

Key factors for success in Initial Vocational Training with regard to the French experience situated in the European context



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Background information

- ◆ population: 60 million
- ◆ 4th economy world-wide
- ◆ main industry sectors: high technology, agro-industry, tourism



Challenges for Vocational Education in France

- ◆ 7 to 8 million jobs will be taken over by new workforce by 2010
- ◆ companies needs for highly qualified personnel
- ◆ the unemployment rate (over 9%) remains high
- ◆ vocational education has not yet acquired the necessary attractiveness



Some basic figures about Vocational Education

- ◆ 6.2% of the GDP is spent on initial education and training
- ◆ 70% of an age group finish high school, out of which 18% get a vocational degree at the end of high school
- ◆ About 40% of pupils follow a vocational training path on upper secondary level
- ◆ About 8% leave school with no diploma or qualification at all



Basic concepts of the French education system

- ◆ school as a factor of social equality
- ◆ school in order to give access to a minimum of common knowledge
- ◆ vocational training as a way to get a qualification and social promotion
- ◆ the structuring effect of social dialogue (employers -employees) in the field of vocational training



V. E. T. issues in the centre of discussions

- ◆ a better balance between general and vocational education
- ◆ a better understanding of the existing training pathways
- ◆ increased links between initial vocational education and continuing vocational training
- ◆ the validation of skills by experience



V. E. T. issues in the centre of discussions

- ◆ the role of the State, the Regions and the social partners (employers-employees) in initial vocational training (IVT)
- ◆ the role of the State, the Regions and the social partners in continuing vocational training (CVT)
- ◆ decentralisation and the links between IVT and CVT
- ◆ social partners' negotiation is a good chance for life-long learning



Decentralization today : IVT

- ◆ State : responsible for the organisation and the contents of IVT and for the management of teaching staff
- ◆ Regions : responsible for maintenance and building of IVT schools
- ◆ shared competencies : investment programmes (which means for which needs?)
- ◆ social partners (employers-employees) : associated on central and on regional level



Decentralization today : CVT

- ◆ State : measures for people with specific difficulties, for professional sectors and companies
- ◆ Regions : direct competencies in the field of apprenticeship and CVT for youth and adults
- ◆ shared competencies : The State/Regional co-ordination on aims and means
- ◆ social partners : associated on central and regional level



Fields of autonomy for IVT schools today

- ◆ some autonomy for the organisational management
- ◆ project management, allowing the adoption of national objectives to local environment
- ◆ active school/enterprise co-operation units
- ◆ setting up qualification pathways for specific industrial sectors



Decentralization in progress

- ◆ State responsibility for contents, staff and certification
- ◆ regional competence for the IVT and CVT offer (together with the State)
- ◆ association of the social partners on the different levels



Success factors with regard to European policies

- ◆ a global objective for Europe in 2010 :
“to become the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world”
- ◆ three main objectives in the field of training: higher quality, better access and a more open-minded approach
- ◆ objectives to be attained :
 - not more than 10% of young people without qualification
 - 80% achievement of secondary education
 - at least 15% of the workforce trained each year



Common success factors relevant in a number of EU countries

- ◆ the creation of a system that is at once qualifying for work and for further studies
- ◆ the introduction of “alternance” training (regular periods of work in a company) in all vocational training courses
- ◆ the logic of economic and social integration on local level
- ◆ the capacity of network-building and innovation of IVT at school level



Success factors to be developed

- ◆ to give a minimum of knowledge and competence to every young person
- ◆ to clearly link local qualification and employment needs to the national qualification system
- ◆ to adjust existing training to changing skill needs
- ◆ to give entire responsibility to the legitimate partners of vocational training



Success factors in discussions

- ◆ a global approach for the implementation of life-long learning in a practical way
- ◆ a financial system adapted to the needs of the life-long learning reality
- ◆ the individual right for regular access to training
- ◆ international mobility and training passport



Conclusion

- ◆ Many challenges for the European system of initial and also continuing vocational education !

Thank you !

