

### **TTnet thematic workshop**

#### **Results of the TTnet project on:**

#### **“Professionalisation of VET teachers for the future - PROFF”**

(May 2002 – May 2003)

### **Session 1: Updating teachers' qualifications and competences**

#### **Thematic introduction** (Auli Harkonen, TTnet-Finland)

The need for teachers to update and develop their professional qualifications and competences is obvious in all cases of the project. Teachers are the key factors for improving educational results. The themes pedagogical, vocational and qualification update are the most frequent in those selected 21 cases from 8 different countries.

Teachers and trainers are the main target groups in the cases. Their roles and duties vary. Various terminology is used for teachers and trainers: an instructor, a tutor, a coach, a facilitator, a mentor etc. Besides teachers there are a wide range of people who participate in the pedagogical process. The terminology to be used is not coherent in participating countries based on structural, cultural and social factors.

VET teachers need both vocational and pedagogical competences. The concepts vocational and pedagogical competence can overlap. There are differences in various trades and sectors in using the terms. It is relevant for VET teachers to perform as a skilful worker / specialist in his / her own trade and to have updated pedagogical competence to be able to guide students to learn professional skills. The working environment and methods change and need continuous development. The world of work, on-the-job learning, web-based activities are used frequently besides the traditional phase-to-phase instruction.

There are various ways of updating qualifications and competences. It can be a top-down or a bottom-up approach. The initiatives of updating the qualifications and competences have come from international, national, regional, local, organisational and individual level. To update qualifications and competences can require from a short course to wide and long-lasting programs. The accreditation can be formal or non-formal. The accreditation can be given by national, sectoral or academic authorities.

The key challenges are to integrate teachers' basic work with development projects. Collaboration within an organisation as well as with their networks is challenging. There are many projects going on. How to disseminate and benefit from all of them? The flow of information is huge and demanding. How can teachers and organisations take the best use of them?