

Modular training programs for workers of European construction sector: Lithuanian experience

Modular training programs contribute to accessibility and attractiveness of vocational education and training (VET) as well as promote its flexibility. Increasing number of the countries within European Union attempt to introduce modular vocational training aiming to achieve such organisation and contents of VET that would best satisfy the learners' needs. The modular programs existing in these countries are innovative and easily conform to the changing demands of the economy.

Inspired by the good practice of European countries, VšĮ Vilniaus statybininkų rengimo centras (Vilnius Builders Training Centre) in cooperation with several Lithuanian VET providers (Alytus and Šiauliai VET centres and Vilnius College for Technologies and Design) promoted and implemented the project funded by European Commission entitled "Development of European Modular Training Programs for Decorator/Builder and their Adjustment in Lithuanian and European VET Institutions/ DEMOP" (project No LLP-LdV-TOI-2008-LT-0012). The profession of decorator/builder was not chosen at random: in Lithuania it proves to be one of the most popular VET programs, delivered in 40 out of 70 VET institutions. Thus, the developed program will enable to test and evaluate advantages of modular training in more than 50 percent of Lithuanian VET providers.

Seven EU countries took part in the project, namely, Finland, Germany, Greece, Lithuania, Romania, Scotland, and Spain. The project partnership transferred the best practice of modular VET from Scotland, and with the input of all international partners performed the needs analysis, developed European modular training program for decorator/builder with the associated credit system, and presented examples of methodological teaching material showing how the program could be used in EU VET institutions for initial and continuous vocational training.

The developed modular training program (in Finnish, German, Greek, English, Lithuanian, Romanian, and Spanish languages) consists of a general description of the program and the following modules:

1. Introduction into the profession of a decorator/painter;
2. Manual plastering;
3. Mechanised plastering;
4. Painting of buildings;
5. Wallpaper hanging;
6. Tiling of vertical and horizontal surfaces;
7. Mounting of plaster-panels;
8. Insulation with thermo-panels;
9. Mounting of decorative panels and linear decorative elements;
10. Introduction into the labour market.

The developed modules have been successfully tested in the institutions of project partners and will be further integrated in their curricula. A number of Lithuanian and European VET providers, higher education institutions as well as social partners have already expressed their interest in the project outcomes. The training modules are flexible and up-to-date with a good balance between gaining knowledge and applying it in practical situations which enhances the attractiveness of VET system and practices. The program is also a step towards the implementation of the European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET) as the volume of all the modules is estimated in credit points. This new curriculum can be rolled out to improve the quality of teaching programs within building construction field throughout European VET institutions. In Lithuania the outcomes of the DEMOP project may be used as a model and may serve to avoid the mistakes while developing national modular training system for VET and other modular programs.

For more information please visit the project website: <http://www.demop.eu>

Renata Černeckienė

Vilnius Builders Training Centre

E-mail: renata@vsr.lt