



EP4A

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WP4 Formation and Work of Apprenticeships Partnerships

Follow up Workshop

Feedback report

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Follow up Workshop – Partners feedback Report

Partner	Regional Development Agency Senec-Pezinok
Country	Slovakia
1st Apprenticeship Partnership Formation Workshop dates	26.4.2018
Number of participants	15+
Participant's profiles	representatives of Regional Development Agency Senec-Pezinok (RDA SP), Slovak Chamber of Crafts (SZK), SMEs, students of secondary vocational schools, Slovak Institute for Vocational Training (SIOV), Central office of labour, social affairs and family (COLSAF)

Part one – Planning of the Follow up Workshop

Explain how your organisation planned the delivery of your country's Follow up Workshop?

Within the EP4A, RDA SP is following the developments in the Dual Education in Slovakia that is concentrated within the National Project "Dual System" (NP). The NP hosts a number of working groups where stakeholders representatives (including representatives of SMEs) regularly meet, discuss issues and propose solutions. The proposals and requests of the SME sector are being heard and the process will change in their favour. Also, during the Country Workshop in November 2017, where stakeholders had an opportunity to meet in a more specified group that was relatively new to the topic, the participants managed to clarify their standpoints, and now they see their requests incorporated in the new novelization proposal for the Act on VET (currently officially published for commenting). The main issue is now to spread the information to the SMEs. Therefore, for the Follow up Workshop RDA SP decided to reach out to SMEs in a double event/fair organized by the Ministry of Economy (Fair of VET – "Mlady tvorca") and Ministry of Labour (job fair – Job Expo). Moreover, the topic of the Mlady Tvorca 2018 fair was "Dual Education". Various presentations and workshops on this topic were part of the programme and RDA SP considered it relevant and effective to organize the Follow up Workshop there. The connected Job Expo fair provided a large concentration of employers in the same place, so that reinforced the outreach possibilities. During the fair was planned also EP4A Info Day, as a 2-day event, since the fair was 2-days. Several preparatory meetings with the SZK took place and 2 common meetings with the organizers at the Ministry of Economy. It was agreed that the workshop will take place in a workshop room within the expo area, and will be included in the official programme of the fair that will be on the website of the Ministry of Economy and also Ministry of Labour (since the 2 fairs are advertised jointly). There will be an EP4A stand at the fair, where participants can get EP4A information materials and more information from the EP4A staff and SZK representatives. The information was sent to the NP stakeholders and EP4A stakeholders, it was published on the RDA SP website and Facebook profile, which was sponsored.

Part two – Delivery of the Follow up Workshop

Following the planning in preparation for the Workshop, explain how your organisation approached the delivery of your country's Follow up Workshop?

In your answer, please include:

- *Description of the 1st Apprenticeship Partnership Formation Workshop/ Follow up Workshop/ Round Table/ Meeting of Apprenticeship Partnership (delete unnecessary) in your countries*
- *What topics did your workshop include?*
- *What techniques and methods did you use?*



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- *Key outcomes/Achievements/Outputs/Feedback by participants*
- *What experiences from the WP3 Capacity building activities did you use in your delivery?*
- *Identify barriers you faced during the delivery of your countries' 1st Apprenticeship Partnership Formation Workshop/ Follow up Workshop/ Round Table/ Meeting of Apprenticeship Partnership (delete unnecessary)?*

As explained above, the Follow up Workshop was intended as an outreach activity, where opinions of stakeholders and SMEs directly would be collected and incorporated to the Road Map and vision for the MoU. It took place as a workshop within a fair aimed at VET with this year's topic of Dual Education. The event took place in one of the specific workshop spaces at the fair. The participants were the invited stakeholders and also exhibitors and visitors of the fair, who got information at the EP4A Info Day stand or were approached by the EP4A team during the fair or found the event in the fair programme.

The workshop had a format of short presentation introducing the topic, the project EP4A and the objectives of the workshop. It was followed by moderated discussion with the participants with the objective to gain their experience with and opinions about the Dual System in Slovakia. There were two moderators to facilitate the discussion and provide information.

The discussion benefitted from participation of various relevant stakeholders, and even though they were not many, they provided important insight, and their interaction enabled the EP4A team to see where the real bottlenecks are. Many of the issues raised in the discussion confirmed what was described in the WP1 analysis, and the EP4A team had opportunity to obtain firsthand experience from the field. The SMEs that are willing to participate in the Dual System find it extremely complicated and the support offered to them by the NP representatives in the regions tends to be rather formal. So when they perceive lack of labour force, they turn to the Dual System, get lost in complexity of the information available, and give up. Those SMEs who turned to the NP established so-called Dual Point, that should be responsible for the information provision and local coordination, the support actually given was provision of a website link where the SME can find all the information. This approach turned the SME, that was sharing this experience, ultimately away from getting into the Dual System. Unfortunately, the present SIOV representatives stated that the Dual Point is the main body that the SMEs should turn to. In this case, SZK representatives from this particular region offered to the SMEs their additional support and promised they make sure that their approach will be different. Also, many of the bureaucratic issues related to entering the Dual System will be abandoned, when the new novelization of Act on VET will be approved during the summer 2018.

There were also current students studying under the Dual System, who shared their very positive experience and answered questions about the attitudes of young people towards the System. In their language, they described very honestly what they find attractive about it – money, responsibility, outfits... – and how their example in their school attracts other students, who didn't enrol for the Dual System, to change their mind (and mind of their parents), once they really see the effects materialized. So they stated that young people are interested, just they need to get the right example and information in a compelling way.

Another outcome of the discussion was the institutional non-cooperation. At the Follow up workshop were present also representatives of the Ministry of Economy and Central Labour Office that is subordinated to the Ministry of Labour. There is absolutely no cooperation in these sectors regarding Dual System, even though they see partial overlaps with their respective agendas. Despite seeing their potential role (e.g. Labour Offices providing this information to employers which are looking for labour force through their services), they do not want to interfere with SIOV/Ministry of Education competencies. If there is dialogue between these resorts about battling common challenges, it stays rather vague and formal, and doesn't reach the implementation practice and implementing officers/staff.

As conclusion, it was stated that the framework for Dual System is there, roles of actors are defined, and general support is proclaimed, but it fails to operate on the practical level. The framework conditions are



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good, it needs more dedicated and practical approach on the implementing staff level. During the Follow up Workshop we have used the communication skills and strategies learned during the WP3, especially when moderating the discussions, but also by introducing the examples from other countries learned during the Study Visit in London. The main barrier when organizing the workshop was that already a lot of meetings of stakeholders within the Dual System are taking place in the framework of the NP, so they are not motivated to attend something more outside that framework. We managed to reach out to some individual SMEs, not members of any professional organisations, but the number was rather limited. The format of the event on a fair didn't enable predicting the participation and it was rather difficult to collect the signatures for the registry. Many people did not come in and sit, instead preferred standing on a side, listening and providing answers to questions when the moderator approached them directly. Nevertheless, the discussion was very fruitful in the end.

Part three – Planning of the follow up of the Follow up Workshop

Following the delivery of your country's Follow up Workshop, please provide information on the future plans regarding the Round Table/ Meeting of Apprenticeship Partnership in line with the EP4A objectives?

Round Table

There was a meeting with another RDA SP member that is representative of SMEs – Slovak Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Bratislava Region, who has also strong role in the NP, and tries to contribute to the attractiveness of the Dual System through collaborating with European partners within an Interreg DTP project "Learning by Doing". Willingness to mutually reinforce the activities was expressed during the meeting and the possibility of signing the EP4A MoU was welcomed. There will be discussions with the SIOV about joining the MoU and the Round Table together. The formulation of the MoU is being finalized and will be provided to potential signatories for commenting.

Meeting of Apprenticeship Partnership

Will be fully depending on the developments with the Round Table.

Part four – Dissemination of the Follow up Workshop

Types of dissemination utilised

Dissemination of the event was both offline and online. The event had 2 partners – RDA SP and SZK, both of them used their channels – website, Facebook, emails and personal contact. The event was advertised in the fairs' programme, both the Mlady Tvorca Fair and the Job Expo. These were displayed on the websites of the organizers – Ministry of Economy and Ministry of Labour, as well as the expo venue Agrokomplex Nitra, it was distributed during the fairs and was part of general communications of the fairs. A printed invitation was prepared for the event. RDA SP has also distributed printed invitations during the fair itself as part of the Info Day stand and also visited stands of the employers to invite them.

Part five – Quality Assurance and Evaluation of the Follow up Workshop

Quality Assurance: Provide information on how you ensured the quality of your delivery of the Follow up Workshop in your country.

Logistics of the event were carefully planned and implemented. Several meetings took place with the partner organisation SZK and Ministry of Economy, in order to clarify all steps and prepare the workshop, as well as the Info Day. All sides ensured promotion of the event, invitation of its target groups.

Evaluation: Provide information on how you evaluated your delivery of Follow up Workshop in your country.



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There is a lot of formats on discussing Dual Education in Slovakia already, especially through the NP Dual System. Finding a relevant niche to support the process of Dual System development and apprenticeship partnership building is important. Working closely with the NP enables to fill the gaps where there are institutional barriers and outreach issues. Connecting various stakeholders on a neutral level/platform provided important insight into the situation, that sometimes works only formally/on paper. We are sorry that the format of a workshop within a large fair did not enable collecting all the supporting data for reporting – especially all the signatures of people stopping to listen to the discussion and contributing to it. This lesson learned will be used in future activities.

List of documents to be delivered

- Invitation
- Agenda
- Attendance lists
- Photos