

WS4 HIGHER VET AND APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMMES

Moderator: Stelios Mavromoustakos

Rapporteurs: Victoria Thompson & Jon Harding

Stelios welcomed the group to the workshop and introduced the participants to how the apprenticeship system has benefited the Cypriot education system. There are regulated professions in Cyprus, which means depending on your qualification depends on how much “training” you do.

Cyprus unemployment rates were high during the crisis. This then meant that the government subsidised the level 5 and 6 for graduates with apprenticeships. Results showed that this enabled students to gain employment within 6 months of completing their apprenticeship- 93.5%.

All programmes now have significant industry experience- this means all graduates are gaining employment before they have graduated.

One problem they have faced is ensuring it is industry specific and for students to have transversal skills. Entrepreneurship and critical skills are key for students to excel in their job. Following the discussion on the Cypriot apprenticeship system, Stelios asked the participants the following critical questions. The workshop was then split in to two different teams with mixed nationalities.

Critical questions:

What are we going to call it? Do we need common terminology across Europe? What are we calling level 5? Higher VET?

The groups confirmed that different terms and implications are dependent on different countries. There was discussion around what the termination could be. It was agreed that Vocation and Professional Education and Training (VPET)- a new term which would cater for it all. This was an idea which was shared by our Hong Kong delegates.

Should it be implemented in all professions?

It was agreed that yes, it should be implemented in level 5 and 6 practical training. However, in reality it would not happen due to how the universities view it. It was then discussed to have more universities involved with the EfVET conference to bridge the gap from VET and Higher Education.

Should it be governed by HE- policies and regulations?

It was agreed that Higher VET and HE should be equally respected- perhaps the same type of policies rather than the exact same due to the different nature of the qualifications.

It was then noted that we need to understand the current policies before we can look at this. This is due to have different it is from country to county.

Should it be quality assured by European Higher Education Area

It was suggested to look at their guidelines and see what we can use. Mutual recognition of learning outcomes- we may not have to have Quality Assurance based on it but it could be possible to benchmark next to it. The use of Block chain was suggested by the Hong Kong delegation as they are

using this to ensure the learning outcomes and being met and the programmes are being effectively Quality Assured.

Three final questions were then asked to the group which was then feedback at the plenary at the end of the Conference.

What are the main activities you think should be undertaking in 2020?

The group decided that a new thematic team on Higher VET- VPET (vocational and professional education and training) would move discussion around this topic forward.

It was also suggested that thematic one day seminars which are regionally based and organised by EfVET would ensure that the momentum of this topic is driven forward. Participants can then bring outcomes to the annual EfVET Conference. This moves the topic forward and tangible outcomes are received.

It was also suggested to have a better focus on employer needs and their input at the Conference. This will ensure that we are feeding in to their companies effectively and they understand VET priorities too.

Where do you need input or support from EfVET delegates?

The group agreed that they would need support with the Thematic Team by having an expert VET provider in this field to lead the Team.

What are your top 2 recommendations for EfVET Steering Committee?

1. New thematic team on Higher VET (VPET)
2. Invite more companies to EfVET conference and to invite Universities and key people involved with the Policies and Regulations around that so they understand VET and Higher VET from all aspects.