basic question for quality management concerns the competences a trainee needs for being capable of acting in his occupation.

In general, we can observe a paradigm shift in vocational education in Germany. Up to the 1990s, the focus of quality assurance in VET institutions had been on the input variables, while today the outcome variables come to the centre of attention.

3.2 Internal Audit and Self Assessment Cycle at Zukunftsbau

Zukunftsbau is an accredited vocational training company. It provides vocational training opportunities to disadvantaged young people and long-term unemployed with the aim of integration into society and labour market. To evaluate organisational performance, Zukunftsbau uses the system of "Learner-Oriented Quality Certification" (LQW). LQW is an example for internal institutional performance evaluation in VET. It is mainly focused on further education, but also applicable to initial vocational training. LQW was developed from 2000 to 2005. It is the most widely accepted quality management system for further education in Germany and in Austria (about 500 training providers).

The system of LQW is focused on the learner as a "producer of knowledge" and has the educational process as its basis. The concept of "successful learning" is the basic reference point for institutional performance education and the benchmark for quality management in educational institutions. So, quality of a training provider means its capacity to provide the conditions for good training.

Nucleus of quality management according to LQW is the mission statement and the definition of successful learning. Going outwards from the core are all the conditions affecting the learning process and are part of the quality process. These conditions are the provision of training itself, the quality of the learning infrastructure and the quality of the organisation. In total LQW defines 11 quality areas, in which minimum requirements have to be fulfilled:

1. Mission Statement	Description of the organisation's system/ includes successful learning
2. Needs Analysis	Analysis of the needs of the community and of the addressees
3. Key Processes	Central processes which lead to the implementation of specific training
4. Teacher-Learner Process	The quality of the teacher-learner process is determined by the competences of the instructors, the interactivity of teachers and learners.
5. Evaluation of the educational process	The completed work is regularly checked.
6. Infrastructure	Conditions for learners and for employees
7. Management	Coordination of how the work gets done
8. Human Resources	Planning, operations and development of staff
9. Controlling	Measures to check the performance of the organisation
10. Customer Relations	Winning new customers, taking care of the existing
11. Strategic development goals	Longer-term and comprehensive goals of the organisation

LQW is a quality cycle of a "learning organisation". The steps of the quality process are as following:

- When an education organisation has opted and registered for the LQW model, the internal quality management process begins with an **introduction workshop**, in which the process is presented and explained.
- Based on the quality areas and their requirements, an **internal evaluation** of the organisation, e.g. an analysis of strengths and weaknesses will take place, and areas needing more attention will be highlighted.
- Based on the internal evaluation, a **mission statement** and a specific organisation's **definition of successful learning** will be produced.
- The written form of this internal evaluation is the **self-evaluation report**, in which the organisation describes its existing quality processes, an evaluation of those processes and proves compliance with the requirements.
- After handing in the self-evaluation report and receipt of its audit report, the **audit visit** is a decisive milestone within the organisation's learning process. Now is the moment to discuss the contents of the audit report with the employees. The description of the organisation itself will be confronted with the point of view of the external observer.
- If the self-evaluation report complies with the requirements, the quality cycle is completed by a **final workshop** and the formulation of strategic development goals for the next quality period. In the final workshop, a reflection on the past and a look into the future will take place. The future period of development will depend on how the organisation interprets the results of its quality process, especially the successes and failures, and which conclusions it draws from this reflection.

3.3 Challenges for VET evaluation and quality control in Germany

- Quality control for VET institutions is mainly oriented on input factors
- Due to the pluralisation of training paths (full-time vocational schools, 'transitional system'), a comparison is rather difficult
- Various suppliers compete on the training markets
- Providers for VET (in-company training and school training) are increasingly emerging as providers of services
- Flexibility is still low and prospects for transfer are still low
- Transparency needs to be improved

As a result, new combinations of input and output control need to be developed, as well as public quality control and internal provider quality control.

4. LESSON LEARNED FROM THE OTHER EUROPEAN PARTNERS

In the course of the project, all partners were able to participate in European partner meetings, visit vocational training sites and VET schools as well as had the chance to talk to experts from the field. All partners were able to exchange ideas and learn about the other partner's experiences and systems which lead to some very fruitful and interesting insights.

For Zukunftsbau GmbH, especially the Turkish and British systems were considered to be providing valuable input on how to further improve our quality assurance system. This nevertheless does not mean that the Romanian and Bulgarian system should be discredited but rather would like to highlight, that the approaches of these two partner countries are less comparable to the German system and adaptations would therefore be more difficult.

Quality management as applied in Turkey is carried out based on the excellence model developed by the European Framework Quality Management (EFQM). Work is done to implement this system of quality assurance into the educational institutions of the Ministry of National Education and experts are trained to be able transfer the necessary knowledge to the institutions. The application of standards has already reached a very high level working with regular evaluations and check-ups in the schools and using standardized questionnaires.

At Lancaster & Morecambe College training is provided on a high quality level and covering a wide area of education. LMC, as Zukunftsbau does, has a special department for QA and continues to develop provision in order to meet the demand and continue to provide top quality education and training including academic and vocational courses as well as training packages in order to meet the demands of companies across the region. Regular evaluation, questionnaires and tracking of student performance as well as o student success help to keep education standards very high. Teacher abilities and performance are regularly evaluated which also helps to keep standards up.

At Zukunftsbau GmbH, we can learn from both of these systems as we are using a quality assurance system which can be compared in some aspects. A focus of our work lies on the learner as producer of knowledge and the evaluation of teachers and facilities in order to be able to provide the best quality service possible. The Turkish and British evaluation systems both help us further define the aspects needed for successful evaluation and quality assurance and will be in our attention when working on a further refinement of our system.

Looking back on two years of common work and exchanges of ideas, our project can and must be considered a great success. Not only were we able to learn a lot of valuable new aspects concerning the systems of the other partners but also were we able to directly work together with partners from four other European countries and build personal relationships with people from other European countries. Furthermore we were able to look outside the box and think our own systems and organisations over which lead to a fresh look at the work we are doing and the way we are doing it.

PART 4: ROMANIA

1. GENERAL STRUCTURE OF ROMANIAN EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

<table>
<tr><th>Age</th><th>Grade</th><th colspan="3">Educational Levels</th><th>EQF</th><th></th><th>Level of qualification</th></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="3">>19</td><td rowspan="3"></td><td colspan="2">Post-graduate education</td><td rowspan="2">Higher education and post-graduate education</td><td>8
7</td><td rowspan="6">NO COMPULSORY</td><td>5</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Higher Education</td><td>6</td><td>4</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Post-high school (post lyceum)</td><td>Post-secondary non-tertiary education</td><td>5</td><td>3</td></tr>
<tr><td>18</td><td>XIII</td><td rowspan="2">Lyceum Upper Cycle</td><td>Lyceum Upper Cycle technological</td><td rowspan="2">Upper secondary education</td><td rowspan="2">4</td><td>3</td></tr>
<tr><td>17</td><td>XII</td><td>Completion Year</td><td>3</td></tr>
<tr><td>16</td><td>XI</td><td colspan="2">Lyceum lower Cycle
theoretical | art, sport theological | technological</td><td>Arts and Trades School</td><td>2</td><td>COMPULSORY</td><td>2</td></tr>
<tr><td>15</td><td>X</td><td colspan="3" rowspan="4">First cycle of lower secondary
(gimnaziu)</td><td rowspan="4">Lower secondary education</td><td rowspan="4">2</td><td rowspan="4">1</td></tr>
<tr><td>14</td><td>IX</td></tr>
<tr><td>13</td><td>VIII</td></tr>
<tr><td>12</td><td>VII</td></tr>
<tr><td>11</td><td>VI</td><td colspan="3" rowspan="4">Primary Education</td><td rowspan="4">Primary education</td><td rowspan="4">1</td><td rowspan="4"></td></tr>
<tr><td>10</td><td>V</td></tr>
<tr><td>9</td><td>IV</td></tr>
<tr><td>8</td><td>III</td></tr>
<tr><td>7</td><td>II</td><td colspan="3" rowspan="3">Pre-primary Education</td><td rowspan="3">Pre-school education</td><td rowspan="3">0</td><td rowspan="3"></td></tr>
<tr><td>6</td><td>I</td></tr>
<tr><td>5</td><td>Preparatory</td></tr>
<tr><td>4</td><td>Middle</td><td colspan="5"></td></tr>
<tr><td>3</td><td>Beginner</td><td colspan="5"></td></tr>
</table>

Education Law Nr. 84/1995 Basic principles

- *Education is a national priority*
- *Education is based on democratic values*
- *Romania endorses the principle of equal chances in education regardless of gender, individual characteristics – physical or mental impairments, cultural or socio-economic background, mother tongue, ethnic origin, religion etc.*
- *Minorities have a right to education in their own language*
- *Public education is tax free*

In Romania education is considered to be a national priority, the entire educational system being protected by the Constitution and by organic laws (the Education Law - *The Law No. 84/1995 ascertains the frame where the educational process takes place on Romania's territory. The law includes details regarding the organization of the pre-school, elementary, secondary, specialization and academic education.*), specialised laws (the Law on the Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions and Recognition of Diplomas, the Law on the Statute of the Teaching Staff), governmental decisions and orders of the Minister of Education and Research

In the time of completing this report the Romanian Government approves Draft Education Law. The Romanian Government approved in a meeting Monday 12.04.2010 a new education bill, which it will send to Parliament for urgent debates and approval

2. INSTITUTIONAL PERFORMANCE IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING IN ROMANIA

2.1 VET system in Romania

VET in Romania is delivered through

- **Initial VET**
  - **by the formal education system – TVET: *medium and long term oriented in support of the career perspective,* having academic and professional recognition**
  - **by apprenticeship: *short term oriented for in time demand of employers***
- **Continuing VET: *short term oriented for in time demand of employers***

Main strategic goals of VET are to set up:

- A national qualification framework supporting learning portability
- To improve lifelong learning for every citizen, focusing on individuals with special education needs
- To deliver quality assured education and training

2.2 Authorities with responsibilities in QA for VET

-ARACIP-National Agency for Quality Assurance in the initial Education *coordinated by Ministry of Education*
-CNDITP-National Centre for Technical and Education Department, *coordinated by Ministry of Education*
-CNFPA - National Adult Training Board, a tripartite social partnership body, *under the coordination of Ministry of Education and Ministry of Labour.*

All these bodies are members of the National Quality Assurance Reference Point set up in May 2006, together with Ministry of Education and Research and Ministry of Labour, Social Solidarity and Family, The QA National Reference Point is an informal structure with the main aim to identify the optimal solutions to support and implement the QA for VET instruments in correlation with ENQA VET recommendations

The National Council for the Vocational Training of Adults (Consiliul National pentru Formarea Profesionala a Adultilor,CNFPA), which also acts as national authority for qualifications (a tripartite body) performs a multitude of tasks: develops and implements, with the assistance of the sector committees (also tripartite), the methodological basis (including the instruments) for the assessment of competency, based on an occupational analysis for each specific sector; elaborates the occupational standards, and the qualification standards; validates the qualifications; elaborates the national register of occupations; certifies the levels of competence and qualification; ensures the quality of the continuous vocational training system; coordinates the licensing of providers of vocational training services.

2.3 Romanian National Qualification Framework Reference levels

- **5 levels (Council Decision 85/368/EEC) – described in the Adult Training Law**

- **Levels 1 – 3 – acquired through:**
  - ✓ **TVET** (initial VET included in the pre-university education; delivered also through **apprenticeship)**
  - ✓ **CVET – (continual) Adult Vocational Training**
- **Levels 4 - 5 – acquired through Higher Education**

ROMANIAN VET System(s) – learning outcomes oriented/ competence- based

- o Qualification – group of competences units
- o Competences units – coherent and explicit set of competences
- o Competences – identified on the basis of occupational analysis
- o Training Standards/Occupational standards
  - ✓ competences units which include related competences
  - ✓ performance criteria
  - ✓ conditions of application
  - ✓ assessment tests
- o Validation of qualifications
  - ✓ Public process
  - ✓ Qualifications - relevant, coherent, necessary, clearly defined
  - ✓ Involvement of social partners
- o Social partners responsibility

Competences based training and assessment

- ✓ **Matching the companies/jobs needs**
- ✓ **Facilitating access to VET:**
  - Modular training – customized training;
  - Competences recognition/certification;
  - Competences accumulation – career development;
  - Preparing credit transfer between parallel VET systems
- ✓ **Recognition of non formal and informal learning:**
  - Competences Assessment Centres Centres;
  - Certificates of competences – recognised in formal CVT system

Within continuing vocational training (CVET), qualifications are obtained through:

- ➢ **Training and evaluation in formal context, realized by adult training providers:**
  - ● ***Unauthorized:*** **own certificates**
  - ● ***Authorized:*** **certificates with national recognition + descriptive supplement** (mentioning acquired competences)
- Qualification certificate (for qualification programmes)
- Graduation certificate(for initiation, upgrading, specialisation programmes)

Authorisation conditions:

- Reference to an occupation included on National Occupational Register (COR). or a qualification included in Nomenclature Code
- Existence of a standard
- Modular curriculum, with objectives formulated in terms of competences
- Existence of the related resources

- ➢ **Learning in nonformal and informal context, that may be attested through an** assessment of competences, in an **assessment centre** accredited by **NATB,** obtaining ***Competence certificate*** **(with national recognition).**
- **Characteristics of the system:**
- Referral to Occupational Standards or Training standards

- Undertaken in different contexts and moments
- Voluntary
- **Assessment result is:** *Competent or Not yet competent*

2.4 Financing of training

Funding for vocational education and training
is coming from several main sources:

- Initial VET is generally financed form the state budget, via general taxation. Although during recent years, ever increasing amounts have been earmarked for education, when expressed as % of the GDP, however it is hard to distinguish financing for what is basically IVET from the general expenditures of the Ministry of Education;
- Financing for continuing VET comes from a host of different sources with the foremost one being company budgets;
- Continuing vocational training for the unemployed is assumed by the National Agency for Employment which, for these purposes makes use of the sums collected from mandatory contributions to the unemployment insurance scheme as well as from state budget transfers, whenever the scheme goes into deficit

Summary - National Qualifications Framework Financing

Financing the initial VET - *by state*

Financing the continuous education by:

- state (through National Adult Training Board and the county commissions for authorization of training programs)
- companies and training providers (through training programs organized or requested)
- National Agency for Employment (through training programs requested for unemployed people)
- trainees
- sectoral committees (through occupational analyses and occupational standards)

Financing the Competencies Assessment Centers by:

- state (through National Adult Training Board for assessment and authorization process)
- beneficiaries of the competencies assessment processes
- sectoral committees (through occupational analyses and occupational standards, as basic instruments in non-formal education assessment)

Financing of all components by other sources (Phare, sectoral, national and international programs)

The new education law states different sources (new structure) for financing of the education and vocational training

3.QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM IN VET

3.1 Characteristic of quality management systems in VET institutions:

TVET

The Romanian national quality assurance framework in initial vocational education and training (VET) was introduced through legislation in 2006. The framework includes a set of national quality assurance principles, measures, methodologies and actions including

standardized arrangements for assuring the quality of the initial vocational training at both the system and provider level.

A Self-Assessment Manual has been adapted from the European Guide on Self-Assessment for VET Providers. Annual self – assessment report is mandatory for all schools, the core of which should be an evaluation based on answers to the performance indicators of internal and/or external quality models

CVET

For CVET providers is not mandatory, some private CVET providers have been implemented a Quality management System according to ISO 9001 standard

CNFPA: National Adult Training Board have the methodological coordination for:

- authorization of the training providers,
- authorization of the competences assessment centres
- nationally recognized certificates;
- monitoring
- external evaluation including quality assurance of the training process
- regulations, criteria, procedures

3.2 Internal quality management and self-assessment in VET institutions

TVET

The National Quality Assurance Framework in TVET is based on self-assessment, a process through which TVET providers evaluate their performance, after collecting and analyzing evidences. The Commission for Quality Assurance and Evaluation draws up the self-assessment report and formulates the proposals for the improvement of quality of vocational education and training at the level of the TVET provider, with the support of the entire school staff. *School Action Plan* is representing the institutional quality improvement instrument based on the self-assessment results, internal monitoring and, where applicable will consider external monitoring (inspection) and external evaluations recommendation

Internal monitoring process by Quality Assurance Committees at school level (bi - monthly).

The self evaluation processes require training providers to:

- plan all their VET activities through a strategic and operational plan.
- internally monitor the planned activities are completed and includes evaluation of teaching and learning process through lesson observations. self-assess their performance based on evidence and produce a self-assessment report;
- identify revisions and develop an improvement plan, to underpin the next cycle of the operational plan
- develop a quality manual for the school.

CVET

Self-assessment not compulsory (are used only in few cases and in the process of Authorization of the training providers)

Internal audit are used by the providers that have been implemented a Quality management System according to ISO 9001 standard

3.3 External quality management - Monitoring, external inspections and supervision, benchmarking:

TVET

Using the EU-funded Phare project a self- assessment manual and an external inspection manual were developed. From 2003-2006 the manuals were trialed by 120+ IVET schools and adopted for all IVET providers from 2006-2007

The manuals include a series of self assessment activities external monitoring processes and a two-stage accreditation system The external monitoring processes include the following activities that are coordinated by the VET inspectorate:

- external monitoring of the quality of VET providers and their programmes.
- validation of VET providers' self-assessment reports;
- approval of TVET providers' improvement plans

CVET

- Authorization of adult training providers (by county tripartite committees).
- Monitoring Made by CNFPA: National Adult Training Board – experts in territory
- External auditors from the Quality assurance bodies in case of certification according Quality management System according to ISO 9001 standards

Authorization of the training providers ASSESSMENT

- Assessment at system level:

- responsibility: NATB; (MoLSSF, MoER)
- monitoring/control visits to the ACs; regulation/rules – standard procedure; reports (sentto the ACs); NATB meetings
- frequency: twice a year; complaints
- regional meetings with the ACs; collecting proposals
- solving complaints regarding ACs' decisions (external evaluators)

- Monitoring authorized training providers

- responsibility: ACs; (NATB)
- monitoring visits to the training providers; regulations – standard procedure and documents
- frequency: annually; complaints
- reports of the (external) examination/assessment commissions (indicators: abandon; non graduates) – systematic data collection

- Assessment of programs:

- by trainees (compulsory) – documents for monitoring
- by trainers
- by enterprises

3.4 Critical aspects regarding to Self-Assessment and Quality Assurance

TVET

- Not all staff are aware about the importance of monitoring and evaluation of their own performance and to identify areas for improvement and not involve in self assessment process
- Not all staff are trained in the techniques of self-assessment
- Learners involved in self-assessment process don`t receive an appropriate feed back
- There are not a consequent process for applying the questionnaires and tools of monitoring and evaluation

CVET

- QA for VET providers is not mandatory - some private VET providers have been implemented a Quality management System according to ISO 9001 standard.
- Is not a unique and precise methodology like in industry for applying ISO 9001 standards or EFQM Excellence Model, benchmarking or Malcolm Baldrige (SUA)
- Few indicators

- Not certified assessors
- Lack in monitoring
- Not a Common quality assurance principles and mechanisms for VET

4. LESSON LEARNED FROM THE OTHER EUROPEAN PARTNERS

During a two years project, after project meetings in the partners country, discussion with project teams and experts from the hosts countries, visits of different training institution and schools some positive aspects must be mentioned like:

Form the educational system point of view Turkey has made very big steps for admission as a full member of European Union. The schools are very good organised, students very polite, teachers and trainers motivated. Quality management applied in Turkey are carried out based on excellence model developed by the European Framework Quality Management (EFQM). System of quality assurance is supported to be settled in the educational institutions of Ministry of National Education and experts are trained to transfer the necessary knowledge to the institutions. Managers and teachers of the schools are very interested in new collaborations and development of the projects with partners form EU countries.

Zukunftsbau is an accredited vocational training company and provides vocational training opportunities to disadvantaged young people and long-term unemployed with the aim of integration into society and labour market
To evaluate organisational performance, Zukunftsbau uses the system of "Learner-Oriented Quality Certification" (LQW), focused on the learner as a "producer of knowledge" and has the educational process as its basis. The main area of quality management is evaluation of the educational process and evaluation of the organisation's infrastructure. In terms of infrastructure at Zukunftsbau is the fact that responsibilities are clearly designated, evaluations of the organisation's human resources are adapted and serve to continuously qualify all personnel.

Lancaster & Morecambe College provides training on a high quality level covering a wide area of education. LMC have a department for QA and continue to develop provision in to meet demand, and continue to provide top quality education and training including academic and vocational courses as well as bespoke training packages to meet the needs of businesses across the region.
Having very best facilities, trained and specialised staff of teachers and trainer, LMC help potential students to achieve gain practical skills for use in the workplace, further knowledge or to go at university, very sensitive at the aspects of not discriminate on the grounds of gender, colour, race, language, religion, belief, disability/learning difficulty, age, marital status, sexual orientation, socio-economic status or family responsibility.

Quality assurance can be applied and the effect of a good work we saw in Bulgaria, even a small centre like Znanie Association – Sofia, if the staffs are involved and motivated.
They run a big number of European projects and are very active in development of new courses and partnerships.

PART 5: BULGARIA

1. INSTITUTIONAL PERFORMANCE IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING IN BULGARIA

The organization, institutions, administration and funding of the vocational education and training system is regulated by the Vocational Education and Training Act (VETA). The Act regulates the right to provision of vocational education and training, satisfaction of labour market needs and securing the necessary conditions for the functioning and development of the VET system. For what concerns the acquisition of a vocational qualification and graduation from primary and/or secondary education, this process is defined in the Public Education Act, the Act on Educational Degree, General Education Minimum and Curriculum, as well as in the state educational requirements.

1.1 General Structure

In accordance with VETA there are 4 formal paths to acquire vocational qualification:

- In vocational secondary schools- as part of the secondary education (ISCED 3A);
- In vocational schools (for early school leavers – ISCED 2A or ISCED 3C);
- In Centres for vocational training for adults – for people, who left schools or graduated, age up to 16);
- In Vocational colleges – post-secondary, non tertiary - for people who finish secondary education.
-

The other legal path to receive vocational qualification is apprenticeship in small companies, in accordance with Craft act.

The informal and non-formal learning are widespread in Bulgaria, so establishment of System for recognition and validation of informal and non-formal acquired competences is very important.

The learning outcomes and some requirement (related to facilities, qualification of trainees, training goals) are described in the State educational requirement (SER) by vocations. Both vocational schools and Centres for vocational training for adults should organise the training process in accordance with these requirements.

The duration of the programmes in vocational secondary schools is 4 or 5 year (from 8 or 9 to 12 grade). In the school the students receive general, together with vocational education.

On the end of the secondary school students should pass two types of state exams:

- State leaving exams for the completion of secondary education (matriculation);
- State exams for the acquisition of a vocational qualification – theory and practice in the profession.

The acquired general secondary education in vocational secondary schools is certified with a diploma for completed secondary education and vocational qualification certificate (and in some cases certificate, certifying the right to practice a profession, including regulated professions as “welder” for example).

In the Centres for vocational training the training is organized in qualification courses, and curriculum is in accordance with the State educational requirement by vocations, too. The courses are with different duration - some of them are short (and people acquired skills to practice only some typical activities from definite profession), or long term courses – when people acquired all skills, described in SER. On the end of long term courses trainees should pass the same as students (on the end of vocational secondary schools) State exams for the acquisition of a vocational qualification – theory and practice in the profession. The people, who pass state exams, receive the same Certificate for vocational qualification as students (graduated in vocational secondary schools). The people, who finish short term courses, receive Certificate for participation in vocational training.

VET in Bulgaria (both for students and for adult) is organized in professions and specialties, regulated by the List of Professions for Vocational Education and Training. The List is developed by the National agency for vocational education and training (together with social partners) and approved by the Minister of Education and Science in cooperation with the Minister of Labour and Social Policy and the relevant branch ministers.

The structure of The List is in accordance with ISCO 08. The professions are with different levels – from 1 to 4 (the levels are similar to EQF levels 2-5).

The levels depend on the complexity of the acquired vocational qualification. First level of a vocational qualification requires the acquisition of vocational competencies to practice occupations involving routine activities preformed under invariable conditions. Practicing occupations from second level of vocational qualification requires the acquisition of vocational competencies, which involve a range of complex activities performed under variable conditions. In order to practice occupations from third level of vocational qualification, apart from the requirements for second level, trainees should also acquire competencies, related to supervising the work of others. The highest- fourth level of vocational qualification includes occupations involving a range of complex activities performed under variable conditions, as well as to managing the performance of others and allocating resources.

The duration of the training of adult, as well as duration of school vocational education is defined in Framework programmes for VET. The Framework Programs (for 1, 2, 3 and 4 level) regulate the terms and conditions for the acquisition of the qualification (educational level, practical training/theory training ratio, conditions for upgrading of vocational qualification, etc).

VET (both in the schools and in the centres for vocational training) consists of theoretical and practical part. Practice can be organized at:

- schools' study and production facilities;
- study and production facilities of similar schools or centres for vocational training in the country or abroad;
- enterprises.
-

Unfortunately there are no requirements for the practical training on the workplaces in the enterprises, so the quality of the practical training is not so high.

1.2 Financing and Expenditure

Funding for the vocational schools come from the state budget.Some resources from European Social Fund (administered by the Operational programme Human Resource development) can be used for the improvement of training facilities and for the practical training of students on the work places in enterprises.

The financing for training of employees and unemployed people comes from the state budget and European social fund – the spending is done by OP "Human Resources Development".

The training of adult in agriculture, forestry and fisheries, processing of raw materials and production of various products is financed under the Programme for Rural Development.

The training for the persons, who work in the field of transport, is financed by the Operational Programme "Transport".

The people, who work in the state, regional and municipal administrations are trained by funding of Operational Programme "Administrative Capacity".

And of course programme, who finances international projects in VET, is "Lifelong Learning Programme".

The education expenditure for 2008 are 4,2%, of GDP, which is less than the average education expenditure in the EU, amounting to 5% of GDP.

Public and private expenditure for the education in 2006 (in thousand leva, 2 leva=1 euro)

	Amount	**Incl.**	
		Public	**Private**
All	2 350 947	2 011 569	339 378
Pre-primary education	373 791	371 546	2 245
Primary education (I - IV gr., ISCED - 1)	362 360	353 234	9 126
Basic education	372 759	360 249	12 510
Secondary education (IX - XIII gr., ISCED - 3A, 3C)	500 345	428 622	71 723
Post –secondary vocational education (ISCED - 4C)	5 373	2 696	2 677
Tertiary education - (ISCED - 5B)	46 178	24 619	21 559
Tertiary education (ISCED - 5A/6)	690 141	470 603	219 538

Unfortunately, national statistics don't give information on the expenditure for vocational training of adult.

1.3 Role of the Private Sector

The role of private providers of vocational training is becoming more and more important for the provision of training for the adult (employed and unemployed). The centres for vocational training (CVT) of adult who have license from NAVET are more than 800. In most cases CVT provide short term qualification courses (100-200 training hours) for the people who would like to acquire skills for some typical work activities (as part of definite job).

According to the NAVET's 2008 annual report 80 000 people have participated in vocational training courses in the centres. The National statistics said 1 563 743 people aged 25-64 participated in 2008 in LLL activities – the whole number of people aged 25-64 is 4 295 030.

What is participation of private companies in VET – they could supply workplaces for the practical training of students and adult trainees. Unfortunately, the work places are not enough and practical training on the work places is not well developed in Bulgaria. Unlike other countries we don't have standards or even special requirements for the training on the work place (or for the companies, involved in the practical training of students and adult).)

The other type of training is apprenticeship (under the Craft law), but only small number of people participate in this training.

Some private colleges (post secondary, non tertiary vocational education) have permission from MEYS to organise training for students in Arts, Economy, Tourism, etc., but in the past few years they don't enrol many students, because graduate students prefer Higher education than vocational education.

1.4 The Students of VET Systems

The entrance in VET schools is after 7 grade (the students should pass special exams in Bulgarian language and Maths) or after 8 grade (without entrance exams).

Currently MEYS prepares reform in Education system – one of the new ideas is - the entrance in IVET will be after 10 grade (because the duration of compulsory education is 10 school years, common for all students).In accordance to the reform, the duration of vocational training will be 2 years (11 and 12 grades), and people will receive both – Certificate for vocational qualification and Diploma for secondary education (ISCED 3A)

1.5 Vocational Qualifications Authority (VQA)

Ministry of Education, Youth and Science (MEYS) plays main role in the VET– it is responsible for the development of regulations, national curricula for VET schools, organization of the training process, training facilities, teachers qualification, monitoring, and of course implementation of the EU recommendations in VET (Common quality assurance framework, ECVET, EQF, etc.) . Regional inspectorates are MOMN structures, who are responsible for the monitoring of the training process in the schools.

National Agency for Vocational Education and Training (NAVET), established in 1999 has three main functions:

- Licensing of centres for vocational training (CVT) for adults,

- Maintenance of the list of professions for vocational education and training (developed in accordance with ISCED 97 and ISCO 08)
- Development of State educational requirements by vocations (SER).

NAVET probably will be authority, responsible for the introducing of System for recognition and validation of competences acquired in an informal way.

Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (MLSP) held adults qualification and employment promotion policies, research the needs of vocational training through analyzing trends in labour market.

Employment Agency (EA) research the training needs of employed and unemployed, create prerequisites for training, match training supply and training demands, provides funds for the adults' training, monitor adult education process.

Representatives of **Employers organizations and Trade unions** together with experts from public authorities are active participants in the tripartite based structures:

● Management board and expert committees by economical fields at NAVET
● National Advisory Council on qualification of workforce
● National Advisory Council for Promotion of Employment
● regional employment structures

2. QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM IN VET

Bulgaria doesn't have officially common Quality Assurance System, but all public institutions have some responsibilities in this field.

The strengths in Bulgarian VET system, which could be seen as prerequisites for implementation of Quality assurance system (in accordance with Recommendation for Common European Quality Assurance Framework) are:

- Well developed legislation
- Institutions with clear functions (defined in VET Act)
- Social dialog, possibilities for the active participation of social partners in VET policy and practice
- Positive attitude towards Quality assurance (both - on system, and on providers level)
- Participants – with clearly distributed functions – qualified and involved (either teach, or develop, or control)
- Necessary level of independence in decision making and undertaking actions at different levels.

The external assessment of quality in the vocational secondary schools is obligation of Regional inspectorates (structures at the Ministry of education, youth and science).

The control of centres for vocational training of adults is shared by the National agency for vocational education and training and Employment Agency.

All type of monitoring and assessment are directed to the input or to the training process. What does that mean? To receive right to organise vocational training, centres should pass complex procedure for receiving license for vocational training from NAVET (schools receive permission by Ministry of education). Training process – documentation, trainees (students) participation, relevance of the training content is object of external control, made by the mentioned state institution. But nobody measures the output - how many people find

job relevant to the acquired qualification, what is employer's opinion in regard to the performance of people, who have finished vocational courses.

The internal quality assurance on providers' level – the people consider this means creating conditions for successful implementation and completion of the course. And completion rate of the people, who finish the qualification courses (or who graduate). And their marks. Not more.

So establishment of Quality assurance system for education (incl. general, vocational, higher) is extremely important task, that must be completed in the near future.

3. STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF THE QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM

The existence of well developed legislation (concerning duration of training programmes, learning outcomes, responsibilities of all stakeholders) could be seen as strength of Bulgarian VET. Also the established structures where employer's organizations and trade unions could participate in VET are prerequisite for the quality in VET. We have providers' network (schools and centres for adult), who cover whole country.

The main challenge for Bulgarian policy makers in Education field is introduction of guidance system. We have some good practices, but we realise, that the guidance is very important part of the VET, so we have to develop Guidance system (for children, students, and adults of course). This activity is planned to be financed by the Operational programme Human Resource Development (ESF).

As mentioned above, establishment of Common Quality assurance system (for all subsystems in National education structure) is very important for the qualification of workforce, as well as for the recognition of Bulgarian education in EU countries.

Qualification of teachers and trainers – both in the schools and in the adult education is important factor for VET quality, moreover students' motivation and participation rate in VET programmes are largely dependent on teacher's performance.

Of course in Bulgaria, as well as in the other countries is introducing Credit system in VET, which is not so clear task, despite the existence of ECVET guide (published on the CEDEFOP website).

System for validation and recognition of previous learning was developed as part of the VET project, financed by the GTZ, and now Ministry of education, youth and science, together with NAVET and MLSP should start its implementation.

And the last, but not least is establishment of Mechanisms for better matching of training supply and labour market demands.

4. LESSON LEARNED FROM THE OTHER EUROPEAN PARTNERS

Ankara Directorate for National Education - the responsibility of the Directorate seems very big, since the system in Turkey is centralised and both formal and non-formal institutions are inspected by the same responsible bodies. The situation is quite different from our country where different institutions are in charge of formal education and adult education.

Lancaster and Morecambe College – the established system for vocational orientation at the entrance in the college of young people determines to a big extend the proper guidance of each student. Consultations provided by the carrier advisors is minimising the risk of dropping out and the proper guidance is a precondition for successful training.

Another good point is the tradition in cooperation and the active participation of the employers.

Zukumfsbau GnbH – The strongest impression related to the quality control in Berlin was the degree to which the business is involved and interested in VET. The existing dual system and the very well developed system for vocational orientation creates a possibility for objective control of the quality of the training.

Fundatia Romano Germana P.P.P. Timisoara – Many similarities were found between Romania and Bulgaria. Starting from the very simultaneous establishment of a National VET Agency following one and the same model, to the very similar environment and challenges for the VET providers.