Work-based Learning in Vocational Education and Training: WBL in VET

**Proposal for a Common EU-Application**

In the Danube area many countries are considerably affected from sectoral changes in employment and the shift to industry as well as service sectors. This concerns especially the young work force and implies – in many countries – high youth unemployment rates. The field of vocational and educational training (VET) is therefore undergoing fundamental reform processes. The concept of work-based learning (WBL) has proven to be effective and is high on the EU agenda. However, its introduction in VET systems, which do not have a tradition in this field, poses a policy challenge.

Based on an analysis of needs and constraints in the Danube region, three main challenges have been identified which should be addressed in the ETC project proposal:

1. Raising awareness of the potential of WBL, especially among the business community, reflecting the specific related needs of all regions involved in the project
2. Supporting the development of WBL policies and support measures in the regions of the project partners. This also integrates support for regional and national stakeholder processes.
3. Improving the quality assurance in WBL which includes also addressing the issue of key competences and how they are safeguarded

The proposed work plan should include the following actions:

1. A Community of Practice for regional and national stakeholders (web-based, workshops, peer reviews)
2. A (high-level) awareness raising initiative (three thematic conferences)
3. A Policy Network for national policy makers supporting the design and implementation of WBL enhancing policies
4. Good practice analysis and quality indicators development (WBL good practice collection, analysis of success factors, quality indicators, recommendations for policy makers)
5. Regional pilot actions involving regional companies and young people together with the identified WBL stakeholders

**Requirements for Project Partners**

It is planned to submit the project proposal to the new Danube INTERREG V –Programme (2014-2020) which implies several requirements for project partners of which the 3 main tasks are:

1. Selection of those work plan elements (1-5) which are most relevant for the partner region in the next 3 to 4 years
2. Active participation in the ETC-application preparation (1-2 meetings and several online exchanges) and implementation
3. Calculation of related project implementation costs of which the EU contributions will be around 85 % (own contribution therefore around 15%)

**Proposed Budget**

The total budget of the project will be € 2.5 to 3 mio. and will be split between 8 to 10 partners according to their responsibilities and activities in the project. Each project partner will need to pre-finance its project activities before receiving a refund of EU-ERDF-means of at least 85% of the total eligible expenditures.

**Proposed Project Duration**

The project should start in 2015 and ends 3 to 4 years later (2018/2019) including the application and implementation phase.

**Next Steps: Invitation to Preparatory Workshop in October 2014**

In order to best prepare the common application a preparatory workshop will be organized for those institutions able to join the ETC-application as full and co-financing partners.

**Contact for more information:**

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