Mapping VET trainers’ competences and existing SSE training programs

Presentation of the first intellectual output of the project “Strengthening VET trainers’ competences and skills” (Sep. 2019 – Aug. 2021), funded by the Erasmus+ programme. Collection and analysis of information and data related to competences of VET and SSE trainers, as well as existing training programs in the field of SSE, in order to “map” the existing situation in 6 European countries (France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Portugal and Romania).
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Part 1:
Approaches to the main concepts of SSE, VET, skills and competences
Social Solidarity Economy (SSE), a diversity of alternatives

- enduring and more recent social movements
- a diversity of local production and distribution of goods and services initiatives
- alternative to the mainstream capitalist economy
- influences of local history, culture, and political/economic realities

... mutual help, workers’ unions, associations in the artistic and cultural sector, climate and environmental protection initiatives, community-supported agriculture, co-housing, migrant support, etc.

**SSE is identified as an economic dynamic interceding between the economic development policy and the environmental crisis**
“Social Economy” in European Union

- **Membership:** up to 160 million people in Europe are members of social economy enterprises (mostly retail, banking and agricultural cooperatives, as well as mutual societies offering services complementary to social security regimes)

- **Objectives:** contribution to the EU’s employment, social cohesion, regional and rural development, environmental protection, consumer protection, agricultural, third countries development, and social security policies

- **Size:** mostly micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)

“the primary objective of traditional social economy enterprises [aiming] to serve the members and not to obtain a return on investment as the traditional mainstream capital companies do [...], in accordance with the principle of solidarity and mutuality, and manage their enterprise on the basis of 'one man one vote' principle”
Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP) definition:

“knowledge, know-how, skills and/or competences required in particular occupations or more broadly in the labor market”

Great diversity at national and regional level, VET predominantly:

- addresses young people
- provides qualifications at the middle level of education
- is financed by education budgets and coordinated by central and regional governments.

Vocational Education and Training (VET) has been identified as a crucial tool to be reinforced by European member States in order to face the socio-economic crises, in particular the massive unemployment, and more specifically the NEETs.
Vocational Education and Training in European Union

The CEDEFOP points at work environments foreseen as integrating “more autonomy, less routine, more use of ICT, reduced physical effort and increased social and intellectual tasks”

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<th>VET Patterns and Interpretation Identified in Europe</th>
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<td><strong>Work-based or dual initial training</strong> (e.g. Denmark, Germany or Austria);</td>
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<td><strong>Initial vocational education</strong> (e.g. Bulgaria, Spain, Malta or Romania);</td>
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<td><strong>Further training</strong> (e.g. Ireland and UK-England);</td>
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<td><strong>Lifelong learning</strong> (e.g. France, Italy or Greece).</td>
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- Public policies and training institutions → integrate the perspective of the future of work in VET policies
- to provide job resilience processes and more accurate job-matching.
Current challenges and job matching

Institutions and programs addressing SSE and the future of work

- European Commission
- ILO Social and Solidarity Economy Academy
- Agenda 2030 Sustainable Development Goals
- G20 Inclusive Business Platform
- G7 Global Social Impact Investment Steering Group
- UN Inter-Agency Task Force on SSE
- International Leading Group on SSE
- European Commission’s expert group on social entrepreneurship

Poor working conditions are main global employment challenge

Progress in reducing unemployment globally is not being matched by improvements in the quality of work

Towards a capacity approach

**Capabilities approach**: setting a set of skills that goes beyond individual attributes to consider the social, economic and cultural conditions that are required to realise capability.

**Capacities**: collective nature of skills and competences, from the expertise to develop individual capacities

**Autonomy of the trainees**: underlying capacity to be able to realise a number of different outcomes beyond workplace in a broader occupational field

**Role of VET**: processes of learning, in order to act on each possible capacity developed via the workplace practices.

Qualification shifting from a package of skills and competences, to a negotiated array of occupational standards to be articulated according to individuals, empowering them in building their professional path in a given social and cultural environment.
Part 2:
Skills and competencies required for the SSE:
Existing training programmes on SSE in each country
Existing training programmes on SSE

**SSE presence in official VET system:** VET providers, training organisations, at workplace, local authorities, universities, SSE entities

**SSE presence in non typical VET system:** SSE fora and schools, SSE entities and networks, non profit and promotion organisations, seminars and trainings

**SSE presence at higher general education level**

**Official Document for skills and competences needed for SSE:** No official vocational profile in Germany, Greece, Italy and Portugal.

In France: two examples of mandatory skills framework

In Romania: three specific competence units in occupational standards

In Portugal: There is an attempt with general requirements

Establishment of a European certificate of qualifications for consultants of Social Economy could be a useful tool
Opportunities for further SSE integration in VET trainings

- **Train of Trainers are needed**: existing training courses on SSE are mostly offered to participants in the SSE field.
- **Self-training**: SSE-specific skills training could be carried out within the framework of internal training plans for enterprises with the use of the vast register of vocational training organisations.
- **Cooperative Trainings**: collaborations with the local authorities and the municipalities, or by forming educational platforms as a collaboration between individuals, collectives and organisations.
- **Competency profile**: need for the establishment of European prototypes for the certification of informal qualifications, in particular the establishment of a European certificate of qualifications for consultants of Social Economy.

**Threats in existing trainings approach and content**: To run social work like private company is serving the for-profit direction of social/community work.
The work in social organizations and particularly in social enterprises has to be based on Social Economics to achieve sustainability not on the economics of the private for-profit sector.
Part 3:
Mapping of VET skills and competences: Field research
Objectives & Methodology

Interviews and survey to explore

→ the possibility of integrating VET trainers' competences in existing training programs, focusing on the need to develop a competence profile for SSE in different disciplines of VET studies.

→ to explore elements that will be introduced in a trainer competence profile adjusted to SSE requirement.

Methodology

➢ Need analysis survey in experimentation areas to collect essential data.
➢ Questionnaire, face to face interviews, phone calls.
➢ Target group: VET trainers, SSE trainers, SSE actors and practitioners

In this report Mapping of trainers competences and existing SSE training programs, partners proceeded to an in depth survey, turning to the people most fitted to answer: the trainers.
An interdisciplinary approach

Cognitive, affective & conative competencies

- **Specific general knowledge or/and academic background = cognitive competencies**
  - knowledge = underpinning theory and concepts + tacit knowledge out of experience
  - specialized knowledge = meeting content specific demands and solving content-specific tasks
  - general world knowledge: understanding context, environment of a given society

- **Value-based, feeling and relating-orientated trainers’ skills = affective competencies**
  - personality and attitudes
  - affective competencies of teachers directly affect student learning

- **Acting, behaving = conative competencies**
  - connection of knowledge and affect to behaviour and is associated with the issue of why
  - personal, intentional, playful, deliberate, goal-oriented, or striving component of motivation, the proactive (as opposed to reactive or habitual) aspect of behaviour
Knowledge and academic background: Cognitive competencies

SSE Groundwork

• history, values & concepts, variety of practices & organisations social-economic environmental context at national, European, and international level
• trends, framework and strategies designed from public institutions

Sociological, Anthropological and Economics and Business background

• social and environmental impact
• alternative resources and tools of economic sustainability:
  • ethical finance,
  • societal purpose, political, economic, ecological and social goals,
• management, finance, administrative, market & digital knowledge
• horizontal decision making and management, working conditions in SSE, social/economic sustainability,
• legal environment, multi-stakeholder involvement, social accounting, social finance
• awareness of political dynamics and the knowledge of the laws in matter of work environment.
Knowledge and academic background: Cognitive competencies

**Local social reality** especially in Italy, France, Portugal and Germany
- comprehensive understanding of the economic and social territorial context
- analysing local dynamics

**Network & Partnership**
- mapping and understanding of the social and economic dynamics
- build and participate to network and partnerships

**Nature of work**
- information on workers rights
- training on hybrid and innovative ways of working life corresponding to nonprofit horizontal management
- Workers/members adherence to company objectives
Affective competencies

towards a balance among knowledge, capacities and social attitude

coherence of personal profile/style → matching SSE values

Trainers’ style and approach

- Coherent with the topic style and approach
- Empirical knowledge
- Empathy with others
- Able to cope with vulnerable groups
- Share the core SSE values
- Inspire trust and reciprocal respect
- Stimulate personal ethics
Affective competencies on SSE organisation/social enterprise/ Civil Society organ

Trainers’ experience on SSE organisation

- Experience in SSE field
- Pedagogy of self-management
- Work with creativity
- Links with existing realities

Trainers’ experience in SSE organisation/social entreprise/NGO
Conative competencies

... Inspiring and be proactive

Trainers’ style and approach

- demonstrate positive impact of teamwork, collective work
- promote open systems
- flexibility, cooperative work, experimentatio n and, leadership.
- non-violent communication, active listening
  To be energetic, captivating and enthusiastic
- Flexibility in educational process and adapt to the group dynamic
- act with transparency, honesty, integrity, moral responsibility, solidarity and tolerance.
- network with other organisations
- Provide tools for emancipation (capitalism/hierarchical/patriarchal)
- Enhance people capacities
- facilitate the prospective / complex thinking
- Share desire for social change / care / equity/
- critical thinking + free and fair speech
- promote personal development innovation / interaction
Methodological Aspects of the Trainings

- Analysis of trainees’ needs and expectations
- Fair participation
- Co-construction and co-design the course together with trainees.
- Open spaces for all to participate
- Articulation of individual to collective Skills (at the core of SSE organization development.)
- Trainer – Trainee contract
  - strong connection and communion bond
  - concretization through decision making and practical actions
  - consensus governance of activities
- Collective & cooperative work (no sub-group) for collective learning (rotation of roles)
  → trainees expectation + active learning + participative process => feedback process

... for a transformative experience
Constraints & opportunities

Constraints

transformative practices are mostly invisible / unfamiliar in training modules, invisibility of social solidarity economy practices
Co-optation of concepts relative to SSE from multinational organisations
Lack of knowledgeable and experienced trainers
Trainees have difficulties in internalising SSE principles because they haven’t practice

Opportunities

SSE vision and practices: new pathway on work, local development, social responsibility, education, training, etc.
SSE as an advocacy movement could affect public policies on issues of environmental and social sustainability.
The learning process could be a concrete example of how the SSE could work
To overcome the inadequacy of the Occupational Standard regarding specific training curricula also requires a better identification of the trainees.
Partners of the Project


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