



**Plan of cooperation between VET and the world of  
work**  
**Cooperation other than students practices**

Leonardo da Vinci Learning Partnership  
"From VET to WOW"

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## Table of contents:

<u>Introduction .....</u>	<u>3</u>
<u>Cooperation other than students practices.....</u>	<u>5</u>
Participation in the projects supporting vocational education and training.....	6
Study visits in companies.....	8
Meetings of teachers and representatives of the world of work.....	8
Organization of non-vocational events by schools and businesses together.....	9
Material help for schools.....	10
Promotional actions for vocational education.....	11
Lessons taught by practitioners from business companies.....	12
Cooperation with labour offices.....	12

# Introduction

This guide is for those who wish to establish and develop different kind of relationships between vocational schools (especially secondary schools) and the world of work in broad sense. We believe it can be useful for teachers, trainers, headmasters, heads of apprenticeships and other school personnel, but also for the members of job market. It has been elaborated as a product of "From VET to WOW" Leonardo da Vinci Partnership Project.

The main aim of this project is to find and share good practices and methods of cooperation between vocational education institutions and the world of work and support teachers and trainers of vocational schools in development of competencies and knowledge in this area.

The partners set up the following goals:

1. To know new models of cooperation between VET and the world of work in their local contexts.
2. To develop professional competencies and knowledge of participants/readers in the area of cooperation between VET and the world of work.
3. To improve the entrepreneurial skills of participants.
4. To learn and share new methods for a more efficient transition from VET to WOW.
5. To share good practices in cooperation between VET and WOW.
6. To promote collaboration between schools, employers and local authorities.

For these purposes, the project provides the users with:

- ❖ the database of good practices in cooperation between vocational schools and world of work, collected during the project,
- ❖ organization of the competition for VET schools / training centers: "BEST IN cooperation with the world of work" and involving VET institutions (headmasters, teachers, trainers and learners) in these competitions.,
- ❖ organization of the promotional event connected with the presentation of the best methods and practices in cooperation between VET and the world of work,
- ❖ this "Plan for cooperation between VET and the world of work.

All tangible products of the From VET to WOW project could be found on the project's website: <http://vet-wow.inncrea.eu/> and/or project's Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/from.vet.to.wow>, to access and/or download free of charge.

The implementers of the From VET to WOW are:

1. The Foundation Supporting of the Innovation and the Creativity Development "InnCrea", Kraków, Poland
2. SMEBOX AB, Uppsala, Sweden
3. Stichting voor Educatie-, Cultuur- en Migratie Onderzoek, Waalre, the Netherlands
4. Instituto De Educacion Secundaria Teror, Teror, Spain

The authors hope that their ideas and thoughts will help you get inspired and develop the way your school cooperates with business and institutions of the job market.

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## **Cooperation other than students practices**

## **1. Participation in the projects supporting vocational education and training.**

An example can be a project „Czas zawodowców – wielkopolskie kształcenie zawodowe” (in English „Time for professionals – vocational education and training in Wielkopolska”). The project has been implemented between 2011 and 2015 by regional authorities in Wielkopolska region in Poland and Poznan University of Technology in the framework of the Human Capital Operational Programme (Action 9.2). Its aim is to increase the quality and attractiveness of the VET by organizing students practices in companies, including innovative laboratories for students practices, establishment of advisory system for career planning of students, elaboration of innovative study plans for six professions and implementing them in 35 schools in the region, teachers’ trainings, extra classes based on the innovative study plans, equipping schools with tools and didactic materials, in particular ICT tools, implementation of the e-learning system in 35 schools in the region. Within the project there has been elaborated an online system (platform) matching the students-candidates for practices with the companies – providers of practices. The needs of employers in terms of students’ qualifications could be monitored with this tool.

Many schools implement European projects of students’ mobilities, which enable the students to have practices and/or job shadowing in companies from other European countries. In some schools after the practices the students present the learning outcomes and experiences during special events or exhibitions, so that other students and school society could gain from their experience.

Some schools apply for grants together with the companies or from them. Their aims are: organization of extracurricular classes, including extra courses preparing to the final exams, and vocational courses, but also - organization of technical foreign languages courses, other subjects’ extra classes in order to minimize the inequalities in learning, psychological support, learning mobilities of students to the innovative educational institutions, innovative programs of job counseling, meetings with employers in different forms (forum, job fairs, study visits in companies), etc.

In Silesia region in Poland there are implemented projects on regional scope, aiming at promoting vocational education and employment in the region. Some of the activities for

students within those projects are: job counseling, job placements and study visits, entrepreneurship trainings, managerial trainings, Business English courses and e-learning marketing courses.

The schools take part or coordinate different European projects. Some of them are aimed at certain vocational topics, like cuisine of different European countries, or related to healthy food and lifestyle or shaping awareness of local products. Others are youth exchanges connected with workshops from different vocational areas. In organization of the international events in Poland are involved local companies.

## **2. Study visits in companies.**

Some classes are taught in the companies' premises. Their aims are to enhance the knowledge of students and teachers of up-to-date situation on the job market and production news.

Sometimes the study visits are organized in the framework of the Polish nationwide "Day of Entrepreneurship", under the auspices of the Polish President. Students' participation in one-day-long practices in the companies help them also to plan their career more consciously.

## **3. Meetings of teachers and representatives of the world of work.**

In the Upper Secondary Schools Complex no. 1 in Ostrzeszów once a year there are organized meetings of the teachers and school headmasters with employers and representatives of chambers of craftsmen. On these meetings there are discussed the current problems of vocational education. In branch groups, the topics of learning programs and issues of working with students are argued.

The Vocational Schools Complex PBO in Zielona Góra also organizes meetings with employers to discuss study plans, format of practical classes, safety rules during work placements and other problems in cooperation between VET and WOW.

The teacher from the General and Vocational Upper Secondary Schools in Bolesławiec took part in the vocational practices in the companies. The practices resulted in enhancement of vocational competencies and facilitated the link between pedagogical and practical approaches. Similar practices, focused especially on enhancing vocational skills, were organized for the teachers from the Complex of Secondary Schools of Economics in Dąbrowa Górnicza.

In these schools from Dąbrowa Górnicza there is annually organized a conference for the teachers responsible for apprenticeships and the representatives of business. The



topic of the conference is related to the importance of practical aspects of vocational education and training, and it is organized in the framework of Global Entrepreneurship Week.

The same school initiated a club for teachers of vocational subjects on a regional scope. Among its activities there are also meetings and trainings by the representatives of the world of work to share the practical knowledge and skills.

#### **4. Organization of non-vocational events by schools and businesses together.**

Schools organize different charity events in cooperation with companies. Some of them involve other institutions, like Polish Red Cross. An example of such events could be blood and bone marrow donating and promotional actions organized by the General and Vocational Upper Secondary Schools in Bolesławiec, involving representatives of a range of institutions from public authorities to individuals and many sponsors.

It is common that the representatives of world of work are invited and take part in school events and ceremonies.

Students from the General and Vocational Upper Secondary Schools in Bolesławiec won the national competition related to active citizenship thanks to presenting their interviews with local entrepreneurs who are active for the development of local community.

Students of the same school from the gastronomic faculties realized the project with the local TV, which was a set of 11 culinary programs. In the preparation took part also the companies where students' practices took place. While the students were preparing the meals, the programs were recorded. The consumers were shown not only the process of the meals preparation, but also were informed about their health values and production by local firms. In Dąbrowa

Górnica there are similar actions, but aimed at school's promotion. A local private TV was involved in realization of culinary videos, but also films about savoir-vivre, etc.

In Bolesławiec, the local companies are also involved in AIESEC – Global Citizen international youth mobility program by supporting organization of hosting the mobilities with providing accommodation, meals and organization of free time activities.

The schools complex from Dąbrowa Górnica took part in organization of a city event "Dąbrowa Górnica is cooking". The local restaurants present their product, but at the same time take part in the competitions of the best meals. Students are preparing the meals with the restaurateurs.

## **5. Material help for schools.**

The companies are sponsors of equipment and material resources for schools. In some cases, business partners are donating the promotional materials and events of schools.

## **6. Promotional actions for vocational education.**

Together with companies, schools lead certain promotional actions to attract young people to vocational education and professions. They organize meetings with students from lower secondary schools, their parents, teachers and job counselors.

In General and Vocational Upper Secondary Schools in Bolesławiec for two years entrepreneurship days are organized for the students of lower secondary schools. In these events are involved employees of the BZWBK Bank, who deliver the lessons aiming at shaping the entrepreneurial attitudes in young people, for example on topics of savings and investments.

The Schools Complex no. 18 in Wrocław organized twice in their premises the forum aiming at presentation of professions from electric and mechanical branches, which was connected to presentations and exhibitions delivered by the companies. Also, the Schools from Bolesławiec organizes similar forum for students from their town and neighbouring towns with participation of companies, local authorities, University of Economics from Wrocław and labour office.

The members of companies visit last grade classes to speak about and present the job opportunities in their companies.

Many schools participate in and co-organize of the fairs related to the business profile of the partner company or job fairs / career days.

Also, there are organized competitions for students, sponsored by companies, from the field of their activities. An example could be the competition invented by students from the General and Vocational Upper Secondary Schools in Bolesławiec and the employees of the BZWBK Bank. It was a two-stages competition. The first one was a test for applicants. The second one was a decision-making game for teams which aim was to accumulate the highest capital. The local authorities and local TV took the patronage over the competition.

## **7. Lessons taught by practitioners from business companies.**

The employees of companies come to schools to share their knowledge and practice. They conduct the lessons or meetings and present eg. the technological news or processes. Sometimes, the meetings are in the format of debates between students, teachers and representatives of business.

There were also organized meetings on the topic of active job searching, application for job and self-presentation for the job interview.

In the Complex of Secondary Schools of Economics in Dąbrowa Górnicza lessons taught by the representatives of companies are organized within the project "Otwarta firma" [en. Open company], run by Junior Achievement Foundation. The lessons are titled "Biznes przy tablicy" [en. Business by the blackboard]. Students can confront their expectation towards a certain profession with the reality presented by a professional.

## **8. Cooperation with labour offices.**

Some schools, especially their branches for adults education, cooperate with public labour offices in activation of the unemployed. In Bolesławiec, they organize frequent (twice a week) meetings of the unemployed with the potential employers and on their basis the training offer is enriched.

A specific but simple cooperation, without mediation of external labour offices, is present in the Complex of Secondary Schools of Economics in Dąbrowa Górnicza. In the school there are displayed job offers that come from the employers. These activities are done by the school's head of apprenticeship teacher.

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