DEL TTnet Denmark

TTnet FINLAND

TTnet thematic workshop

Results of the TTnet project on:

"Professionalisation of VET teachers for the future - PROFF"
(May 2002 – May 2003)

Background paper
(Project objectives, methodology and expected results)

Coordinating networks: Denmark, Finland
Associated networks: Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal

Objectives

This project builds upon the findings of the TTnet thematic workshop which was held in Helsinki in 2002 on 'Professionalisation of VET Teachers for the Future' (5 and 6 April 2001).

The workshop gave answers to a lot of questions as to the state of professionalisation of VET teachers in the Member States, but it was agreed that there was a need for further studies within this area. One of the conclusions of the workshop was:

> "that it is fairly easy to identify transnational challenges in 'professionalisation
> of teachers'. However, in order to find solutions and to identify good practices
> to meet these challenges, more dialogue and research are needed[1]".

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[1]   Final report from the Helsinki workshop.
   The synthesis report and other relevant documentation on the Helsinki workshop is available in the TTnet website at: http://www.trainingvillage.gr/etv/projects_networks/ttnet/Work/w_view.asp

The aim of the project is to amend this shortage by:

> *identifying good practices in the Member States within the field of professionalisation of VET teachers and to disseminate them on a European level via the tools made available by Cedefop.*

Focus is on VET teachers and on learning activities within the different Member States aiming at qualifying the teachers for meeting present and future challenges to the profession (see figure 1). Within the project a number of case studies have been selected describing how the Member States meet the challenges to the VET teacher profession.

Figure 1

Professionalisation of VET teachers for the future
Challenges to the profession
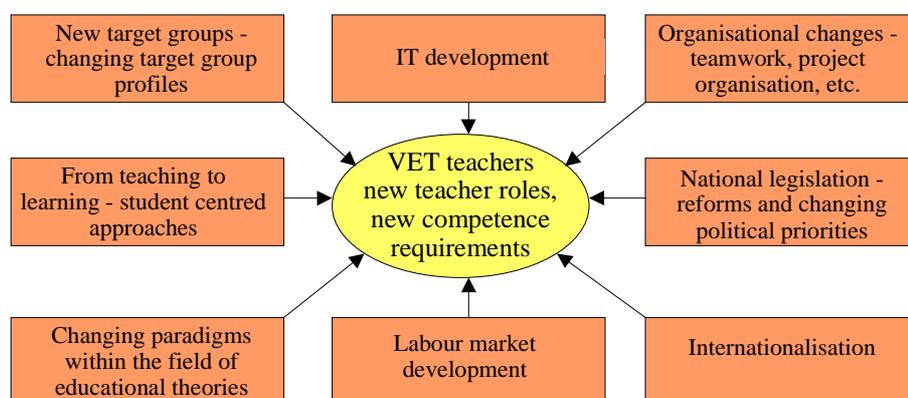
The above figure provides a schematic overview of the challenges to the VET teacher profession based on the results of the Helsinki workshop. The categorisation is purely analytical and will serve as a framework for selecting relevant cases. In reality, these categories will be highly intertwined. In the following, a brief outline of the challenges and relevant research questions will be presented.

One of the challenges to the VET teacher profession is the demands from either new or changing groups. How are VET teachers for example qualified for educational planning and teaching in regard to target groups such as adults or immigrants?

Within education and training, a movement from teaching to learning is taking place. Today, teaching at VET schools has become much more student centred. The VET teacher has become a facilitator of learning. This requires competences such as planing and differentiating teaching taking into account e.g. students' different learning styles, and making use of different educational methods such as project work, workshops, case studies in order to facilitate the learning processes of the students.

Changing paradigms within the field of educational theories change the perception of learning and education. As such, this "challenge" is closely connected to the previous, and encompasses themes as practice learning, communities of practice, meta-learning, reflection, responsibility for one's own learning, learning styles, intelligence profiles. How have these

themes been integrated into the national VET systems, and how have this affected the roles of the VET teachers, and how have the teachers been qualified for this?

From the rapid IT development stems a number of challenges to the VET teacher profession. Not only does the teacher have to possess general IT qualifications, a number of them will have to be able to develop, carry out and guide students in e-learning activities. The theme of e-learning will however be excluded, as this theme was dealt with in the TT-Net work programme for 2001, and is in 2002 dealt with by subgroup 1. There may however be other relevant aspects of IT that could be included.

The labour market development and its challenges to the VET teacher profession can be viewed from several perspectives. An important perspective is how the vocational skills of the VET teachers are kept up-to-date. Are there any systematic approaches in the Member States?

Organisational changes. The VET schools are today to be professional training institutions in an increasingly competitive market. The schools' most important resource is the teachers and their knowledge. This requires a coherent strategy for competence development and knowledge sharing. Furthermore, teaching today is interdisciplinary and the teacher must be able to work in teams and participate in ad hoc development project groups.

National legislation, VET reforms and changing political priorities: How have recent reforms or legislation affected the competence requirements of the VET teachers? And how have the teachers been qualified to meet these?

Internationalisation and international competition among educational institutions are also factors challenging VET teachers. The teachers have to be able to add an international dimension to their teaching.

Finally, new challenges to the VET teacher profession may arise from the teachers themselves. They may require that the schools work more professionally with competence development and that continuing training is a benefit for all teachers. The teachers may be interested in raising standards and thereby improving their bargaining position in the labour market.

The selected cases deal with exemplary local, regional and national learning activities initiated to face these challenges. The cases comprehend both formal and non-formal learning activities. The cases may include:

- formal and non-formal[2] learning activities taking place at the VET schools;
- formal CVET programmes for VET teachers;
- national policy initiatives aiming at furthering strategic competence development of VET teachers and/or to make the VET teacher profession more attractive.

On the basis of the nationally selected cases, 5 to 10 cases have been selected for in-depth analysis. The analysis will be carried out by the network leaders in consultation with the associated networks and VET experts within the national networks. The aims of the analysis are:

- to identify new parameters for the professionalisation of VET teachers in the Member States;
- to assess the consequences for the teacher training systems;
- to provide recommendations for further project development and policy making.

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(2) Non-formal as defined as learning activities which do not lead to a formal recognition of competences for example a certificate or a diploma.

The field of analysis will be delimited to continuing training and education of VET teachers as the basic VET teacher training has already been described and analysed in the TTnet monographs.

Methodological approach

The work was based on:

- desk research (existing national and international studies and surveys, ministerial regulations, periodicals, etc.);
- qualitative interviews with stakeholders within the system;
- qualitative interviews/consultations with experts within the field.

Expected results

The work will result in the following "products":

- An inventory of innovative practices from participating Member States. The inventory will be made available for Cedefop and will also be at disposal for the EU database of "good practice" set up in connection with the memorandum on lifelong learning.
- A final report containing the results of the in-depth analyses of the innovative practices, and recommendations for further project development and policy-making.