

ECVET-TOUR

INTERNATIONAL COMPARISON

RESULTS OF THE SURVEY

bm:uk



International Country Comparison

Quantitative survey

Results of the surveys, concerning the key competences in the apprenticeship education for the professions cook and hotel- and gastronomy assistant/receptionist

Contributions to this report by all partners:

Sandra Strobach (University of Salzburg), Manuela Hufnagl (University of Salzburg), Maria Thalmaier (SMC), Genoveva Brandstetter (3s), Pablo Navarro Ferre (COEPA), Daria Zawalska (AHE), Dorota Nawrat (AHE), Beata Marcinkowska (AHE), Katja Heidler (Harz_ AG), Günther Brandstetter (3Mfb).

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1. Introduction

The main focus of the work package two (WP2) in the project “*ECVET-TOUR for tourism and mobility*” is to analyze the key competences for the two professions cook and hotel- and gastronomy assistant/receptionist. The survey was taken in two waves. In the first wave, which took place in February and March 2009, each partner held between 10 and 12 qualitative interviews with stakeholders and professionals working in the tourism sector. The results of these qualitative interviews are represented in the international country comparison “*ECVET-TOUR International comparison, key competences in tourism – AT, DE, ES, PL*”.

In this document the results of the second wave, the quantitative survey are represented. The questionnaire comprised closed and open questions. For the interpretation of the quantitative survey we interpreted the quantitative data against the background of the answers to the open questions. We used also selected results of the qualitative survey. The quantitative questionnaire was created by 3s and the University of Salzburg. The aim was to ask pupils¹ and apprentices², which key competences they gain during their vocational education and training. Each partner undertook the survey(s) in the respective home country Austria, Germany, Spain and Poland.

The target group consisted of pupils and apprentices who train as cook and hotel- and gastronomy assistant/receptionist. It is necessary to know that not all interviewees were at the same level of vocational education and training. In Austria and Germany apprentices attend part-time vocational school 20% of their time during their vocational education and training (VET school). 80% of their apprenticeship they stay and work at their companies.³ In Spain and Poland pupils attend full-time vocational schools (VET schools). During this vocational education they have to undertake an internship in a company.⁴

In Austria the interviewed apprentices are in their 3rd year of vocational education and training, in Germany the interviewees are in the 2nd and 3rd year of vocational education

¹ Pupils = Visiting a vocational school (VET school).

² Apprentices = Dual system in Austria and Germany. Apprentices attend 80% of their vocational education and training in a company and 20% at the vocational school.

³ In Austria and Germany the apprenticeship for cooks and hotel- and gastronomy assistants lasts 3 years.

⁴ Spain: Cook 380h/Receptionist 400h; Poland: Cook 160h/Receptionist 120h. Further information is available in the ECVET-TOUR Report “International comparison of spheres of competences.

and training, in Poland the pupils are between their first and fourth level of vocational education and training and in Spain pupils are in their first year of vocational education and training.

The sample size of the quantitative survey differs per country: Austria n=140, Spain n=151, Poland n=189, Germany n=248.

The interpretation of the respective quantitative survey was conducted by each partner. In chapter 6 you can find a summary of the most important competences needed in each country. Chapter 7 lists suggestions regarding possible improvements at VET schools, in (training) companies, in the field of further education and finally mobility.

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2. Austria

SMC Studien und Management Center Saalfelden gGmbH, Maria Thalmaier

Introduction

The quantitative survey was carried out in the vocational schools in Altmünster, Upper Austria, and Vienna-Meidling in summer and autumn 2009. In total, 94 cook apprentices and 43 hotel- and gastronomy assistant (HGA) apprentices have been interviewed. Thanks to an online-inquiry in some Pinzgau training companies, three additional completed questionnaires were integrated into the survey. Therefore, it results in a sample size of n=140, which is not representative for Austria. It has to be emphasized, that the sample size varies according to the questions, because missing answers have not been included in the absolute sample size.

The target groups of the interviews were cook and hotel- and gastronomy assistant apprentices in the 3rd year of apprenticeship.⁵ After having obtained the permit of the board of directors, the survey was carried out directly in the vocational schools. On average, the apprentices had a maximum time of 25 minutes to fill in the questionnaire. Due to the presence of the project partners, the apprentices had the opportunity to ask questions.

⁵ Apprentices in Austria spend 20% of their time of vocational education and training at VET schools and 80% at their apprenticeship training place.

2.1. Abstract

The results of the quantitative survey reveal that - all in all - the interviewed apprentices are more satisfied with the education in the vocational schools than with the education in the training companies. When looking at questions in a more detailed way, it turns out that approximately one third of the total sample (30.18%) is unsatisfied with the vocational school.⁶ The apprentices criticize teaching methods, instructions and professional competences of teachers in the vocational schools. One wish is often voiced: school should last for 10 weeks instead of 8 weeks. This would enable the apprentices and teachers to learn and teach more. The apprentices regard it as unfair that because of "bad pupils" the standard of teaching suffers. The qualitative results confirm the critics that the teaching methods and the contents in the vocational schools are partly no more state of the art. The vocational schools should focus more on the professional skills, offer more foreign language education and train pupils in social competences which are required in both professions. In the opinion of experts, the vocational schools are partly no longer able to respond to the needs of the free market economy.

It is significant that 78.1 % (n=128) of the apprentices don't want to stay in the company providing apprenticeship training and that already in the third year of apprenticeship, one third is aware that they don't want to work in their profession any longer. One third of the apprentices is unsatisfied or very unsatisfied with the training in the company: Apprentices are unsatisfied with the lack of professional knowledge (51.1%) they get and lack of support by their trainers/tutors (57.8%). The central points are reflected in the open questions: 25% (n=140) indicate that they intend to continue to gain professional skills, that they would like to increase their knowledge and competences and that they don't want to remain "apprentices". 10% think that they aren't learning anything in the training company. 27% (n=140) wish for more respect and would like a trainer to accompany them during their apprenticeship and gives the appropriate support. The acquisition of knowledge and competences is important for the young people, in order to make their professional career. However, also appreciation, respect and a good atmosphere in the training company are central topics for them. The adolescents consider it as one of the most important issues to learn to work autonomous during their apprenticeship. This issue also arises in the results of the qualitative

⁶ Sum of the results relating to vocational schools, divided by 4.

interviews. The stakeholders (if they run a company) regard their respective training company as the most important place to acquire competences. The training companies have to adhere to the training regulation and they are not allowed to use the apprentices as unskilled workers. Stakeholders as well as Professionals demand that the training companies should be controlled better, in order to guarantee an adequate professional education for apprentices.

In the field of further education, the major part of the apprentices indicates that they do not want to complete any further education at the moment; the others express the wish to work abroad, to learn foreign languages and special professional skills in the domain of diet kitchen, patisserie and bar. It is striking that also in the field of further education turns out that 11% (n=140) of the interviewed persons know already in their third year of apprenticeship that they want to change their profession. The interviewed stakeholders of the qualitative survey underline that Austria consists of small and medium size companies and that therefore the further education has to be considered in a differentiated way. Compared to international companies family-run businesses have a different structure they have a different staff shell and different financial possibilities. Also the location of the company, whether in town or in the country, plays a very important role in the field of further education. In contrast to the interviewed apprentices, the young professionals reveal an expressive will to complete a further education. Also the stakeholders emphasize that the professional education and further formation is an absolute must in order to make a professional career. Apprentices wish to work abroad and they prefer English speaking countries. No German-speaking country was ranked as the first target nation. One of the most frequently indicated motives is the acquisition of language skills. In contrast to the qualitative results, family-related motives are not indicated as an obstacle.

2.2. Results

2.2.1. Vocational school

90% of the interviewed persons (n=140) are satisfied with the education in the vocational school. 91% of the apprentices (n=133) believe that they gain specific professional skills in the vocational school. It is significant that despite of the high satisfaction rate concerning the specific professional education, 65 of 140 apprentices of the vocational school answered the open question "11.1 What is lacking, in your opinion, or what should be improved?" (concerning teaching abilities of teachers specific professional skills in school).

40% of the apprentices are unsatisfied with the teaching methods and with the contents of the lessons. The apprentices long for better and more detailed instructions and fair marking. Marks should be given in an objective way. They wish to learn more professional knowledge and not leave out certain contents. Teachers have antiquated or no knowledge of hotel management and they should be sent to instruction courses. Smaller classes would be more efficient for a qualitative high education. The focus should be set more on foreign languages. 16.92% express the wish that the vocational school should last for 10 weeks instead of 8. The lessons should be more practical, the contents should be explained in the adequate terminology and be more detailed. One apprentices suggests undertaking excursions to other companies in order to learn about different aspects. Another idea deals with offering a "tailored" practical instruction for the respective hotels, because there are great differences between three and four stars hotels. Only 4 out of 65 answers relate explicitly to propositions concerning the acquisition of professional skills in vocational schools: "During the cooking lessons there should be a more stressful atmosphere, because in real life there is also a lot of stress." "One should teach cooking more and especially how to make more extravagant meals." "Cooks should be taught how to work in a team." And: "We miss having guests".

85.2% of the apprentices (n=128) say that they gain social competences in the vocational schools. 14.8% are unsatisfied.

51 of 140 apprentices answer the open question whether they have any suggestions to improve the acquisition of social competences in the vocational schools. 19.6% of the answers refer directly to the acquisition of social skills. Some voice suggestions on how to create the teaching unit "social competence" in vocational skills

are mentioned: *"Behavior and manners", "Role games between guest and employee", "Re-enacting situations of practical life", "Behavior in front of a guest"*.

If one relates these suggestions for improvement to the total sample, only 7.14% of the interview partners present wishes or proposals on how to create the teaching unit "social competences". Again it is significant that 12.14% criticize the lessons.

The general satisfaction with the vocational school is also confirmed by the open question *"Whether apprentices have any suggestions on how to improve the vocational school"*.

40 of 140 apprentices answer this question. Also in this question, the part of those apprentices, who criticize the lessons, is reflected. 65% criticize the methods and the professional skills of the teachers. The open question *"If you had one wish, what would it be concerning your education in the professional school. What would you improve?"* is answered by 60 of 140 apprentices. One third of the apprentices, 33.3%, desire a better qualitative education. The apprentices criticize that teachers always take the slowest apprentices into consideration, but never the average apprentices. Thus, they are not stipulated enough. 18.3% of the apprentices wish that the vocational school should last 10 weeks instead of 8. This would help to learn more intensively and more exactly.

2.2.2. Training company

It is striking that the apprentices answered the open questions concerning the training company in a very clear way! The apprentices did not distinguish between the two categories "specific and social skills in the training company". The answers are overlapping.

The apprentices (n=140) are less satisfied with the education in the training company than with the formation in the vocational school. 67.9% indicate to be very satisfied or satisfied. 32.1% are either unsatisfied or very unsatisfied with their education in the training company. This means that one third of the interviewed apprentices is unsatisfied or even very unsatisfied with the training in the company. The reasons for the dissatisfaction of the apprentices can be seen in the fact, that specific professional skills are not gained enough (51.1%) and that the trainers do not motivate them enough (57.8%).

A high percentage of the apprentices, namely 75 of 140, answered the open question *"Which professional skills do you gain in your training company?"* The answers are little surprising.

Cook apprentices refer mainly to the working methods (concentrated, exact, tidy, stress resistant, responsible, hygienic, quick) and to the typical work processes such as preparing a menu, purchase, calculation, stocking the goods. The professional skills which they acquire are: preparing pastries and sauces, cooking national and international meals, create desserts, marinating, barbecue and preparing specialities of the week. The mentioned social competences are: ability to work in a team, multi-tasking, autonomy, ability to resist to stress.

Also the hotel- and gastronomy assistant apprentices mention the typical working processes which are included in their curriculum: check-in, check-out, talking on the telephone, dealing with guests, booking, learning computer programs, trainings in F&B, complaint handling and revenue maximization. Apprentices say that the acquisition of competences is related to the respective working stations.

An apprentice answers: "... *cleaning, serving, washing dishes, cooking – the reception is not in the focus*". 18.6% (14 of 75) criticize that as an apprentice one has to clean, one is treated badly and one does not learn anything in the training company. Calculated in relation to the total sample, approximately 10% of the apprentices are unsatisfied because they aren't learning anything in the training company.

73.6% of the apprentices (n=129) answer with "*Yes, we gain social competences in our training company*". 26.4% negate this. The attitude of this answer is also reflected in the open question. 38 apprentices of 140 refer to the question, whether the training company procure social competences.

25 apprentices presented concrete suggestions. They wish for a more respectful treatment by their training master, to gain more specific professional skills in the company and to obtain adequate explanations concerning the internal working processes. Furthermore they would like to absolve further education. With the help of "internal problematic cases" they would like to train social competences. The apprentices would like to have closer contact to the guests and to the staff. The vocational school and the training company should work together more intensively.

69 of 140 apprentices answer the question "*What were the most important learning steps in your training company during your education?*"

For cook apprentices, the most important learning steps are the acquisition of specific and social competences in the training company. The most important specific skills are: techniques of cutting, preparing meat, preparing different meals and menus and cooking à la carte; furthermore barbecue, marinating, roasting, preparing soups and pastries and patisserie. Ability of team work, autonomy, open-mindedness, integration into the team, economic and efficient working are mentioned as the most important social competences.

The hotel- and gastronomy apprentices work in different fields within the company. They run through several domains and stations in the house: service, reception and bar are indicated as "learning steps". As specific professional skills which have been gained by the third year of apprenticeship are lined out: communication with the guest, behavior and the right choice of words in front of the guest, dealing with conflict situations, the appreciation of the guest, entering the orders into the cash register, writing inquiries and confirmations. Hotel- and gastronomy assistant apprentices find it more difficult to differentiate between social and specific professional competences than cook apprentices do.

It is significant that 39.1% refer explicitly to the acquisition of social competences, where the ability of being able to work independently is the one mentioned most often. During their training, the apprentices have learned to be open-minded, to take responsibility, to be flexible, to work in a team, to keep a clear mind in extreme situations, to work professionally and objectively. Those characteristics can be phrased as general social competences for both professions.

A high percentage of the interviewed persons, 78.1% (n=128), doesn't want to stay in the training company after having finished their education.

111 apprentices answer this open question. The most significant reasons for wanting to change the training company are the following: 35 of 111 apprentices want to complete a further education, to improve their knowledge and their competences and they are convinced that one has to change the company after having finished the apprenticeship in order to make a professional career. 24 of 111 think that the atmosphere in the training company is bad and they are unsatisfied with their training master or with their professional education. 16 apprentices of 111 want to go abroad to continue their education, or to travel the world or work as seasonal employees. 9 of the 111 interviewed persons have to leave after their apprenticeship and 5 of 111 intend to work in another profession.

The interviewed persons suggest the following changes in the training company: respectful treatment of the apprentices by the trainers, support and companionship during the apprenticeship, adherence to and control of the training regulation. There should be an opportunity to work in every different domain together with a trainer during the education time. For the apprentices, a good atmosphere in the company is crucial. Overtime hours should either be paid for or not be required.

2.2.3. Further education

The answers in the category further education are generally hardly significant or very diffuse. The open question *"Where else would you like to educate yourself - in addition to your school or your company?"* is answered by 82 apprentices.

The most frequent answer of 19.51% is: at the moment I don't know. 18.29% indicate that they want to go abroad, and 8.54% intend to learn foreign languages.

"Which kind of further education could you imagine undertaking in the future?" is answered by 91 of 140 participants.

36.26% can be referred to the category "formations/similar professions". Within this category, there are three significant results: 9 apprentices want to start an education to become a diet cook or a nutritionist, 9 apprentices want to learn to work in a bar, as a sommelier, waiter, or F&B trainer and 8 apprentices want to attend an additional education in the fields of patisserie, confectionery and bakery. 17.58% intend to change their profession, 12.08% want to attend a language course, 9% want to take the Matura (general qualification for university entrance) and 6.59% intend to learn about the domains marketing, management and leadership.

2.2.4. Mobility

The interviewed apprentices can imagine working abroad. 80% (n=140) answer with yes, 20% with no. 31.3% would go to Spain, 12.5% to Germany and 1.8% to Poland.

The question with multiple answers *"Which country would you choose?"* is answered by 66 apprentices of 140. The favorites are English-speaking countries such as Great Britain, USA, Ireland, Canada (33 answers), followed by European countries such as Italy, Greece, Netherlands, Portugal, Slovakia, Bosnia, Croatia (17 answers), and Asian countries (14 answers), and only 11 apprentices would like to go to Switzerland. The



reasons, why someone does not want to go abroad are not covered by the qualitative census. Only two apprentices mention family reasons, four indicate lingual handicaps.

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2.3. Suggestions due to the qualitative and quantitative results

2.3.1. Vocational school

- Specific professional competences: the teaching of more foreign languages
- Social competences:
 - „Behaviour and manners“
 - „Role games between guest and employee“
 - „Re-enactment of situations of practical life“
 - „Behaviour in front of the guest“
- Specific professional competences for cook apprenticeship:
 - „There should be a more stressful atmosphere in the cooking lessons, because at work there is also a lot of stress“
 - „One should teach more varied and extravagant meals“
 - „The cooks should be taught the ability to work in a team“
 - „The presence of guests is missing“.
- Prolongation of the time at school from 8 to 10 weeks
- Lessons concentrated on diverse specific domains
- Practical subjects:
 - Excursions to other gastronomy and hotel enterprises in order to learn the differences
 - Tailored practical lessons for specific hotels, because there are important differences between for example a four stars and a three stars hotel

2.3.2. Training company

- Professional coaching should be guaranteed by the trainers/instructor at work: Monitoring throughout the different stations in the training company to guarantee transfer of knowledge
- To train social competences by dealing with internal problematic situations: to make a case study out of a real happening at the training company
- Procurement of specific competences according to the year of apprenticeship and to the training regulation
- Appreciation and support

2.3.3. Vocational school & training company

- Motivation and enhancement to participate in mobility programs:
 - Competence in foreign languages
 - Differentiated look concerning guests – intercultural competence working autonomously

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3. Spain

COEPA, Pablo Navarro

Introduction

The data is based on the analysis of the responses to the ECVET-TOUR survey carried out by the staff of COEPA in two Secondary Schools with Vocational Training Programmes in Tourism Sector: IES María Ibars, Denia, October, 5, 2009 and IES Mediterrània, Benidorm, October, 7, 2009.

At the time the survey was carried out, 60% of the participants had not yet participated in any sort of in-company training. These factors explain the low response rates in the questions concerning this training area.

Contacts with vocational schools to request cooperation in the project were first made in June 2009, which is the busiest period for both pupils and school staff, so the appointments for the survey were postponed to October 2009, without being aware that at that time it would be the beginning of the academic year - a time at which only few are at their in-company training place.

Organisation of in-company training by schools: pupils make their placement after most of theoretical courses have been taken; therefore, pupils do not usually attend courses at the school when they are participating in in-company training programmes. The communication between placement tutors at school and pupils usually takes place via e-mail.

Therefore, further research should be applied to get more consistent conclusions regarding in-company training.

Tutors in charge of pupils doing their placements suggested that a website-based questionnaire and e-mail distribution via a mail-list could be a more effective methodology to get a higher response rate in the fields related to company internships.

The spirit of cooperation showed by the staff of the vocational training centres participating in the survey was remarkable, also their willingness to make the task of interviewers as easy as possible during the survey at schools.

As expected, there were some interviewees who gave irresponsible responses, not many however, so most of the pupils took the survey quite seriously.

3.1. Abstract

Most of the pupils are satisfied or very satisfied with the training provided by their school, although many think that the training programmes should be more practical. Better training in foreign languages at school was also a frequent complaint.

Considering the interest shown by pupils in participating in exchange programmes or working abroad, they seem to be aware that this might be the most efficient way of developing soft skills they can't get at school.

When asked about the possibility of taking a job in the company in which they do their placement, most would do it. It may be in contradiction with the fact that many of them would like to work or study abroad, however, because of the current underperformance of economy and high unemployment rate, it seems they are willing to sacrifice further training in order to guarantee job stability.

Broadly speaking, pupils have identified the same weaknesses of the vocational education training systems that tourism professionals and stakeholders voiced when interviewed in the previous project phase.

However there is a difference, stakeholders are not so satisfied with training provided by the professional schools, particularly in regard of the qualifications of teachers, which differs from the general sense of satisfaction of pupils.

The reason behind this may be that the point of view of professionals regarding their training changes once they have worked in tourism business for some years.

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3.2. Results

3.2.1. Vocational school

According to the survey results, 145 out of 151 pupils are satisfied or very satisfied with the training provided by their school, a fact that does not prevent pupils identifying the weak points of the training programmes they are taking part in, which coincide with those already pointed out by almost all interviewed stakeholders:

More practical training, like earlier in-company training, less theoretical subjects, and applicable knowledge during their work at companies.

Need for a more efficient foreign languages training, which currently it is too theoretical and grammar oriented instead of being focused on the use of the language.

Pupils, like stakeholders, are also aware of the importance of getting soft skills in order to be a good professional, and at the same time point out that these are difficult to obtain in any other way than by in-company training programmes.

As remarked by stakeholders, due to the level of stress and commitment requested by staff working in the tourism sector, a vocational spirit is absolutely necessary to become a good professional. In this sense, it is important to highlight that 88% of the respondents confirmed that they would choose this profession again.

The vast majority of respondents also intend to carry on with further training related to tourism, either after finishing current courses or once they are employed, which not only confirms that their selection of training is based on vocation, but also shows the awareness of belonging to an economic activity for which updating and specialization training is absolutely necessary to remain competitive at the job or to climb the career ladder.

Although the number of students unsatisfied with the training system due to insufficient teaching know-how is very low, it is remarkable that 80% of this group would still choose this profession again, reinforcing the idea that the choice of training courses is done on the basis of vocational orientation.

Both, satisfied and unsatisfied for whatever reason, are interested in working or studying in foreign countries, which might be their way of solving the problem of poor language training.

Those unsatisfied due to the lack of development of personal competences do not want to stay working in their training company and would not choose this profession again, which reflects the fact that a bad experience in in-company training may even change the mind of pupils with regard of vocation, and highlights one of the most important role

of tutors: to make sure that pupils are treated fairly in their training companies.

Pupils who are unsatisfied with the education in the professional school because they think the teaching methods are not adequate would like to stay in the company in which they are doing their placement, they feel satisfied with their education in the company and, on the whole, would choose this profession again.

In conclusion, we can say that regarding the vocation of pupils, a bad experience in the company training may be more discouraging than the feeling that the teaching methodology is not adequate.

3.2.2. Training school

Up to 12.2% of the pupils who are unsatisfied with the training provided by the company in which they are doing their placement, would still stay to work for the company, reflecting that they are aware that the employment situation is currently very bad.

When considering the reasons why they are unsatisfied we can see that up to 66.7% of those unsatisfied pupils would remain with the company even though they feel the company has insufficient teaching know-how.

However, the percentage of unsatisfied pupils who would remain in the company goes down to 16.7% if they think their personal competences are not being enhanced, the development of social skills is not boosted or teachers are not providing the necessary support.

In general, most of the interviewees think that experiences abroad as a pupils or working for a company are a good way of dealing with some of the missing elements of the training system; however, only 34.2% of those satisfied with the education provided by their in-company training would like to participate in an exchange programme abroad.

Therefore, when the company internship experience is satisfactory, they do not seem to feel the necessity of taking part in experiences abroad to improve their language or communication skills, even though it is perceived by pupils and stakeholders as being one of the areas which should be improved in the Spanish training system.

Seen that way it would be very important to highlight another important role of the tutors of in-company training: they should always foster the spirit of constant improvement with the pupils.

Considering that most of the pupils have selected their studies based on their vocational orientation, the fact that only 3.8% of the interviewees unsatisfied with their in-company training would not choose this profession again reflects how discouraging it may be for pupils to have a bad in-company training experience.

A bad in-company training experience is also discouraging in terms of wanting to

participate in exchange programmes (only 8.7% of the unsatisfied pupils would participate in them because of bad in-company training experience) as well as to work abroad (only 3.6% of the unsatisfied pupils would work abroad because of bad in-company training experience).

The degree of satisfaction of the pupils regarding the relationship between company and school has been measured with the following variables: fluent communication, clear instructions, explanation of working tasks, enough support by tutors and clarity in identifying contact persons.

Apparently, the existence of fixed patterns in the frequency of response suggests that the degree of satisfaction regarding the relationship between professional school and company has no effect at all in the following aspects: their interest in staying with the company in which they are doing their placement, willingness to participate in exchange programmes, working abroad and changes in their vocation.

3.2.3. Mobility

Most of the pupils are aware of the poor quality of foreign language training in the Spanish educational system. They are also aware of the fact that work experiences abroad can be very useful to gain competences and to be more employable.

Therefore, this may be the reason why, according to the figures of the research, the wish to go abroad to work does not change the wish of staying in the training company in which they are placed, the degree of satisfaction regarding in-company training, degree of satisfaction regarding training in school and changes in the vocational orientation of the pupils.

When choosing the countries in which they would like to work or to participate in exchange programmes, most of the respondents selected countries different to those listed in the questionnaire. The most frequently selected countries are those considered to be tourism powers such as USA, France, Italy, UK, Spain, Mexico, Thailand and Japan.

4. Poland

AHE, Daria Zawalska, Beata Marcinkowska, Dorota Nawrat

Introduction

The research was undertaken on a group of 189 pupils from technical secondary school and college. 74 females and 113 males took part. 177 pupils were under the age of 20 and 12 were older than 20. All years of vocational education and training were evaluated: 6 pupils from the first level, 39 from the second level, 114 from the third, and 7 from the fourth level.

4.1. Abstract

Despite of the mandatory standards of education in Poland, there are some gaps within the secondary education. The problem is the mass education system, where there is no response to the individual needs of pupils. The major problems are: overcrowded, more than 30 person groups, lack of integrated teaching (a teacher of a given subject concentrates only on his subject), lack of consideration of personal competencies in educational programmes (62.2 % of the pupils are dissatisfied with the possibility to develop personal competences offered by their schools). Not all teachers of practical subjects have experience in teaching; as a result, they just pass on theoretical knowledge, which is not always satisfactory.

In the conducted research it becomes clear that more emphasis should be put on the education during internships; a fact also admitted by the workers of the sector. Internships do not always play the role they are supposed to. More than the half of the people taking part in the study do not want to work for the companies in which they had internships, although they are satisfied with the level of practice. It may suggest that they "had a good time", but they did not gain practical skills. Furthermore, a lot of pupils performed tasks in the internship unrelated to their future employment or professional work preparation. It can also be the result of an unprofessional attitude of the pupils connected with the system of education (lack of basic training, independence, self-responsibility).

Not all pupils are willing to work during their education which shows a lack of awareness when choosing their profession, a consequence of this, is a bad decision-making regarding their future employment. It is confirmed by hotel managers, who think that not

all candidates (or even their current employees) have the competence required for their job. It influences their motivation towards work, involvement and ability to develop.

Both, hotel managers and employees confirmed that workers have an opportunity to gain skills (via courses, trainings) and it depends on their motivation and eagerness to learn more. In the context of mobility, pupils declared on the one hand, readiness to move, but on the other, they pointed out some limitations, e.g. language barriers. The above mentioned limitations, together with others connected mainly with family life, cultural adaptation, lack of international standards as far as job qualification acknowledgement is concerned, were also pointed out by the workers of the sector.

Employees feel that they are well prepared for the job. They think schools in Poland are quite good, which prepare for cook or receptionist jobs in a quite good way, because they provide not only theory, but also practical lessons. However, they see a problem in finding a good job. In this respect it is important to use and search for information effectively (especially the internet). Another vital issue are recommendations. Workers think, that more emphasis should be put on practical preparation/lessons, conducted by experienced people (in that sector). Employees believe that there are good places in Poland to gain their qualifications. Graduating from vocational school gives a basis to continue their training on special courses. A good cook cannot learn to cook only on courses; however, personal motivation and predisposition are very important. Additionally theory is one thing and practice another, and therefore most essential. Trainings should be systematic, especially in those occupations, where theory is not so important, but practice is a key to success. There also should be language courses, work with clients, and regarding to, gastronomy-related courses. Such as meal preparation, motivation for experimenting, training in the decoration of dishes. Moreover interpersonal training and practical preparation in the workplace, lessons conducted by experienced persons, cooperation with workmates, effective information transfer between employees and team management by hotel managers. Courses are helpful if they are conducted by specialists, authorities in a given sector, who are not only knowledgeable but also very experienced. Invaluable courses are those, where a trainee gains a specific knowledge or ability to make something new. Throughout the whole career, these skills and abilities should be improved: practical skills, ability to work with people, time management and team player skills, foreign language command. When it comes to a cook – learning of new recipes, menu diversifying; higher education, constant training and searching for novelties are also very important in that job.

The most essential matter is proper preparation for the job, but also: good interpersonal skills, commitment, eagerness to learn, openness, desire to gain knowledge, fast adaptation to new conditions and ability to learn fast.

4.2. Results

The following summary gives an insight into the most significant results of the Polish survey. Most of the survey was done in Polish public schools, which currently is poorly financed by the government.

4.2.1. Vocational School

25,9% of the Polish pupils are dissatisfied with the professional skills they learn at school. They wish to have better equipment. They criticise that there is a lack of facilities for vocational subjects. Regarding their practice they have to complete they wish for an adequate payment.

23% of the interviewed pupils say they don't acquire soft skills at the vocational school. The most important issue for pupils is the demand to work more with customers and to gain more practise during their education. If it worked like this, social skills could be gained much more effectively at vocational schools.

In the Polish educational system, professional know-how is still more important than soft skills; knowledge is more appreciated than personal competences. In general, our curriculum is overloaded with knowledge, pupils have to learn a lot but without soft skills they don't know how to use their knowledge after finishing school.

More than the half (51,9%) of the interviewed pupils have suggestions on what should be changed in vocational schools: more practical lessons - less theory, more vocational training, more individual approach and more practical courses. Pupils should be paid for their work, the schools could organize more presentations connected with their professions and finally they wish a better organization (i.e. smaller group of professional classes, place where you can spend your break). In the surveyed schools too little emphasis is placed on practical knowledge of the profession.

Concerning the test groups' suggestion of improvement in their vocational school, it is significant, that things they would like to improve are more practice and foreign languages.

According to managers do candidates and employees not always fulfil all requirements. Managers have enormous problems in finding well-qualified cooks. Finding qualified and dedicated employees is, in many cases, the biggest problem, and managers find it a challenge. They do not want workers who come to a workplace to chat and wait until somebody else does their job. To make this situation better, the quality of vocational education has to be changed drastically. In the managers' opinion, vocational schools prepare future employees only to a certain extent, mainly theory is provided whereas they place too little emphasis on practice. They underline the fact that vocational graduates have quite a good level of knowledge, but they cannot use it in practice (or they do not want to). Managers think that in vocational schools there should be more practice along with 'real' internships, where pupils come to a workplace and are evaluated for their work, like all workers. Also better psychological selection should be implemented to find out why does someone want to take up this profession.

Teachers should have practical knowledge. More hours of internships, harsher marking and graduation requirements should be introduced right from the start. Very essential are, for instance, internships in hotels to show pupils what the real job in a hotel looks like. A good hotel-keeper should work in all job positions in the hotel and know how things work in the building. The main aim of an internship is to prepare pupils for their job.

4.2.2. Training School

Pupils want to learn those skills which are connected with the profession they take up: cooking, consumer service, waiter and confectioner. Furthermore bartender, food service aesthetics, production of confection and delicacies, food decoration, group work, cooking with products of bad quality, approaching people, guest services at various events, working in the café, interpersonal communication, preparing parties, familiarization, hygiene at the workplace, computer skills, approach to people, guest services at various events, management, the organization of catering services, food preparation and service reviews, cleaning, handling consumer diets, preparing meals with the smallest possible cost, technology of gastronomy.

24,6% say that soft skills are not acquired at their training school⁷. Again, the interviewed pupils wish more practice and particularly practice in professional restaurants and not only at school. The wish to work with "real customers" is quite strong.

⁷ In Poland training schools are fulltime schools.

Furthermore, they miss the support of their trainers and the preparation for the traineeship. It would be as well helpful to know how to act in difficult situations with customers.

This dissatisfaction with the training schools can be seen in the responsiveness regarding the question if they want to stay in their "training company". 78,9% say that they don't want to stay. Pupils were not pleased with the training (low standard, poor atmosphere, low payment, poor relations with superiors, lack of equipment), they want to learn more and have higher ambitions, they want to go abroad, they want to create their own business or some want to change their profession.

One third (33.7%) of the pupils doesn't feel well prepared for their professional everyday life. They claimed that they didn't learn enough during school time. They are not satisfied with their level of knowledge and level of practice. The reason for their dissatisfaction is caused by inadequate level of curricula compared to the current market. They have to learn a lot of unnecessary things.

41.2% of the pupils have suggestions on what could be changed in the education in the training company⁸. Pupils should be paid for their work, they should have the possibility of having practice in real companies, they wish more equipment and assistance, more practical courses, more working hours in order to prepare better. They wish individual vocational training.

In the early stage of a job the most essential thing, in the managers' opinion, is the worker's involvement as well as the eagerness to learn and being interested. In the receptionist job the practice of client management (even in a shop) is important. Other crucial elements are: the ability to observe and learn fast, the ability to get used to a new work environment, accepting orders from the superiors, reliability in carrying out the orders, theoretical knowledge and vocational education.

Schools should pay more attention to the selection of training companies and supervise the course of professional practice.

4.2.3. Further education

Concerning further education, answers are divided between those who want to continue their education and the rest of the pupils who want to work in restaurants, pubs, bars or other places connected with their education, and others who want to progress no further

⁸ Pupils have to make an obligatory internship, but they don't work like Austrian and German apprentices 80% of their professional training at a company.

at the moment. The quality of the courses depend on the trainer and their ability to pass on knowledge. It is important to organize courses which aim at refreshing the obvious things in the job, but they are forgotten due to routine. There should be more practice supervised by professionals from that sector. Exchanging experiences by attending fairs or courses gives the opportunity to present oneself and learn new things.

4.2.4. Mobility

78.2% could imagine taking part in an exchange programme in a foreign country during their vocational education and training. 21.8% would prefer to stay in Poland. Those who want to stay in Poland answered that they love their country, their family, friends and they see their chances in Poland. According to managers, the biggest obstacles of mobility are problems with accommodating employees (even for a short period of time), costs of travel, people's mentality and no or very little knowledge of foreign languages.

Poland does not have a long hotel or restaurant tradition. However, they think that qualifications gained in other countries are recognizable in the European Union. However, cultural diversity and the ability to adjust to a new place are real obstacles. What is more, there are no specialized work agencies, which would act in these sectors and conduct high-standard recruitment process so that the chosen employees - the best ones - are appreciated abroad and treated as qualified employees.

Employees say about mobility: the ability to live in a place, where the work is located and the employer's help to adapt in a new place are the most important aspects of job mobility but knowledge of foreign languages is as important. Society in general and the minorities, health care and help in adaptation to a new place - everything that makes an individual feel safe. As the biggest obstacles employees enlisted: having a family and the language barrier. For interviewees the chance in increasing mobility is to unify procedures, teach languages, job rotation, during which employees have a chance to gain practical and cultural knowledge of a given country. The best solution for the questioned would be the creation of some kind of European Certificate in Tourism. This certificate would confirm skills and knowledge in a given occupation. It should be a very developed and deliberate system, which would check skills and qualifications of each candidate. As a result, it would guarantee good preparation for a job and could be recognized in the whole of EU. The course should be finished with an exam and the above mentioned certificate.

5. Germany

Harz_AG, Katja Heidler

5.1. Introduction

The “Harz” region is situated in the former eastern Germany and belongs to the Federal State of Saxony-Anhalt. This area is mainly a rural district with small and medium sized companies. One of the most important branches of the local economy is the tourism industry. Because of its importance the need for skilled personnel is high, so the tourism branch suffers under the demographic development. Although the region has a high rate of unemployment (an average of 11.7% in 2009), in 2009 there were 26.000 apprentices missing.

The “Harz” district is a district which has recently been created out of three smaller districts. This is an important factor because the “Harz” district now has too many schools. In each of the former districts there was one vocational school.

The administrative area plans to reduce the number of vocational schools, therefore our questionnaire is highly explosive because it gives an insight into the quality of the schools and their standard of teaching. Under these circumstances the “Harz_ AG” is really grateful for receiving the permission to question the 248 apprentices in the professional field of cooks and hotel specialists. The interview partners were the vocational school J.P.C. Heinrich Mette of Quedlinburg (90 apprentices) and the vocational school of Wernigerode (158 apprentices).

SUPPORTED BY



5.2. Comparison of the qualitative research and quantitative survey

Of the 248 questioned apprentices, 110 young people are learning to become a cook, 114 like to become a hotel specialist and 24 of them would like to become a restaurant specialist. Answering the question how satisfied they are with their vocational school, around 68% were satisfied with their school. 21% of the questioned were less satisfied, and 6% were unsatisfied with their vocational school. Why they are not satisfied with their vocational school, that question was answered by around 31% of the interviewed apprentices. From their point of view, there is a lack in the quality of the education. Of these 31%, around 38% miss specialized knowledge. Furthermore, 51% of the apprentices are unsatisfied with the teaching methods within the vocational school. The apprentices criticized the teaching methods, for instance, that the learning atmosphere should be improved. Other important points were that they would like to discuss more often during the lessons; they'd like to work more often with the computer and would rather prefer multimedia-based lessons.

52% of the apprentices of the vocational school of Wernigerode would like to improve something at their school. 41% of these apprentices were not satisfied with the behaviour of the teachers. They'd like to have more motivated teachers; the teachers should have more practical experiences within the field they are teaching. Another fact mentioned by the apprentices was that the teachers have little understanding for the apprentices' long working hours, and because of that also have little understanding for the apprentices' lack of concentration. One other important subject mentioned was the improvement of practical training. In both schools the apprentices miss a better relation between theory and praxis. During the lesson they would like to have more everyday examples. 72% of the apprentices of the vocational school of Quedlinburg would like to improve something at their school. At the vocational school of Heinrich Mette, 35% of the questioned apprentices would like to have more practical exercises. 35% of the questioned apprentices wished for an improved quality of the lessons. They would rather use the computer more often and in general be taught how to work with the new media. They would like to receive more detailed instructions and a better preparation for their exams. 34% of them would like to change the behaviour of the teachers - they should be more motivated and should have more practical experiences and so on.

Some of the apprentices wrote shocking comments in their questionnaire. For example they want a better adjustment between the working and school hours - when there is too much to do at their hotel they cannot go to school. At the end they fail their exams and do not finish their apprenticeship and lose the job. So the apprentices demand

controlled working hours.

29% of the interviewed apprentices are unsatisfied with the company they work for. 15% underlined comments such as they do not get the needed help and assistance of their instructor at work. 20% of the apprentices even said they miss specialized knowledge. The answers of the question "What the pupils miss in their companies" varied in the two different schools. In the vocational school of Quedlinburg 37% of the interviewed apprentices say there is the need for improvement. 24% of them want to receive better and more detailed instructions from their training supervisor and 21% demand a better training for their future day to day work. An improvement of the working conditions is favoured by 21% of the questioned apprentices.

In Wernigerode the picture differed. 34% of the apprentices voice the need for improvement. The improvement of the preparation for their future day to day work as a skilled labour was the most important matter for 36% of interviewees.

Within that field they would like to improve the handling with foreign guests, the training of role plays to improve the handling of difficult situations. Furthermore, they would like to get the possibility to take over more responsibility and work in a more independent way. Better and more detailed instructions of the training supervisor, better working conditions and the improvement of support of apprentices ranged between 15% and 17%. As mentioned above, there were also shocking comments made by the apprentices. Requesting to employ more manpower, to improve the teamwork and the communication between the different departments of a hotel and to employ more skilled labour was one of the most mentioned facts in the field of better working conditions.

Although the close cooperation between the schools and the apprenticing companies is really important and fundamental, 63% of the questioned apprentices miss this teamwork. Another important matter for a high quality apprenticeship is the support and help of apprentices as well as a structured work flow. These aspects are missing. 13% of the 248 questioned apprentices complain that they do not have sufficient support from their instructor. 15% of the 248 young people even miss a structured daily routine at their company. As well as, 15% of the apprentices do not have a contact person they can turn to in the case of problems or questions or simply as a guide. So it is not astonishing that 75% of the 248 interviewed apprentices would rather not stay at their out-picturing-place. But only 53% of the questioned apprentices of both schools have ideas for improvement. Related to the two schools, 42% of the interviewed persons in Quedlinburg are not satisfied with their working conditions.

Statements like you will be treated like an apprentice, better chances in another company, to work in a foreign country, no chance of an employment on a permanent basis, or starting a career at the Federal Armed Forces varied between 3 - 5%.

Furthermore, 24% of the apprentices in Quedlinburg are satisfied with their working conditions. The apprentices of Wernigerode draw a different picture. 35% of the interviewees highlighted bad working conditions. 12% of the interviewed persons of Wernigerode would rather collect experiences in a foreign country compared to Quedlinburg, where only 3% trace such a plan. But in Wernigerode only 18% of the interviewees were satisfied with their working conditions.

47% of 248 questioned apprentices have ideas for changes at the vocational schools. At the two different vocational schools - for the apprentices of the vocational school of Quedlinburg the most important weak point was the low offer of practical exercises. 43% of the apprentices of the vocational school of Quedlinburg wish for more exercises where the apprentices can practice their day to day business. Especially they wish for a better balance between theory and practice.

This was the same weakness that 42% of the apprentices of the vocational school of Wernigerode mentioned. The commentaries on what exactly should be improved at the vocational school of Wernigerode differed between better preparation of the subjects, a better adjustment between the schedule of the bus and the lessons, skilled teachers of the subjects social studies and English, as well as, precise rules and a better acceptance of the authorities of teachers. Important differences between the two vocational schools are established in the following ideas of modification: At the vocational school of Wernigerode 32% of the apprentices wished for a changed attitude of the teachers of this school. Only 13% of the questioned apprentices of the vocational school of Quedlinburg would like the same change. 19% of the apprentices of the vocational school of Quedlinburg favour an improvement in the encouragement and appreciation of the pupils, whereas only 9% of the apprentices of Wernigerode would like an improvement here.

Of the 248 questioned apprentices, 236 have ideas for a change in their apprenticing company. 49% of the questioned apprentices of both vocational schools are not satisfied with the company they work for. The reasons for their dissatisfaction were also similar in both vocational schools. Around 40% of the apprentices of the vocational school of Wernigerode and 39% of the apprentices of the vocational school of Quedlinburg are unsatisfied with the working conditions. About 31% of the apprentices of the both vocational schools want more backup in their day to day work in their apprenticing company. In detail, they wanted the following improvements: less working hours, improved hardware in the apprenticing company, fix working hours, a better communication within the apprenticing company, skilled workers who are experienced and able to help and a better teamwork. The apprentices mention the following items: a

weekend off, less pressure and stress, regular meetings and discussions and internships within other hotels.

Concerning their further education during and after their apprenticeship, the young people draw a different picture in each vocational school. The focus of the young people in each school varied. 59% of the questioned apprentices of the vocational school of Wernigerode answer the question "which further education or classes would you like to participate in during your apprenticeship?". No time or possibility was given as an answer by only 3%. To participate on special workshops and seminars or to read specialized literature was mentioned by 11%. For 21% of the young people it is more important for their further education to work abroad or in another region or company. 19% would rather like to improve their specialized knowledge and would like to extend their language skills. At the vocational school of Quedlinburg, only 2% of the questioned young people mentioned that they do not have enough time for participating at workshops, or have no time to invest in their further education. 31% of the questioned apprentices of Quedlinburg would rather work in a foreign country, region or company. At the vocational school of Quedlinburg, only 13% mentioned this, in Wernigerode, 19% are wanting to study after finishing their apprenticeship. To receive further specialized knowledge was important for 13% of the apprentices of Quedlinburg, and for 9% of the apprentices of Wernigerode. 18% of the apprentices of Quedlinburg and 20% of the apprentices of Wernigerode would like to gain further knowledge of foreign languages. Concerning the question which further education the questioned apprentices would favour after their apprenticeship, the answers again were different from school to school. 67% of the interviewed apprentices of Quedlinburg and 59% of the apprentices of Wernigerode answered this question. 52% of the interviewees in Quedlinburg wanted to receive a higher professional qualification. In Wernigerode only 15% favoured this higher professional education. Only 18% of the questioned apprentices at both schools want to study afterwards. 12% of the interviewed apprentices of Quedlinburg and 20% of the apprentices of Wernigerode want to work in a different section or department of the hotel. Some of these young people also mention learning a different profession. In Quedlinburg 17% and in Wernigerode just 9% of the interviewees want to learn a different profession.

The last questions of the questionnaire concerned working abroad. The majority - 79% - would like to work abroad. Around 70% would even work in a foreign country during their apprenticeship. These questions were answered by between 98% and 96% of the interviewed apprentices. Why don't you want to work in a foreign country? 12% answered this question in Quedlinburg and 23% of the interviewees in Wernigerode. At both schools, the most common answer was to be scared with 55% in Quedlinburg and

33% in Wernigerode. They are scared of being alone, of getting homesick, of having a lack in language skills, of not having a tutor or anybody who can help and not being paid enough. Another negative aspect was the missing social surrounding which 55% of the interviewed apprentices of Quedlinburg and 53% of the interviewees of Wernigerode underlined. It is striking that 4 apprentices of the vocational school of Wernigerode mention that they are not interested at all in going abroad. The question why they don't want to work abroad during their apprenticeship, 8% of the interviewees of Quedlinburg and 22% of the interviewees of Wernigerode answered. Here, the reason of lack of professional knowledge is mentioned, next to the aspects of being scared and the missing social surrounding. This is mentioned at both schools by around 14% of the interviewees.

5.3. Conclusion

At the first interview, the stakeholders mention a lot of necessary competences which are difficult for the apprentices to acknowledge. But at the second interview, it has been shown that the apprentices know exactly how they have to perform. In the following part I would like to show why some of the expectations of the stakeholders cannot be fulfilled. In the interview of the stakeholders, we figured out that the professional assistance of apprentices is fundamental for their positive development to a skilled labour. Furthermore, it has been said how important the ideal flow of information inside the company is, as well as, between the staff and the guests. Another important competence is being able to pass on collected experiences from a professional to the trainees and young professionals. This is a talent – and just a few professionals are able to do so. Furthermore, this ability is important and might lead to a successful career.

So these are the abilities an apprentice should fulfil, but in reality, 29% of the interviewed apprentices are unsatisfied with the company they work for. 15% underline that they do not get the needed help and assistance from their instructor at work. In another part of the interview, this matter shows up under "What the pupils miss in their companies". In the vocational school of Quedlinburg, 37% of the interviewed apprentices mention the general need for improvement. 24% of them want to receive better and more detailed instructions from their training supervisor. As said above, exactly these aspects are mentioned by the stakeholders in how important it is for an apprentice, to obtain the right flow of information, the passing on of collected experiences, as well as having a real tutor. If we do not hand out the right tools to our apprentices, how can they be supposed to become the skilled labours needed by the tourism industry?

The same problem was mentioned again when the apprentices ask to employ more

manpower, to improve the teamwork and the communication between the different departments of a hotel. To employ more skilled labour was one of the most mentioned facts in the field of better working conditions.

Although the support and help of apprentices, as well as a structured work flow seem to be really important for the interviewed stakeholders, these aspects are missing. 13% of the 248 questioned apprentices complain that they do not receive sufficient support from their instructor.

As mentioned also in our analyses of the stakeholder interviews, the Harz region tried to consolidate its position within the tourism sector, but the service providers try to be the most inexpensive. They cannot afford to employ skilled labour because they are too expensive, therefore they employ unskilled labour. Even the apprentices complain about this, because they have to replace skilled labour - which is unprofessional!

Regarding just how important the tourism branch is for this region, it is distressing that 75% of the 248 respondents don't want to stay at their current company, but most of all, that 28% would not choose this job again. To solve this problem, one should improve the knowledge about working in the tourism branch. A better educational advertising concerning the job description, for instance in schools, is necessary.

But it has to be underlined that the biggest responsibility is accorded to the apprenticing companies of the region. If so many young people are not satisfied with their company and even their apprenticeship, how can they act like business managers? What is required furthermore by stakeholders is that they should be able to identify synergistic effects which most of the staff members can't. This was one important matter for the stakeholders. Another important matter was "Doing the job with enthusiasm and love" - this was regarded as one of the most important characteristics employees in the tourism sector should have. If they even regret doing this job, as 28% of the questioned apprentices do, then they will never be high performing employees. The next question would be "are the companies' skilled workers the right examples for the apprentices?"

Easy solutions have been shown up by the apprentices. They mention the following wishes: a weekend off, less pressure and stress, regular meetings and discussions and internships within other hotels.

So, the apprentices even mentioned some easy ways of handling the problems they are facing. But the most important matter is not just that the apprentices are used as cheap labour. They still need assistance and help, and the companies are investing a lot of money into the apprenticeship of each one of these young people. The situation could be improved by giving the apprentices enough assistance by the more experienced colleagues. Furthermore, it would be a signal to invest more into the apprentices. They

could get training programs which offer new and alternative ways of marketing and sales (How can I tell myself as well as the hotel, and how to handle criticism). This would be a good way of showing the apprentices how important they are for the company they work for, and it would give them sufficient self confidence and motivation for their day to day work. An additional option would be to create a training rotation. This would mean that the tourist providers of a region, no matter whether two or five stars hotels, exchange their trainees and professionals.

The awareness of the importance of lifelong learning seems to be existent. Around 60% of the interviewees want to undertake something in this matter. But especially within the field of tourism, mobility (and work experience abroad) is really important. In spite of that, the willing to go abroad is low. The young people of Wernigerode would rather not leave their region but invest in further education such as studying, receiving specialized knowledge and learning foreign languages. The importance of going abroad is not known for their personal development, as it is for the development of skilled labour. This is a matter that has to be communicated - just how important it is to spend some time abroad, either in a foreign school or looking for a job with the help of employment agencies.

One aspect is shown in the interview: the answers depend on the region the apprentices work in. Wernigerode is a tourist region with a lot of well known and traditional hotels. For the hotels of the region of Quedlinburg it is harder to survive, because this city is not known as well and doesn't have such a long tradition. This might be an important reason why the apprentices are not as satisfied as those in Wernigerode. One last remark is that the quality of the lessons depends on the teachers - a lot of apprentices in Quedlinburg (18%) complain about the English lessons and their improvement - in Wernigerode they are only 6%.

These questionnaires were an interesting experience. They underlined weaknesses we already thought we know, but now we are sure about. So this will help to improve the quality of the apprenticeship of the Harz region. What we will try to do is to work closely together with the vocational schools, repeat these interviews once a year and work on an improvement of the quality of the apprenticeship in this region.

6. Summary of the international comparison – most significant results of the quantitative survey including the results of the qualitative research

The international comparison reveals that the interviewed apprentices and pupils are more satisfied with the vocational school education than with the professional education in the companies. In the quantitative analysis the answers given by the future cooks and hotel and gastronomy assistants or receptionists are not specially analyzed.

Nevertheless, some particular answers by the respective professional groups can be allocated quite exactly, as for example the wish for acquiring more knowledge of foreign languages during the professional education.

Concerning the satisfaction about the education in vocational schools and companies, the results sometimes differ considerably amongst the participating countries:

The Spanish interview partners are the ones most satisfied with their vocational education and training: 145 of 151 pupils indicate that they are satisfied or very satisfied with their vocational school. Also the Austrian comparison group is satisfied with the vocational school: 14 of 140 apprentices state to be unsatisfied or very unsatisfied. The Polish pupils interviewed lie in the middle: 152 of 189 pupils are satisfied or very satisfied with their formation. The most unsatisfied are the German apprentices: 77 of 247 apprentices, so 31.2% of the interviewed persons, criticize parts of their vocational education and training. The reasons for the high level of dissatisfaction shown by the German and the Polish apprentices/pupils are the following:

The German apprentices criticize the teaching methods (66.2%) and that not enough professional skills are taught (48.1%). Polish pupils indicate that their personal competences are not boosted (62.2%). It is striking that in relation to the acquisition of social competences, the answers have a very different tone. Answering the question 2.1.c. *"Why are you "unsatisfied" or "very unsatisfied" with your education?"* the German apprentices and the Polish pupils state that their social competences are boosted at school. However, with question n.12 *"Are soft skills taught in school?"* the contrary is stated: 37.3% of the German apprentices and 23 % of the Polish pupils say that their social competences are not boosted in school. In contrast to that, the Austrian

apprentices and Spanish pupils are satisfied. The interviewed stakeholders and professionals of the participating project countries point out that the apprentices, pupils and as well students (university degree holders) reveal a lack of social competences. However, according to the experts, the social competence is THE core competence for both professions, for cooks and hotel and gastronomy assistants as well as for receptionists. Stakeholders and professionals therefore demand that the acquisition of social competences should be anchored in the secondary school's curriculum, so that apprentices, pupils and university degree holders can safely enter the working world.

Within the international comparison, there is a general consensus that the instruction should be more practice-orientated. The apprentices and pupils suggest the following topics:

- Role games – How do I behave in front of the guest? How do I serve guests? How do I treat critical guests? How do I present myself in front of the guests?
(Reception)
- Incidents (complaints, conflicts) which occur in the company or during the practical time should be shown as case studies in school and should be worked on.
(Reception).
- Teaching unit „behaviour and manners“, (kitchen/reception).

Furthermore, one quarter of the Polish pupils (25.9%) and German apprentices (23%) criticize that they do not learn any specific professional skills in school.

Concerning the acquisition of specific professional competences, a significant result for receptionists is that

- the focus should be laid more on foreign languages. The results reveal that even degree holders of secondary schools and universities in Poland and Spain show a lack of knowledge in foreign languages. In Austria and in Germany one has to distinguish between the vocational school (VET schools) and establishments of VET colleges (Matura/Abitur, school leaving examination). In both countries it is a

fact that the higher the school leaving degree, the better the knowledge of foreign languages.

and for cooks

- that regional and international menus should be taught and trends should be tested in school; more creativity and practical units are wished for.

In the international comparison, the grade of discontent with the education in the company is surprisingly equally high: 32.1% of the Austrian apprentices, 30.2% of the Polish pupils and 29.1% of the German apprentices are unsatisfied or very unsatisfied with their education in the training company. 60% of the Spanish pupils had not made any practical experiences at the time of the survey.

The following items are criticized most frequently by the apprentices/pupils:

The company provides too fewer specific professional skills: Austria 63.9%, Germany 59.6% and Poland 51.1%; and the pupils/apprentices are not boosted in their professional development: Austria 57.8%, Germany 52.8% and Poland 45.6%. Apprentices or degree holders wish for a more specific and psychological support at the beginning of their professional career. This result is covered by the qualitative census. As is the case in the vocational education training, also in the company education a contradiction within the answer behaviour arises. One quarter of the interviewed persons in Austria, Germany and Poland states that they do not learn any social skills in their training company. In the first part of the questionnaire, this question was not answered in a significant way⁹.

⁹ Compare question 3.1.c. "Why are you "unsatisfied" or "very unsatisfied" – The development of my social competences is not boosted" and question 14 "Are social skills taught in your training company?"

According to the interviewed persons, the focus of the in-company education should be laid more on the following items:

- Teaching of specific professional skills (AT, DE, PL),
- Support by a tutor/apprenticeship trainer in the professional development (AT, DE, PL),
- Teaching of social competences (A, DE, PL),
- Respect and acknowledgement by the employers (AT, DE, PL).

The Spanish and the Polish interview partners wish for more practical units during their professional education and a better relationship to the real working world. This is valid for cooks and receptionists, for establishments of higher education and universities. In the classical apprenticeship formation, such as it can be found in Austria and Germany, the acquisition of competences depends highly on the respective company providing the training. This is confirmed by the qualitative as well as by the quantitative results. The staff managers in Austria educate the social and professional competence from the “house” in which the job applicant has learned or worked.

According to the current results, the education of apprentices in training companies seems to be responsible for the fact, that German and Austrian apprentices feel better prepared for the “every-day-work” than their Spanish or Polish colleagues, who do not profit from this kind of apprenticeship: only 10.2% of the Austrian apprentices feel badly prepared for every-day-life, 20.2% of the Germans, 32.6% of the Spanish and 33.7% of the Polish pupils. That the Spanish and the Polish pupils desire more practice in their vocational education and training, can be seen clearly in the qualitative census (stakeholders and professionals) as well as in the quantitative survey. Polish pupils wish to absolve more practice in the companies during their education, which should be more challenging and instructive and not consist in unskilled labour which most of the interview partners have experienced so far. In Spain there is the additional problem that the trainers are often very young and that they do not show the necessary expertise which is required for both of the professions.

The quantitative results within the category of further education are not significant. Further education is not connected to a particular institution by the interviewed persons. In fact, the opportunity for further education depends on several factors: on the structure of the company (international enterprise, small or medium sized enterprise), on the budget, on the location (city, countryside), and on the schedule of further education offers (frequently offers cannot be taken because they cannot be arranged with the working time). In addition to the environmental factors, the person him/herself of course must be motivated to study further.

The highest motivation of mobility is shown by the Spanish pupils, amounting to 84.8%, followed by the Austrians with 80%, and the Germans with 77.7%; whereas only 69.8% of the Polish pupils indicate to intend to go abroad. Quite a high percentage of the interview partners can imagine participating in an exchange program: Spain 87.4%; Poland 78.2%; Austria 72.8% and Germany 71.8%.

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7. Suggestions

Vocational School

- Better teaching of professional know-how (DE)
- Improvement of the teaching methods (AT, DE, PL)
- A better advancement of the personal competences at school (PL)
- Better professional training of the teachers (AT)
- Focus more on a better qualitative education (AT)
- 10 weeks instead of 8 weeks professional school – to learn more intensively and exactly (AT)
- More practical exercises to train the day to day business (DE, PL)
- Improvement between the relation between theory and praxis (DE, PL)
- Better preparation of the subjects (DE)
- Precise rules and a better acceptance of the authorities of teachers (DE)

Training Company

- Better teaching of professional know-how (AT, DE, PL)
- Professional accompany of the apprentices/pupils through trainers and instructors (AT, DE, PL)
- Better development of personal competences (AT, DE, PL)
- Better transfer of social competences through trainings, role plays (AT, DE, PL)
- A better acceptance and respect by the company and fair treatment (AT, DE, PL)
- Fair working hours (AT, DE, PL)

Further Education

- In-Company Trainings
- Time off on evenings, as most courses take part in the late afternoon (diverges with working hours)
- Training of social competences with role plays

Mobility

- Language skills – more focus on that in vocational schools
- Financial support by company or school
- Time off from the company when taking up an apprenticeship

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Appendix

ECVET-TOUR Work tasks Key competences in Tourism

QUALITATIVE SURVEY

F2F - Interviews with stakeholders/professionals

Draft and Final draft of the Interview guidelines and consulting	3s, University of Salzburg	GB, SS
Input and discussion about Interview guidelines	University of Salzburg, SMC, 3s, COEPA, AHE, Harz_AG	SS, MT, GB, PNF, DZ, KH,
Translation of interview guidelines	3s University of Salzburg	GB, SS
All supplements like "how to manage interviews and guidelines for analysing the interviews"	3s	GB
Implementation of the Interviews (stakeholders/professionals)	University of Salzburg, SMC, COEPA, AHE, Harz_AG	SS, MT, PNF, DZ, KH,
Transcripts of the Interviews (stakeholders/professionals)	University of Salzburg, SMC, COEPA, AHE, Harz_AG	SS, MT, PNF, DZ, KH,
Analysis and Summary of Interviews (stakeholders/professionals)	University of Salzburg, SMC, COEPA, AHE, Harz_AG	SS, MT, PNF, DZ, KH,
International comparison consulting	3s	GB
International comparison	SMC	MT

QUANTITATIVE SURVEY

Draft and Final draft of the questionnaires and consulting	3s	GB
Translation of questionnaires	University of Salzburg	SS
All supplements like "how to manage interviews and guidelines for analysing the interviews"	3s, University of Salzburg	GB, SS
Implementation of the survey guidelines	University of Salzburg, SMC, COEPA, AHE, Harz_AG	SS, MT, PNF, DZ, KH,
Analysis of survey	3MfB, University of Salzburg	SS
Quantitative International comparison	3MfB, University of Salzburg	SS
Short summary of survey	University of Salzburg, SMC, COEPA, AHE, Harz_AG	SS, MT, PNF, DZ, BM, DN, KH,
Consulting "International comparison of survey"	3s	GB
International comparison	SMC	MT

Team ECVET-TOUR

Sandra Strobach (SS) – University of Salzburg, Maria Thalmaier (MT) - SMC, Geneveva Brandstetter (GB) - 3s, Pablo Navarro Ferre (PNF) – COEPA, Daria Zawalska (DZ), Dorota Nawrat (DN), Beata Marcinkowska (BM) - AHE, Katja Heidler (KH) – Harz_AG, Günther Brandstetter (3Mfb).

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