

## 3 Facilitator

### Links to employment / labour market

#### Context

The main objective of the Strategic Partnership EICON is to **support organizations / institutions providing vocational education and training (VET) to become more inclusive using information and communication technology (ICT)**. Organizations / institutions that are active in VET are particularly in need for guidance on how to further develop, as they often have to work towards multiple aims simultaneously, i.e. inclusion usually is one among many other aims. **EICON particularly explores the inherent potential and synergies in the overlapping section between education, inclusion and digitalisation.**

#### How to use this list of inclusion opportunities?

There is no 'one best way' for any organization / institution active in VET to increase its inclusive capacity with ICT. Rather, each organization / institution needs to find its own solution that then fits perfectly to its respective situation and requirements. Therefore, this list of inclusion opportunities aims to guide organizations / institutions through a process of reflection and planning. List entries contain both examples of good practice and innovative examples and focus specifically on inclusion potential in an organisation.

Lists of opportunities may be used by different groups: **teachers, managers** of VET institutions / organizations and **facilitators** that support these organisations in organizational change processes. These lists have a slightly different focus depending on the respective role, so make sure you select the ones that fit to your role. Teachers use them, for example, to formulate requirements for their management with regard to the procurement of new ICT. Facilitators in turn can use the lists to discuss and decide on possibilities for specific ICT change projects together with the organisation's representatives. Managers can also use the lists to identify potential uses of ICT for inclusive leadership.

EICON (Enhancing inclusion capacity of educational organizations / institutions providing VET with information and communication technologies (ICT)) is an ERASMUS+ KA2 Strategic Partnership for vocational education and training during 2018 - 2020 (Grant Agreement No.2018-1-DE02-KA202-005110). This list of inclusion opportunities has been developed in the context of EICON. It represents the results of discussions among the experts involved in the project as well as a subsequent public consultation process that involved a wider audience in reviewing the intermediate results.



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## Links to employment / labour market

The following list of inclusion opportunities explores to which extent ICT can be supportive or beneficial to establish and maintain the required links to employment and the labour market, or even create new opportunities for creating and nurturing links of a totally new quality. Because ICT in itself will not suffice to run these activities, the following two sections look both at technologies and respective processes to utilise these technologies for the intended purposes. The questionnaire is divided into questions relating to establishing new links and questions relating to maintaining these links once established.

### Section 1: Establishing new links to employment and the labour market

Finding new companies that might be of relevance to inclusive VET is a time-consuming task. Fortunately, ICT can be supportive to render this task slightly more efficient. The following questions may be useful to reflect on the potential of various processes and technologies that help to get in touch with, and to establish links, to employment and to the labour market:

#### Processes

##### Consider establishing processes that ...

☐ **draw attention** to the potential of employees with disabilities (e.g. websites, social media channels, presentations).

☐ help your learners to create **alternative / more competitive presentations** of their **profile, skills** and **competences** (e.g. video CVs).

☐ **match occupation-specific descriptors** with learners' **skills** to find companies suitable for trainings or permanent placements.

☐ **match requirements** of job vacancies with **learners' skills**.

☐ use your **educational programmes and certificates** as filters to search specific databases\*, to find **matching** local or regional **companies** that are of potential interest for your learners' future employment paths.

(\* Databases provided by third parties (e.g. chambers of industry and commerce, crafts organisations, trade guilds, regional and economic development organisations, employment offices / job centres etc.), either paper-based or electronically, directly (e.g. via web interfaces) or indirectly (e.g. via a search request) accessible by a VET organisation.)

☐ access and search specific databases\* with companies and their respective **employment, training or apprenticeship opportunities**.

(\*Databases provided by third parties (e.g. chambers of industry and commerce, crafts organisations, trade guilds, regional and economic development organisations, employment offices / job centres etc.), either paper-based or electronically, directly (e.g. via web interfaces) or indirectly (e.g. via a search request) accessible by a VET organisation.)

☐ identify online presences\* of **companies that particularly address people with disabilities** (e.g. corporate missions that indicate the company's openness for hiring people with disabilities, contact information for applicants with disabilities).

(\*Online presences of companies: company website or their profiles at regional (e.g. business directories, yellow pages) or other general platforms (e.g. Facebook, LinkedIn))



☐ qualify companies (found during the previous steps) according to the **phases of education and training** in which they could be a useful partner (e.g. initial orientation, practical training / internship, know-how-exchange, transition).

☐ qualify companies (found during the previous steps) according to their **accessibility by public transportation**.

☐ review periodically your own web presence, to which extent it provides sufficient information, to company's / labour market representatives, about the **skills and potentials of your graduates**.

☐ review periodically your own web presence, to which extent it provides detailed information on **opportunities to companies participating in training and educational activities**.

☐ review periodically your own web presence, to which extent it provides information on the **benefits of hiring graduates with disabilities**.

☐ **place learners** for days or weeks in **new companies** so that they can gain practical experiences and help to establish a link to the respective company.

☐ run an own **Practice Enterprise\*** that interacts with real companies.

(\*Practice Enterprise: A VET organization unit that is run like a real business silhouetting a real enterprise's business procedures, products and services.)

## Technologies

Consider hardware or software that ...

☐ allows **access** to relevant **company** or **job vacancy databases** for searching and filtering.

☐ performs an **automatic match** between learners' **abilities / skills** and **job requirements**.

☐ **documents** each **company's history** with your organisation to follow-up and co-ordinate activities by anybody within your organisation.

In particular, does it contain ...

- o a history of joint activities (e.g. training phases, apprenticeships, transitions)
- o contact persons and their respective details
- o a history of previous contacts (e.g., who contacted whom by when and by which means, and main content of the exchange)
- o a broad classification of the companies as partners (e.g. for single, multiple or strategic use)

☐ establishes a kind of **hotline between the company and the VET supervisor** during practical phases of learners in this company, also outside visiting hours (e.g. phone, video, chat / messenger).

☐ allows for a **shared documentation** of the learner's progress throughout the practice phase between the VET organisation and company, which contributes to increased transparency and collaboration.

☐ maintains **contact between the learner and the supervisor during practical phases**, to minimise the need for on-site visits which always take extra efforts and costs (esp. travel time & costs, absence from VET organisation during visit).

☐ **maintains** the required **support after successful transition** and offers a gradual (individualised) reduction in the intensity of support both for the learner and the company.



## Section 2: Maintaining links to employment and the labour market

Key to maintaining links is to carve out and fully understand the mutual benefit of a more permanent cooperation between a VET organisation and a company or any other stakeholder. Maintaining the link means to ensure that this win-win 'survives' over time.

### Processes

Consider establishing processes that ...

- ☐ allow you to **probe** continuously the **expectations** of each cooperating company towards the VET organisation, as these may develop and change while the cooperation evolves.
- ☐ perform regular, sometimes also anonymous, **surveys** through which companies' interests can be explored more in-depth.
- ☐ allow you to **review subscriptions** of cooperating companies to interesting topics at your own website or newsletter.
- ☐ allow you to **review your web site statistics** with regard to topics of high interest to visitors.
- ☐ support you to **further develop** an initial link from a 1-to-1, initially personal relationship (e.g. teacher or trainer in contact with a company representative) to a **link between two organisations**.
- ☐ allow to **collect feedback** from strategic partners (like innovative companies, chambers etc.), to review and assess the information and to draw the right conclusions to ensure that courses, assessments and certificates are tailored to current and future labour market needs.
- ☐ facilitate you to **follow-up your learners after transition** to the labour market and use this information to **monitor the long-term impact** of your VET programmes and processes.

### Technologies

Consider hardware or software that ...

- ☐ helps you managing the **periodic contacting** of cooperating companies (e.g. by setting regular reminders).
- ☐ allows to set up, run and evaluate **online surveys** for your company partners to provide feedback on relevant issues.
- ☐ documents all activities so that **team concepts** with mutual substitution are efficiently doable.  
Explanation: This e.g. requires the technology to document not just *when* and *who*, but especially *what* and *why* activities took place, allowing any team member to continue the cooperation where another member stopped before.
- ☐ **limits access to personal data** of learners exclusively to the eligible stakeholders inside and outside the VET organisation.
- ☐ supports the **cooperation needs** of interdisciplinary teams (e.g. job coaches, career counsellors, mentors etc.) during transition phases (e.g. task scheduling, exchange of learner-specific data, provision of immediate feedback).
- ☐ is able to **discriminate data** to particularly see the performance of learners with disabilities and to assess the impact of any educational interventions targeted to them.
- ☐ provides **access to required resources** (e.g. online information and services, databases) to all stakeholders permanently throughout the transition and when placed at work.
- ☐ supports you to **follow-up your learners** once they left your organisation.



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