
The political and institutional landscape of work-based learning in CVET in Europe

Cedefop workshop
19 November 2013
Thessaloniki

Cedefop's workshop on *The political and institutional landscape of work-based learning (WBL) in continuing vocational education and training (CVET) in Europe* will bring together national and European policy-makers and stakeholders in the field of adult and work-based learning, including experts, researchers, human resources managers, training providers and trainers, and social partners. It is an invitation-only event. The workshop will be devoted to discussing the preliminary results of Cedefop's ongoing study on '**Work-based learning approaches in CVET in Europe: policies and practices**'.

Background to the workshop

The European Council's conclusions of 12 May 2009 on a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training ('ET 2020') posed that 'By 2020, an average of at least 15% of adults (between 25 and 64) should participate in lifelong learning'. CVET, and in particular its work-based learning components, are important tools to meet this objective. In the Bruges Communiqué (2010), more participation in CVET is called for in order to contribute to that benchmark. More generally, in the current context of economic and demographic crises in Europe, CVET and work-based learning appear as promising approaches to contribute to enhancing skills development, sustaining employability, and supporting enterprises' and countries' policies and strategies of innovation, competitiveness and growth.

However, the landscape of work-based learning in CVET in Europe is not well known. While a clear overall view of the practices, institutions and policies is key for identifying the challenges and providing helpful recommendations and guidelines for reform, the reality is that the context of CVET in Europe is difficult to grasp. Heterogeneity is a major issue in that respect: CVET is differently defined in different countries, and it is profoundly shaped by countries' specificities, e.g. economic structure in terms of sectors and size of companies, how occupations and qualifications are designed, how access to occupations or functions is regulated, etc.

To improve the understanding of policies and practices of work-based learning in CVET in Europe, Cedefop launched the study **Work-based learning approaches in CVET in Europe: policies and practices** in 2013. The first findings of this study will be discussed in the workshop.

Objectives of the workshop and key questions

The main objective of the workshop is to provide a forum for networking and sharing knowledge, experience and expertise on the subject of WBL in CVET based on the emerging tendencies of the Cedefop study ***Work-based learning approaches in CVET in Europe: policies and practices***. The rationale, objectives and expected outcome of the study will be presented. Major focus will be put on discussing the emerging tendencies with respect to the institutional and political landscape of work-based learning in CVET in three out of the six countries surveyed, i.e. Bulgaria, England and Germany. The intention is to actively involve participants in elaborating, suggesting, opening new perspectives and adding information to the study. The following questions will be discussed:

- The EU policy of WBL in CVET:
 - What is the state of the play?
- The national policies of WBL in CVET:
 - Are there any policies, programmes or other initiatives regulating or promoting WBL in CVET? What are their characteristics? Can (a) typology(ies) be set?
 - What are the current issues? What are the trends?
- The governance of WBL in CVET:
 - Who are the key stakeholders in WBL in CVET? What are their roles and responsibilities? Can models be identified?
 - What are the current issues? What are the trends?
- Learning patterns and settings in WBL in CVET - Views from practice:
 - Can we identify some particularly good patterns or mechanisms in work-based learning for adults? What are their major features? What makes them stand out?
 - What are the success factors and/or difficulties and/or risks linked to designing, arranging, implementing or running a work-based learning setting for adults?
 - What are the barriers, needs, expectations, views, challenges and policy priorities in the area of work-based learning in CVET from a practice standpoint?

The workshop will consist of presentations followed by discussions, allowing participants to share their knowledge, experience and expertise.

Expected outcomes

The workshop is expected to yield a deeper understanding of the policies and practices of work-based learning in CVET. It should allow reviewing and enriching the first phase of the study, and inform the next ones.