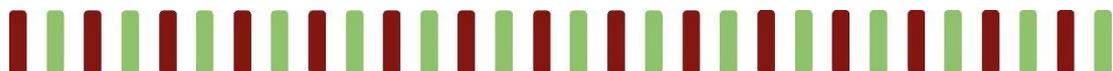




Improving Proximity Responses for the Adaptation of Vocational Education and Training

2015-1-ES01-KA202-015976

**CASE STUDY – Wisamar Bildungsgesellschaft
gemeinnützige GmbH, Leipzig, Germany**



Coordinator	Wisamar Bildungsgesellschaft gemeinnützige GmbH
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CASE STUDY DATA

Territory: City of Leipzig

Country: Germany

Promoter / Leading organization: wisamar Bildungsgesellschaft gemeinnützige GmbH

A. THE CONTEXT

Introducing Leipzig

Leipzig is besides Berlin and Dresden one of the biggest cities in the eastern part of Germany. It is situated in the federal state of Saxony and counts about 560.000 inhabitants. In terms of population it belongs to the fastest growing cities in Germany. The area covered by the city is nearly 300 qm².

Traditionally Leipzig is associated with the image of a city of trade and trade fairs, but in the year of German reunification in 1990, it was mainly an industrial city. Since that time, Leipzig has witnessed a large share of its industries close, which led to the loss of about 90 percent of manufacturing jobs. The repercussions are still visible today with a perpetually high unemployment rate and vacant and neglected inner-city space.

However, this trend was stopped the past 10-15 years, among others thanks to the decisions of BMW and Porsche to choose Leipzig as the site for their new assembly plants. The BMW plant, built in 2005, is the city's largest employer with about 5,000 staff and brought an investment of 1.3 billion Euros to Leipzig. Several related industries have also grown up near the plants, such as suppliers and other company-related services. The housing and labour markets also gained a boost from this major development. The unemployment rate currently is the lowest since the beginning of the 1990ies (ca. 8% in 2017; ca. 18% in 2003).

Besides the automotive sector, logistics is another important economic field. In 2004 and 2006 DHL and Amazon chose Leipzig and Leipzig-Halle-Airport for the locations of their new international air freight hub / shipping/receiving center.

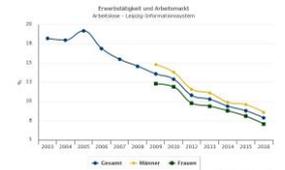
Other important sectors are healthcare and biotech, energy and environment as well as media and creativity.



Leipzig City Hall



BMW production plant



Unemployment rate 2003 – 2016 (Source: Stadt Leipzig)

wisamar Bildungsgesellschaft gemeinnützige GmbH

Wisamar is a non-profit educational institute in Leipzig, Germany, acting in vocational, cultural and adult education. Wisamar is accredited by TÜV as education provider according to AZAV principles (employment activities for the Federal Employment Office) and also by the Office for Migration and Refugees as Integration Course Provider. In the AZAV accreditation process the quality management system is audited on an annual basis.

Wisamar works in four areas:

- **Integration – labour market and social integration:** This part of our work includes integration courses and other offers for people with migrant background (Accreditation by German Office for Migration and Refugees). Besides, we offer different approaches to support the labour market integration of drop-outs and unemployed in general as well as for people that are seeking orientation. We give competence analysis, job application training, further education and also start-up consultancy as well as courses aiming at empowerment and activation of unemployed.
- **Further education:** We have several further training offers related to working life but also more informal areas. Current regular offers are Computer literacy/IT/Web programming, Internationalisation and EU Mobility, Innovative teaching methods and Storytelling in education.
- **Project Office:** We are an experienced partner and coordinator of different EU funded projects in thematic areas such as social and labour market integration, innovations in education and culture & creativity.
- **EU Mobility & Mobility Consultancy:** Annually we welcome around 400 persons in EU mobility projects and are sending trainees and trainers from our region abroad. Our incoming and outgoing projects already received best practice awards, the German National Agency mentioned one of our mobility projects at their website as reference. Besides, we serve as expert on this topic e.g. at the EC campaigns “Youth on the Move” and “We mean Business” where we gave presentations on EU Mobility. The German National Agency mentions us as one of the Regional Mobility Consultancies.

The aim of the organisation is the promotion of education, of tolerance and international attitude in all spheres of understanding between different cultures.



The VET system in Germany

Germany has a dual vocational education system, especially regarding initial vocational education and training (I-VET). Every person who has completed full-time compulsory schooling has access to apprenticeship training (duration usually three years), which combines two learning venues, companies and vocational schools. Those successfully completing their training are qualified to be employed as skilled workers.

The learners are employed as trainees at a company where they spend about 70% of their training. The company provides systematic training under real-life working conditions (in-company trainer, up-to-date equipment, etc.) and pays the trainee a certain training allowance.

In addition, vocational schools offer lessons in vocational (2/3) and general education (1/3) subjects free of charge.

I. Overview – Dual VET facts and figures



Trainees



- On average **52.4%** of the population enters Dual VET, **41.9%** graduate from Dual VET
- **1.3m trainees** in **326** recognised training occupations
- **5.1%** of all employees are trainees
- **High employment security** (95% of Dual VET graduates employed; only 80% employed among people who are untrained)
- Receive **average training allowance** of about € 854 per month

Employers



- **428,000 out of a total 2.1m companies provide training (20.0%)**
- Train more than **500,000** new trainees every year
- Hire **68%** of Dual VET trainees as temporary or permanent employees after training
- Employers invest on average **€18,000 per apprentice per year** (62% of which is training allowance)
- **70% of investment is refinanced** by the productive contribution of trainees during the training period

Government



- Shares expenses for VET system with employers
- **Public expenditure for Dual VET: € 4.75bn**
- €2.9bn for 1,550 public vocational schools providing part-time VET
- €1.85bn for steering, monitoring and further supporting measures
- **Employers contribute €7.7bn** (= overall net cost of Dual VET; gross cost = € 25.6bn)

Contributes to

National Economy / Society

- Strong **SME competitiveness** on international markets
- Relatively **low youth unemployment** in Germany (7.2%)

Sources:
BIBB Data Report (2017),
Federal Statistical Office

In Germany continuous vocational education and training (C-VET) is seen as an important matter to update skills of employees and to integrate unemployed people into the labour market. C-VET is not strictly regulated in comparison to I-VET and the landscape of C-VET providers is extensive. C-VET is financed by companies, individuals or through public funding. Especially big companies offer C-VET to their employees. Individuals usually pay C-VET on their own in order to improve their opportunities on the labour market and if the new skills are not only relevant for the company where they are working right now. Public funding for C-VET is mostly available for disadvantaged people.

B. THE EXPERIENCE

Introduction to the experience

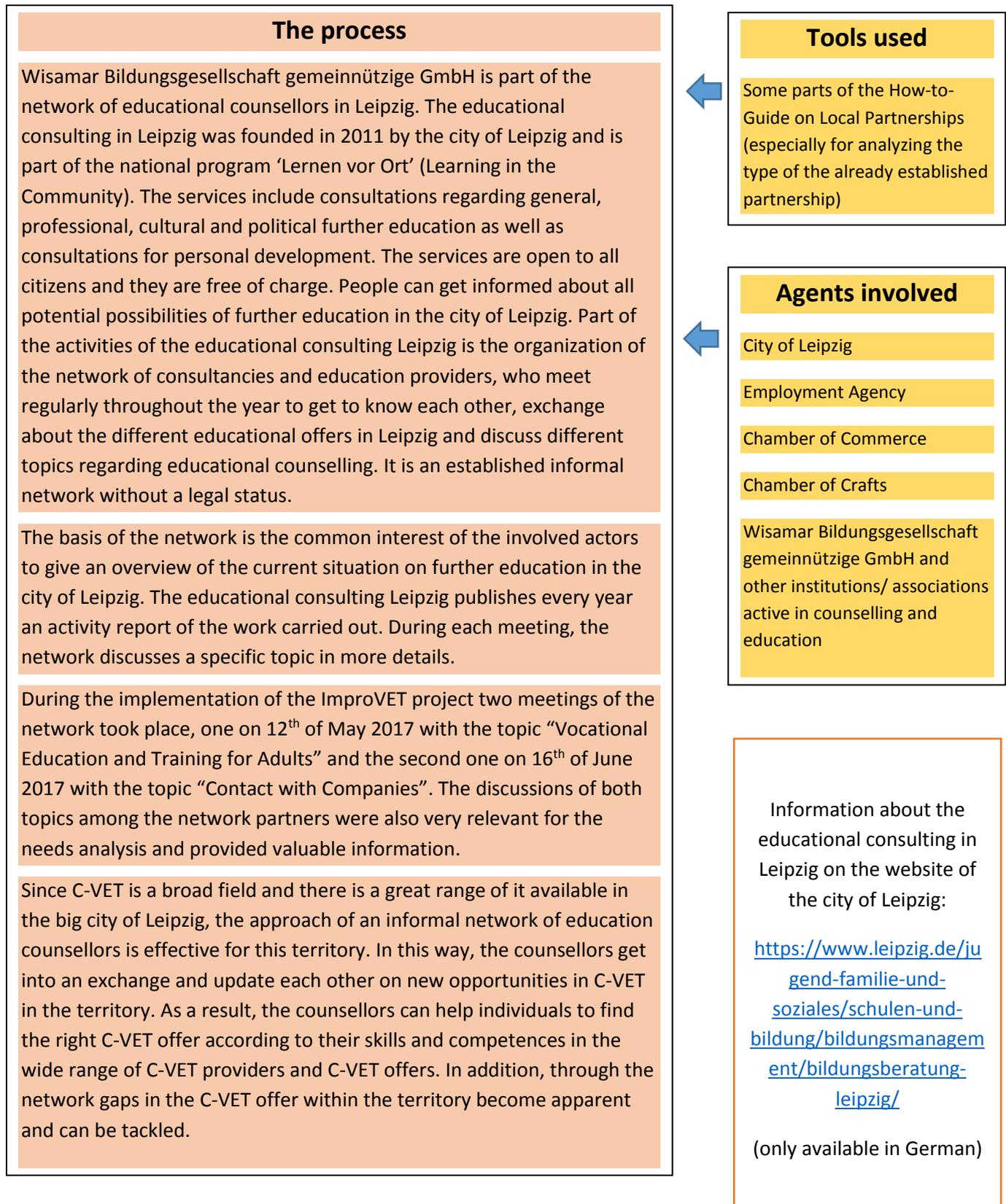
The implementation of the How-to Guides of the ImproVET project in the territory of the city of Leipzig took place between April and September 2017. The overall responsibility for the implementation had Wisamar Bildungsgesellschaft gemeinnützige GmbH.

How-to-Guide 1 on Building a Local Partnership for VET has been used partly, since we could build on an already existing partnership in the territory – a network of consultancies and education providers on educational counselling. The network especially provided a lot of insights to support the implementation of How-to-Guide 2 on Labour Market Needs Analyses. The research here was on the one hand focused on getting an overview of C-VET offers and on the other hand on the needs in the territory in order to identify possible gaps. One result of the analysis was that there are already a lot of general and specialized C-VET offers in the city of Leipzig. This is due to the well established VET system in Germany. But one reason for this is also that especially in the Eastern part of Germany in some sectors there is a shortage of qualified staff and companies want to maintain their staff. This is why they are keen on sending their employees to further training. Something which until now is rarely covered in the territory are trainings regarding intercultural competences. They are mainly offered for students and academics, but not within the VET system. Based on this need we developed a training on intercultural communication following How-to-Guide 3 on VET programming. The training has been planned, organized, implemented and evaluated. The evaluation took into account the recommendations and templates provided in How-to-Guide 4 on Impact Assessment. You can find more details on the implementation of the single How-to-Guides on the following pages.

The whole experience was in our case positive. Stakeholders were especially interested in our training on intercultural communication and we are going to offer this training regularly from now on. Because intercultural skills are getting more important in all kinds of sectors we are trying to integrate this kind of trainings already in the initial vocational education and training (I-VET).

One factor during the implementation was the limited time in the framework of the ImproVET project. In our opinion deeper analysis and the development and implementation of more trainings are only possible over a longer period. Also the assessment of the mid-term and long-term impact of the trainings can only be done over time. But the How-to-Guides give a good theoretical background with practical examples and templates to continue working in this field.

B.1. Phase 1. Partnership





Lessons learnt and important tips

- It is very beneficial when the partnership is led by the public administration of the territory, because in this way partners are often more committed.

- In order to get a better overview of C-VET in your territory, try to involve education counsellors, who already have an overview and know the relevant actors in this field.



Results and products

It is an already established network and therefore no new results were achieved.

- Agendas and minutes of the meetings

B.2. Phase 2. Labour Market Needs Analysis

The process

The Labour Market Needs Analysis was carried out by Wisamar Bildungsgesellschaft gemeinnützige GmbH following the How-to-Guide on this topic.

In a first step, research about C-VET in the city of Leipzig was conducted. Here the discussions during the meetings of the network of education counsellors were very relevant. The information shared there was researched further. During this step, one focus was also on identifying all C-VET providers in the territory. This was especially important for the next step. Research was done on the following aspects:

- C-VET providers in the territory
- C-VET offers in the territory
- Statistics on C-VET for the city of Leipzig (how many people take part, what are their characteristics, in which fields do they participate in C-VET, what is the age range, what is the status of the persons – employed or unemployed)
- Financing of C-VET in Leipzig (companies, individuals, public funding)
- Analysis of open job positions and required skills

In a second step, informal discussions with VET schools and companies about their needs were conducted. We did not develop a formal questionnaire, since the personal contact with the actors is more successful. The discussions took place with partners from our local network.

In a third step, all collected materials were sorted, evaluated and analyzed, which led to the description of the results in a final report. Leipzig has a flourishing landscape of C-VET providers and C-VET offers. Especially big companies invest in their employees and send them for C-VET. For ¾ of participants in C-VET the companies covered the costs. C-VET is mostly done to improve the professional skills regarding for example new technologies. Soft skills are often required by employers, but not specified in announcements of open job positions. Trainings in soft skills mainly cover job-application training, time-management or team work.

Through the needs analysis we discovered, that there is a need for intercultural skills, since they become more and more important nowadays. Due to the increased number of migrants in the territory, intercultural competences are a horizontal issue across all sectors. Intercultural competences are not only important for the migrants themselves, but also for the employers and their employees in order to be more open regarding the employment of migrants in their companies.

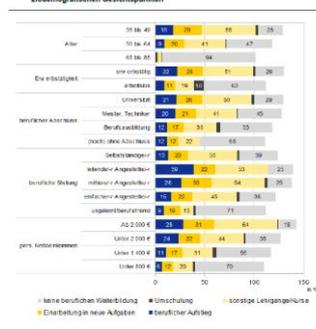
Tools used

How-to-Guide Labour Market Needs Analysis and the tools mentioned therein and explained in the toolkit

Agents involved

- Network of consultancies and education providers
- wisamar Bildungsgesellschaft gemeinnützige GmbH
- partners of our regional network (VET schools and companies)

Abb. 6.2: Teilnahme an beruflicher Weiterbildung in den letzten drei Jahren nach soziodemografischen Gesichtspunkten



Participation in C-VET during the last 3 years according to sociodemographic aspects (source: Bildungsreport Leipzig 2016 (Education Report Leipzig 2016), p. 149)



Lessons learnt and important tips

- Local statistics often give an overview on further education in general and there is not always specific data on further vocational education



Results and products

Needs analysis report

B.3. Phase 3. VET Programming

The process

According to the needs identified in the needs analysis, the training was planned following the How-to Guide on VET Programming. Due to the limited timescale, we focused on the development of one specific training and did not develop an overall trainings plan covering different trainings for different sectors for a longer period. All steps of the guide were taken into account: Preparation, Implementation and Follow-Up. The topic of the training was intercultural communication. Since this is an important topic nowadays for all employees across all sectors we decided to keep the target group very wide and not limit it to a specific group of people. Therefore, everyone interested was able to join the training and there were no preconditions to join the training. In order to establish a good and cooperative atmosphere we limited the number of participants to 16. In this way, all participants were able to participate actively in the workshop.

Topics like intercultural communication should be trained in an interactive and practical way. This is why the training took place in form of a workshop. The workshop was a general introduction into intercultural communication and was planned for one day. In order to go into more details, give even more practical examples and use more interactive activities more time would be needed.

Since we have a big seminar room with all necessary facilities, materials and technical equipment, the training was organized within our premises. The participants of the training had no costs for the participation in the training because all expenses could be covered by the project. For future trainings, we will most probably ask for a small contribution from each participant. We promoted the training through the partnership network and among our own contacts in Leipzig.

Before the training, a detailed training program was developed covering the objectives, topics to be addressed, necessary materials and media and the timing. The training took place on 16th of June 2017 with the involvement of 2 trainers and 16 participants.

Due to the fact, that it was a one-day workshop, no monitoring measures were necessary during the implementation of the training.

At the end of the training, the participant filled in an assessment to see if they understood the topic and improved their knowledge in this field. The participants were also asked to answer an evaluation questionnaire and received certificates for their participation.

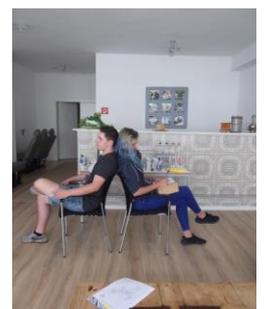
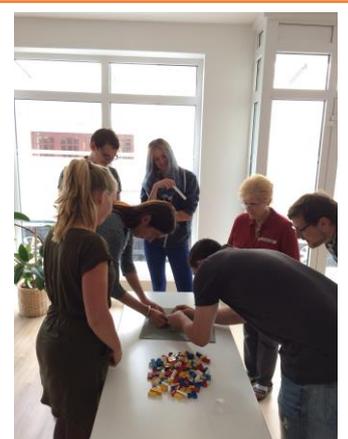
The development and implementation of the training went very well, also due to the experiences we have in this field. Therefore, no problems occurred during this stage of the implementation in the framework of the ImproVET project.

Tools used

How-to-Guide on VET Programming and the tools mentioned therein and explained in the toolkit (especially the example of a training program)

Agents involved

We conducted the training ourselves within the framework of our organization.





Lessons learnt and important tips

- Start the development and planning of a single training early
- Plan enough time to disseminate the training in order to get many participants
- The assessment and the end of the training is not only important for the participants, but also for you. It gives you information how well the topics discussed and understood by the participants and if you delivered a qualitative training.



Results and products

- Detailed training program for the workshop
- Materials to be used during the workshop
- Sign-in sheets, assessment sheets, certificates, pictures of the training

B.4. Phase 4. Impact Assessment

The process

The impact assessment of the training was taken into account from the beginning while planning the training itself. Therefore, the templates for evaluation questionnaires mentioned in the How-to-Guide on Impact Assessment and given in the Toolkit were translated into German and adapted to the training. Due to the limited timeframe of the project we mainly focused on step 1 of the guide – the impact on individuals. Before the training started, we discussed the expectations of the group regarding the training as well as their needs related to the topic of the workshop (intercultural communication). We implemented this in form of an open discussion, since from our experience in previous trainings, the answers are more specific and direct feedback is given within the group in comparison to filling in a questionnaire before the training. Also the trainer has the chance to ask further questions. Directly after the training the participants were asked to fill in the evaluation questionnaire. The questionnaire from the Toolkit gives a really good insight into the opinion of the participants. The questions are formulated in a very clear and understandable way. In general, the participants were very satisfied with the training. They were especially satisfied with trainers and the depth of the topics discussed during the training. Some participants commented that they did not miss any topics during the training. Other participants mentioned that it would have been beneficial to give more examples connected to one specific culture. All participants would recommend the training to colleagues or friends and stated that besides the theoretical parts it was very practical. We are planning to ask the participants again for their evaluation of the training six months after the training, in order to see the mid-term impact. However, this will take place after the end of the project and therefore the results could not yet been taken into account. In addition, we evaluated the training orally with the companies, which showed satisfaction among the employers. The employers value intercultural skills among their employees, especially in view of the increasing migrant population in the city of Leipzig. However, a long-term impact is not measurable up to now. We also discussed with the employers the possibility to send their trainees for an internship to other European countries to test their professional skills in a different context, to get experience in working with people from different cultures and by this increase their intercultural communication skills. The companies were very thankful for this opportunity and would like to continue cooperation in this field.

Tools used

- Pre training individual test questionnaire (used for oral discussion)
 - Post training individual questionnaire
 - Post training managers questionnaire (some questions used directly after the training during oral discussions with the companies)
- (all these tools can be found in the ImproVET Toolkit)

Agents involved

We conducted the evaluation of the training ourselves within the framework of our organization. The participants of the training were partly trainees of the local transport company and others were from different companies covering different sectors in Leipzig.

Results from the evaluation of the training

(whereas 1 was the highest score and 4 the lowest)





Lessons learnt and important tips

- Remember to adapt the evaluation templates to your specific trainings, but also keep general questions in order to make the evaluations of different trainings comparable

- Plan enough time for the evaluation at the end of the training. The participants should not do the evaluation under stress.



Results and products

- Filled in evaluation questionnaires by training participants
- Results from discussions with companies
- Draft evaluation report with the results available up to now