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**Professionalisation of VET Teachers for the Future**

*Heelsinki, 5 and 6 April 2001*

**Portuguese key issues and the state of art**

In Portugal there is a unique teacher career including basic education, secondary education and vocational education. This level, vocational education, is delivered in basic education schools, in secondary schools and in vocational education schools. Also about the teachers' training there is a common model for all the levels and types of education, delivered by universities and colleges of education.

This teachers' training model, although considers the basic education particularities, offers a unique training to all teachers, wherever they will practice in the secondary or in the vocational school.

In this scenario we can conclude that the Portuguese teachers' training system doesn't recognise the VET teacher as a professional with a specific profile or career.

In general, the Portuguese teachers' training model is based on the acquisition/repetition of contents paradigm and in the reproduction of a social and economic model that is no longer responding to the demands of evolution and the globalisation. By other words, the Portuguese teachers' training model isn't based on the competencies development, but on the contents/knowledge acquisition.

As a result of this situation, there is a gap between what is defined by the Education Ministry as the support of the initial training of teachers' curricula and what is expected from the teachers in their day-to-day practice; the actual curricula are supported by the knowledge reproduction paradigm, but the teachers are expected to be, not the reproducers, but the learning facilitators and guides.

The teachers career development and progression is strictly connected to the in-service training system. It means that a teacher, wherever his or her acting area is, goes through the career depending on, among other factors, the participation in in-service training programmes. In consequence, teachers often do training courses, no matter about what, only towards their career progression. At the

same time, schools don't assume the in-service training as a need, because of the static position of the majority of schools management boards and also because of the lack of "school culture" coming from a large number of teachers. Once again, the reproduction (repetition) paradigm prevails.

In a prospective approach, we think that a teachers' training model should emphasise certain competencies, namely those that concerns the pedagogical, social and technical levels. This affirmation is based on the assumptions that:

- we are witnessing a growing tendency towards tertiary sector expansion, massive invasion of information and communication technologies, sharper competitiveness, etc. As a result, there is a need for more participative and flexible work organisation and an upgrading of competencies that, in line with the demands of contemporary societies, must be multi-professional and transferable;
- the VET teacher must be, in first place, a guide and a facilitator of the learning process, towards the development of the trainees competencies; the acquisition of technical competencies and also the "learning how to learn" competencies, will provide the autonomy and adaptability to face the challenges of the labour market, for instance, in such an accelerate mutation;
- the VET teacher must, himself, develop competencies which aloud him or her a self-long live learning, to be prepared to face the effects of the change and the internationalisation, or even, globalisation, in what concerns the VET;
- the development of a dialectic relationship between the teachers' initial and in-service training, their self-learning and the professional practice, is a fundamental issue wen we are thinking about a teachers' training model.

All the issues that we referred are a concerning to the Portuguese VET system actors. Nowadays, there is in Portugal a large scope debate about the characteristics, the strengths and the wackiness of the system. The aim of this debate is to prepare a real, deep and urgent reform of the educational and vocational system. For instance, we can mention the creation of a committee that is evaluating the university teaching, focused on the quality aspects of the teachers' training programmes.