

Trade Union involvement in Vocational Education and training

human european consultancy in partnership with FNV, FNV Bondgenoten,
MEDOSZ Hungary and CNSLR-FRATIA and BNDS Romania
Matra project (June 2003 - July 2006)



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STRIKING DEALS: Trade Union involvement in Vocational Education & Training

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General information about the project

Striking Deals

A project to set-up a sectoral structure for the retraining of workers. Trade unions and employers are working together to create a viable structure for life-long learning.

Aim of the project

The aims of the project are:

1. Establishment of a bipartite Training Expertise Centre in the wine sector in Hungary and in the aviation and shipyard sectors in Romania, managed by the employers and trade unions.
2. Provisions in (or annexes to) the collective labour agreement to legalise the bipartite Training Expertise Centre at sector (or branch) level and at company level.

Countries and partners in the project

The Netherlands	
human european consultancy	Project management
Trade Union Confederation FNV	Content expertise
FNV Bondgenoten	Content expertise
Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Donor

Hungary, branch Agriculture	
MEDOSZ	Trade union
MOSZ	Employers' association
Tokaj Wine House in Miskolc	Pilot company Wine sector
Association of small winegrowers	Tokaj Region
Ministry of Employment Policy	Government

Romania, branch Machine Building Industry	
CNSLR- FRATIA	Trade Union Confederation
BNS	Trade Union Confederation
FEPA-CM	Employers' association
Aerostar company in Bacau	Pilot company Aviation sector
Aker company in Tulcea	Pilot company Shipyards sector
National Adult Training Board	Tri-partite Romanian Institute
Ministry of Labour	Government




Background of the project

New technologies are emerging and changing very fast in agriculture, industry and commerce. In order to be competitive, companies need to retrain workers. This is also in the interest of workers. Qualified workers will have more job security and be better paid. Therefore, it is beneficial to the trade unions and employers to cooperate on the issue of worker retraining. All over Western Europe employers and trade unions have established sectoral Training Centres and Funds. These sectoral Training Centres and Training Funds are managed by representatives of the employers and the trade unions. In the Netherlands co-operation between the social partners is very fruitful. Therefore, the Dutch trade union confederation FNV and trade union partners in Hungary (MEDOSZ) and Romania (BNS and CNSLR-FRATIA) decided to work together for Hungarian and Romanian companies, trade unions and workers. The Dutch government and embassies in Budapest and Bucharest are supporting the project.

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Operating the Training Expertise Centre

The Training Expertise Centre is **not** an institute to carry out retraining courses. It is a Training Expertise Centre. The Centre will develop training programmes and will set work standards. The training programmes are based on expertise in emerging new technologies and questions from companies. Training departments of companies or private institutes will carry out the training programmes. The Centre will perform a quality control function.

Key elements of the Training Expertise Centre

- The Centre will be a small and flexible organisation which is capable of fulfilling the need for companies to retrain a group of workers within a short period of time.
- The Centre will be a broker between companies asking for a specific retraining programme and suppliers of training courses.
- The Centre will select the best training provider regarding quality and price. A company training department can also be selected.
- The Centre will be responsible for the high quality of the training programmes, which will be geared to the companies practice.
- The Centre finances the costs of the training.
- The activities of the Centre are to be financed by the sector through a small annual contribution donated by companies committed to the Training Expertise Centre.
- Companies in the sector are free to commit themselves to the Training Expertise Centre. The commitment will be formalised by the collective labour agreement of the company.


Target group

The activities of the Centre are directed towards the retraining of workers employed by a company.

Activities of the Training Expertise Centre

The activities of the Training Expertise Centre will be precisely formulated by the social partners in the sector. In the meanwhile a general consensus is emerging:

- The Centre will monitor emerging technologies, materials, IT, tools and equipment and use this information to support the design of training courses and development of work standards.
- The Centre will establish contacts with national and international operating companies and institutes to get up-to-date information about training programmes and training methodologies.

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- The Centre will take the lead in setting the standards for certification and in organising the certificates for the workers.
 - The Centre will employ some trainers to instruct trainers and to upgrade the quality of the in-company training.

Type of training courses


Short, practical retraining courses

Board of the Training Expertise Centre

The Centre will have a bipartite board. The trade union and the companies will have representatives on the board.

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Collective labour agreement

The aims of the project are:

1. the development of a bipartite Training Expertise Centre and
2. the embedding of the regulations of the Training Expertise Centre in the collective labour agreement of the company, sector or branch.

The legal framework to facilitate vocational training for workers is the collective labour agreement. Most of the collective labour agreements have certain provisions about training. The Training Expertise Centre is a new issue in the general interest of the sector, companies and the workers. A sectoral Training Expertise Centre forms a building block in the system for life-long learning. Provisions regarding the Training Expertise Centre are to be legalised by collective labour agreement.

A collective labour agreement can be concluded at the level of a company, sector or branch. The Training Expertise Centre is a separate legal entity (e.g. foundation). However, the activities and functioning of the Centre, the involvement of a company and financing are subjects of the collective labour agreement. Thus it is the collective labour agreement which makes the Training Expertise Centre work. A company has a say in the activities of the Centre: (1) through the collective labour agreement and (2) through the employer representatives on the board of the Centre.

A company can only be bound to the Training Expertise Centre once the employer and the trade union of the company have agreed on the issues of the Training Expertise Centre at company level.

Company collective labour agreement

In the company's collective labour agreement just a few issues should be formalised:

- The recognition of a bipartite Training Expertise Centre working for the benefit of the companies in the sector.
- The commitment of the company to cooperate with the Training Expertise Centre.
- The willingness of the company to make an annual contribution to finance the activities of the Training Expertise Centre.

In an annex to the collective labour agreement all the details concerning the functioning of a Training Expertise Centre are laid down. In this way, the continuity of the Centre is guaranteed and the Centre is not subject to the uncertainty of annual negotiations regarding other issues of the collective labour agreement.



Sector collective labour agreement


The details concerning the functioning of a Training Expertise Centre can be laid down in an annex to the company collective labour agreement or in a sectoral document. Such a sectoral document can be: (1) a single document covering the sector or (2) as an annex to the sector collective labour agreement (if any).

Branch collective labour agreement

The branch collective labour agreement only has a role to promote the Training Expertise Centre in sector. It is up to a sector to establish a Training Expertise Centre.

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Project planning

The aims of the project are:

1. Establishment of a bipartite Training Expertise Centre in the wine sector in Hungary and in the aviation and shipyard sectors in Romania, managed by the employers and trade unions.
2. Provisions in (or annexes to) the collective labour agreement to legalise the bipartite Training Expertise Centre at sector (or branch) level and at company level.

The duration of the project is 3 years: June 2003 - July 2006

June 2003 – December 2003

- Preparation of the project
- Selection of the sectors and the pilot companies
- First national conferences (Hungary and Romania)

January 2004 – July 2004

- Mobilising support for the Training Expertise Centre among other companies in the wine sector in Hungary and the aviation and shipyard sectors in Romania
- Mobilising support among Dutch companies and Dutch Training Expertise Centres for the wine sector in Hungary and the aviation and shipyard sectors in Romania
- Tracing the demand for training and the content of the training programmes
- Description of the activities and organisation of the Training Expertise Centre

August 2004 – December 2004

- Establishment of the legal entity of the Training Expertise Centre
- October 2004: second national conference and signing of the legal documents to establish the Centre
- Appointment of the employer and trade union representatives to the board of the Centre
- Organising a study visit to Holland
- Calculating the costs of the Training Expertise Centre and the annual contribution of the companies
- Organising donor support for the start of the project



January 2005 – July 2005

- Concluding the collective labour agreement at company level, sector level and branch level regarding the activities and functioning of the Centre
- Development of the organisation of the Centre
- Organising cooperation and facilities from the government for the Centre

August 2005 – December 2005


- Start-up of the practical activities of the Centre
- First group of workers being trained
- Preparation of the draft texts for the collective labour agreement

January 2006 – July 2006

- Evaluation of the project
- Final and third national conferences (Hungary and Romania)

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Trade unions

The aims of the project are:

- Establishment of a bipartite Training Expertise Centre in the wine sector in Hungary and in the aviation and shipyard sectors in Romania, managed by the employers and trade unions.
- Provisions in (or annexes to) the collective labour agreement to legalise the bipartite Training Expertise Centre at sector (or branch) level and at company level.

MEDOSZ represents the workers in the Hungarian wine sector.

BNS and CNSLR-FRATIA represent the workers in the Romanian aviation and shipyard sectors.

Modern trade union

The project is an initiative of the trade unions. Trade unions are in the process of modernising and are redefining their role in order to contribute to social dialogue. The social partners – trade unions and employers – have a common interest in regulating labour and social issues. One important issue is the employability of the workforce, which will be increased by retraining workers.

Sectoral approach to vocational training

It is beneficial to the sector, companies operating in the sector and workers to have a working system of vocational training, a system which is able to modernise training programmes in order to keep up with emerging technologies. Therefore the trade unions are in favour of a sectoral approach to vocational training. A sectoral approach takes into account the specific situation in the sector.

Important point for the trade unions

Important points for the trade unions for a bipartite Training Expertise Centre are:

- Nationally and internationally recognised certificates for workers
- Embedding the regulations concerning the Training Expertise Centre in the collective labour agreement
- Using the existing training facilities in the sector and within companies. The Training Expertise Centre is almost a guarantee for the continuity of the activities of company training departments
- The Training Expertise Centre must be managed on a bipartite basis by the trade unions and employers
- Training courses should be attractive for adult workers: short and very practical oriented with a balance in knowing, acting and being




European Union

The trade unions view a sectoral and bipartite Training Expertise Centre as a priority within the social dialogue as part of the EU directives (acquis communautaire). Such a Centre is therefore very well-equipped to channel EU funding to the wine sector in Hungary and to the machine building industry in Romania.

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Wine sector in Hungary

Cooperating organisations

Trade unions (MEDOSZ), employer's organisation (MOSZ), pilot company (Tokaj Trading House), Association of Small Winegrowers, Miskolc region, National Council of Wine Communities, Ministry of Labour (Department of Adult Education).

Planning

July 2004: mobilising support for the Training Expertise Centre among other wine producers;

October 2004: signing of the legal documents to establish the Training expertise Centre;

January 2005: embedding of the regulations in the collective labour agreement.

Social dialogue

The agricultural trade union MEDOSZ is cooperating at national level with the employer's organisation MOSZ to promote vocational training and to establish a Training Expertise Centre in the wine sector. In the wine sector MEDOSZ is cooperating with the Tokaj Trading House in Miskolc and the Association of Small Winegrowers in the Tokaj region.

Pilot company

Tokaj Trading House in Miskolc is the pilot company. The pilot company takes the lead. The director of the company, Mr László Kiss, views the Centre as a precondition to improve the quality of the Tokaj wines and to enhance the competitiveness of Hungarian wines on the international market. The trade union in the company is cooperating with the Head of the Training Department to develop the activities of the Training Expertise Centre.


Small winegrowers

The quality of the wine is very dependent on the wine-growing. Therefore, it has been concluded that the Association of Small Winegrowers in the region must be part of the activities and board of the Training Expertise Centre. Talks between MEDOSZ, Tokaj Trading House and the Association of Small Winegrowers are ongoing. Talks are also starting at the national level with the National Council of the Wine Communities.

Development of the Training Expertise Centre

The expertise of the pilot company will be used to develop the Centre. Specific issues are:

- What exactly is the demand for training courses and what should the content of the training be?
- What kind of training is specific to the Centre? What are the costs of training?

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- What are the specific tasks for the Centre?
 - What should be the annual contribution of a company to finance the Centre? How much of the annual contribution is tax-exempted?
 - What kind of regulations should be embedded in the collective labour agreement of the company?

Government


The government of Hungary is very interested in the project. They are willing to facilitate the Centre. The project contact person within the Ministry of Labour, Department of Adult Education is Dr László Váradi.

Donor funding

The project team is seeking donor funding for the start-up of the Training Expertise Centre

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Aviation and shipyard sectors in Romania

Cooperating organisations

Trade unions (BNS and CNSLR-FRATIA), employer's organisation (Machine Building Branch FEPA-CM), pilot company Aerostar (aviation); pilot company Aker Tulcea (shipyard); Ministry of Labour and Family Planning (Adult Education).

Planning

April and May 2004: mobilising support for the Training Expertise Centre among other companies in the aviation and shipyard sectors;

October 2004: signing of the legal documents to establish a Training Expertise Centre;

January 2005: embedding of the regulations in the collective labour agreement.

Social dialogue

The machine-building trade unions BNS and CNSLR-FRATIA are cooperating at national level with the employer's organisation FEPA-CM to promote vocational training and to establish a Training Expertise Centre in the aviation and shipyard sectors.

Pilot company in the aviation sector

Aerostar in Bacau is the pilot company in aviation. The Vice President of the company, Mr Mihai Ciobanu, views the Centre as a very important development in the promotion of the sector. The trade union in the company is cooperating with the Head of the Human Resources Department, Drd.ing. Dan Paul Mălin Popa MBA to produce a description of training programmes.

Aerostar has two preconditions for taking the lead: (1) more companies are interested and willing to commit themselves to the Centre and (2) use of the company's training facilities to carry out training on behalf of the Training Expertise Centre.

Pilot company in the shipyard sector

Aker Tulcea is the pilot company in the shipyard sector. The General Director of the company, Mr Dumitriu Ivanov, views the Centre as a very important development in the promotion of the sector and to enhance competitiveness on international markets. The trade union in the company is cooperating with the Head of the Human Resources Department, Ivan Firsă, to produce a description of training programmes.

Aker Tulcea has two preconditions for taking the lead: (1) more companies are interested and willing to commit themselves to the Centre and (2) use of the company's training facilities to carry out training on behalf of the Training Expertise Centre.



Development of the Training Expertise Centre

The expertise of the pilot company will be used to develop the Centre. Specific issues are:

- What exactly is the demand for training courses and what should the content of the training be?
- What kind of training is specific to the Centre? What are the costs of training?
- What are the specific tasks for the Centre?
- What should be the annual contribution of a company to finance the Centre? How much of the annual contribution is tax-exempted?
- What kind of regulations should be embedded in the collective labour agreement of the company?

Government


The government of Romania is very interested in the project. They are willing to facilitate the Centre. The project contact person within the Ministry of Labour and Family Planning is Mrs. Violeta Nedelcu, from the Department on labour force policies.

Donor funding

The project team is seeking donor funding for the start-up of the Training Expertise Centre

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Dutch project partners

human european consultancy

human european consultancy manages international projects in the public domain. Our activities first started in Central and Eastern Europe, but we now operate worldwide.

Projects are implemented in partnership with other organisations by international teams of experts. Through this approach we can ensure the highest level of professionalism for projects in specific policy areas, such as health care, social protection, labour relations and human rights.

By involving the different stakeholders in the process of change we provide added value for the solutions found and facilitate the sustainability of the changes.

We value the human factor, both in cooperation with recipients and within our project teams.

The Netherlands Trade Union Confederation FNV

The FNV (the Netherlands Trade Union Confederation) is the largest and strongest trade union confederation in the Netherlands. It unites 14 trade unions which have together 1.2 million members = 60 % of all unionised Dutch employees. Some 28 percent of the FNV's total membership are women.


The FNV is defending and promoting the individual and collective rights and interests of its members concerning wages, working conditions, employment, social security, codetermination, training and education, equal opportunities for women and ethnic minorities on the labour market.

The FNV and its trade unions are not only involved in negotiating collective labour agreements, but also in the work of all kinds of advisory and management structures in the field of social security, pensions and labour provision.

The FNV is affiliated to the European Trade Union Confederation and the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions.

FNV Bondgenoten (FNV Allies)

FNV Bondgenoten is a trade union with 475,000 members in the industrial, services, transport and food sector. FNV Bondgenoten provides support to its members, (former) employees, with regard to Collective Labour Agreements for thousands of employees in a particular sector, or legal aid in case of unfair dismissal.



It tries to secure employees' interests during restructuring and provides activities tailored to groups which require special attention, for example women, young people or members of ethnic minorities, to improve their opportunities. Pension schemes and training funds are also realised with the involvement of FNV Bondgenoten.

FNV Bondgenoten has about 1,000 employees and thousands of trained volunteers who are active within companies and trade union centres, located throughout the Netherlands. The Trade Union operates on the national, the regional and the local level.

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