

Innovation Ecosystems for
Vocational Education and Training

Peer Review 2

Prepared by UPIT

This Report refers to months 9 to 14 of the project implementation - 1st of July 2016 to 31st of December 2016.

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1. Evolution of the MSKPs since creation: size, participation, involvement

The MSKPs have been created based on the on the framework set in the InEcVET Terms of Reference for MSKP.

Three meetings have been held in each partner country.

The size of the MSKPs has been maintained constant (Romania) or even increased (Cyprus, Ireland and Portugal):

Cyprus	Following the feedback received by members of MSKP during the 1 st and 2 nd meeting, participants from the Cyprus Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Cyprus Employers & Industrialists Federation have been invited to join the InEcVET MSKP. In spite of two withdrawals (because some members changed job in the meanwhile), the total number of MSKP participants increased as a result of dissemination activities during which stakeholders had shown vivid interest in our project.
Ireland	At the last meeting four new members have been added: two from our Regionals Skills Training centre, one from a university that is responsible for training teachers to work in both second level schools and vocational education colleges and programmes and one from the national agency that are responsible for funding of Vocational Education and Training in Ireland.
Portugal	<p>The MSKP team started with 8 people, including VET teachers and tutors from the public and private sectors, technicians of Lousada Municipality and a professional from an entrepreneurial association that represents 12 municipalities.</p> <p>Following the feedback received by members of MSKP during the 1st and 2nd meeting more people have been invited to join the InEcVET MSKP:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - education managers of 4 groups of schools; - 2 business owners; - a professional from an employment office; - a local politician.
Romania	The MSKP has 27 persons. The focus was maintaining its size and increasing members' motivation & engagement in the MSKP's activities rather than extending the size. From one meeting to another, the members' involvement has increased: more vivid discussions, longer debates, creation of ad-hoc inner small groups of 2-3 people analysing a certain topic. Even more, their interest and thus contribution became more consistent through the arguments that they brought into discussions to support ideas and to try making 'round' their suggestions and recommendations (e.g. to a topic approached by one member, the others added the perspective of their profession and current job).

After each meeting, minutes have been prepared, checked by MSKP members and thus validated.

Sometimes attendance at meetings has fluctuated (Ireland) due to members having other commitments but everyone receives a copy of the minutes so is therefore informed and kept up to date with the progress of the project.

2. Inputs from stakeholders (MSKPs) on how to implement the Intrapreneurship Curriculum

The stakeholders have provided valuable input about the training approach, delivery methods and recommendations:

- In **Cyprus** additional needs of necessary soft skills for intrapreneurship have been identified, suggested to the consortium and eventually integrated in the developed Intrapreneurship Curriculum. The stakeholders proposed one face-to-face set-up at a computer lab where the trainees will be provided with certain guidelines on technical issues, i.e. on how to sign-up and navigate to the e-platform. Then, the trainees will be invited to complete the Curriculum online on their own pace, but technical support will be guaranteed by CARDET and EUC.
- In **Ireland** all members of the MSKP have had input into the Intrapreneurship Curriculum in the early stages of the project and have had the opportunity to feedback and make recommendations on the content of each module. At this stage of the project the Irish partners are in the process of meeting with the VET professionals who will take part in the pilot training on the Intrapreneurship Curriculum. Once they have assessed trainees' current knowledge and identified their current level of skill, these will be invited to the next MSKP meeting where it will be discussed how the training will be implemented.
- In **Portugal** at the 3rd meeting the stakeholders analyzed the content of the Curriculum. We discussed the construction of the intrapreneurship curriculum. Thus, the objectives of the curriculum, the general description of the curriculum and the already designed modules and contents were presented. The participants agreed to the proposed 8 Modules. In terms of Module 1 they suggested that it would be interesting also to talk about entrepreneurship and the connection with intrapreneurship. The participants did not give suggestions for the remaining modules, agreeing that the curriculum is very good. They also agreed with the need to make this curriculum available to the VET community. Participants also reflect about the main problems of VET in Portugal. They identified the following problems:
 1. The lack of innovation of some VET professionals such as lack of entrepreneurial skills, lack of exploitation of technologies that meet technical efficiency and the use of traditional methods, considered passive, focused on a theoretical component which must be replaced by innovative and more active methods that allow a pedagogical practice to generate practical knowledge;
 2. Lack of training aimed at VET professionals, especially in the field of entrepreneurship;
 3. Disconnection of VET policies and projects in Portugal with the policies of the European Union;
 4. Significant mismatch between training supply and labour market demand:
 - a) An oversupply of courses leading to professions such as medium skilled technicians for IT and for commerce for a low demand of the labour market;
 - b) High demand for qualified workers in such areas as food services, construction and industrial production which low rank in VET provision.

It was decided that the problem we are going to ask our skunkworks team to find a solution is the lack of innovation of some VET professionals.

The next MSKP will be on 20th February 2017. The purpose of the meeting is to do the Training and Skunkworks Implementation Plan for Portugal. We will discuss how the training will be implemented and will select the participants to complete it.

- In **Romania**, at the 3rd meeting, analysis on how to implement the Curriculum took place both for implementation within this project but also possibilities to implement it at national scale, throughout the VET system. The suggestions of the MSKP members are to implement the Curriculum through a blended training: initial face-to-face training (quite short and rather focused on how to use the e-learning platform) followed by the online modules. 17 attendees filled in the 12-Month Evaluation Survey for members of the MSKP focusing on both the Intrapreneurship Curriculum and the skunkworks. These have been translated in English by UPIT and uploaded on InEcVET platform. More details on how to effectively implement the pilot training on the Intrapreneurship Curriculum will follow in the next MSKP meeting (4th meeting).

At the level of the InEcVET consortium a common line of approach will be applied regarding the Curriculum implementation (i.e. number of attending teachers, number of training hours, Curriculum contents) but the concrete manner of implementation will be a flexible one, allowing adaptation of the local environments. The localization of the Curriculum is also envisaged: being modularly designed, the partner institutions will be able to use it to fit the overall local dynamic and individual skill requirements of VET trainers/tutors – all and/or partial use – and also to add new modules.

3. Perspective on the skunk works framework at local level

The perspectives regarding the skunk works framework are varied and reflect the characteristics of the local environment:

- In **Cyprus**, the stakeholders believe it would be more effective to create a visible skunk works that will work as a knowledge-transfer programme leveraging internal knowledge of all participating organisations but aiming at a marketable deliverable in VET innovation. Therefore, the skunk works should be evolved as a concept and fit into the VET sector; thus it will have much greater chance of outside funding and it will constitute a less costly short cut to knowledge though interaction with experts in the topic. In addition, we suggest that an education skunkworks should be open and have external members to function effectively.
- In **Ireland** the stakeholders were introduced to the Framework for Establishing a Skunkworks Framework at the last MSKP meetings. However, few of the stakeholders are familiar or have any experience of conducting a skunkworks so the focus of the future MSKP meeting will be discussing and deciding on what form this will take.
- In **Portugal** the skunkworks team is going to be selected at the 4th meeting of the MSKP. The selection of participants will be made among VET teachers and tutors from the public and private sectors, school managers, University professors, technicians and politicians of Lousada Municipality, professionals of entrepreneurial associations, business owners and professionals from employment offices.
- In **Romania** although the skunkworks have been briefly introduced at conceptual level during the 1st and 2nd meeting, the 3rd meeting was meant to deepen the idea and to discuss how skunkworks can be introduced in the education & training environment in Romania. Participants were involved in a group activity: they have been split in 4 groups and requested to brainstorm to create a mind map and answer about introducing the skunkworks. The main aspects that have been emphasized were: to identify the educational and training niches, to take responsibilities and to choose innovative elements of high impact. The 4th MSKP meeting will also approach the skunkworks, in order to advance with concrete ideas on how exactly the skunkworks to be achieved.

4. Status of teachers' selection for pilot training

The selection of the teachers who will attend the pilot training is currently under different stages of implementation in partner countries: some are more advanced (Ireland), some have organised/planned the selection and follow to perform it soon (Cyprus, Portugal, Romania). Few aspects of the selection process are rendered below:

- In **Cyprus**, the intention is not to focus on existing VET providers despite their expertise in the field, but mostly to aim at educators that are accredited as cVET providers from HRDA and other potential VET providers. The pre-selection will be based on the criteria set by the consortium and a call of interest to HRDA, post-graduate students, VET agencies, the Ministry of Education and Culture and other trainers/tutors will be circulated.
- In **Ireland** as the Education and Training Boards in Ireland are the statutory bodies responsible for Vocational Education and Training a minimum of one teacher across all the different levels of programmes offered by Louth Meath Education and Training Board will be selected. So it will be a teacher from Youthreach Programme, Back to Education Initiative, Community Education, Adult Literacy Service, Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme, Skills Training Centre, Post Leaving Certificate Colleges and our Community Training Programmes. Senior management will identify teachers and trainers. Once identified will be invited to an information session and from there they can decide if they want to take part in the project.
- In **Portugal** the VET professionals for the pilot training will be selected at the 4th meeting of the MSKP. The selection of participants will be made among VET teachers and tutors from the public and private sectors, school managers, University professors, technicians that work in the education department of Lousada Municipality, VET managers in entrepreneurial associations, business owners that develop VET courses for the company employees and professionals from employment offices who develop VET Courses. Most of them are already in the MSKP and will be also involved in the skunkworks team.
- In **Romania** UPIT and AOA have met and discussed the organisation of the teachers' selection for pilot training based on the common criteria agreed by the InEcVET consortium. Then the trainer(s) have to be decided. The selection of participants and trainers is not acquired yet, it will be done by the end of January 2017.

5. MSKPs' activities within the next 6 months

An overview of the activities to be achieved within the next 6 months emphasized that the MSKP members will focus on:

- **Cyprus:** conversion of MSKP into knowledge-transfer skunk works whose emphasis will be on additional steps to promote innovation and creativity in VET; involvement in process of identification of appropriate trainers; assistance in finding stakeholders from Cyprus for short stories/testimonials which will be included in the national adaptation of the Curriculum.
- **Ireland:** integrating the selected teacher and trainers into the MSKP and allow them hear first-hand the issues that local businesses and employers have identified; identifying teacher and trainers (Late-December 2016); inviting teacher and trainers to an information session (Early-January 2017); conducting information session and assessing current knowledge and skills (Mid-January 2017); MSKP meeting with existing stakeholders and teachers/trainers (Early-February 2017); starting the training on the Intrapreneurship Curriculum (Mid-February 2017); continuing with the MSKP meetings and starting the skunkworks process (March – April 2017).
- **Portugal:**
 - Selection of the VET professionals for the pilot training, (20th February 2017);
 - Starting the implementation of the Intrapreneurship Curriculum (pilot training) (March 2017);
 - Selection of the members for the skunkworks, (20th February 2017);
 - Starting the skunkworks meetings and use their knowledge to explore a solution to improving the Standing of VET in Portugal, (March 2017).
- **Romania:** selecting participants and trainer(s) for the pilot training (January 2017); performing the (brief) training and information of the trainer(s) (January – early February 2017); starting the implementation of the Intrapreneurship Curriculum (pilot training) (February 2017); creating the team (deciding/selecting the members) and initiating the skunkworks (March-April 2017); implementing the 5th MSKP meeting (April 2017).

The MSKP meetings are planned as in the chart below:

	<i>January</i> <i>2017</i>	<i>February</i> <i>2017</i>	<i>March</i> <i>2017</i>	<i>April</i> <i>2017</i>	<i>May</i> <i>2017</i>	<i>June</i> <i>2017</i>
Cyprus						
Ireland						
Portugal						
Romania						



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