

Erasmus+ Joint Mentorship: *Better Cooperation for Better VET*

Good Practice Handbook

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Project study visits

(prepared by Croatian Chamber of Trades and Crafts)

Study visit to Zagreb

In line with the first objective, two study visits were organized within the project with the aim of presenting the vocational education and training systems in Croatia and Belgium, more precisely those vocational education models that emphasize work-based learning (apprenticeship, dual education). The participants of the study visits were representatives of vocational schools, companies and other institutions related to vocational education and training.

The first study visit was organized by the Croatian Chamber of Trades and Crafts, within which we presented the apprenticeship system within the entire vocational education and training system in the Republic of Croatia to the participants.

The apprenticeship scheme of the Unified Education Model has been implemented since the 2004/2005 school year.

However, before that, dual programs existed since the 1995/1996 school year. The first Trades Act (1994) was the basis and prerequisite for the development of educational legislation, curricula and a practical introduction to the dual education system. After the law and curricula were drafted, the experimental practice of the dual education system began. The results were encouraging, but they also showed that there was a lot of work to be done to make the system work at full capacity. In addition to the experimental system, the "classical model" (based on schools) was also applied in most vocational schools.

Therefore, in early 2003, a single education model was developed, which was implemented in accordance with the Crafts Act and contained, albeit to a lesser extent, the features of dual education. New educational programs for crafts professions were introduced.

This system could not function without the cooperation of numerous institutions, each of which has a legally defined competence. Competence is divided between the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of the Economy, the Croatian Chamber of Crafts and the Agency for Vocational Education. The Ministry of Science and Education is primarily responsible for coordinating education provided in schools.

The Ministry of the Economy, Entrepreneurship and Crafts is responsible for maintaining the database of contracts and apprenticeship places. <https://enaukovanje.portor.hr/login.htm>

The Croatian Chamber of Trades and Crafts is responsible for issuing permits to tradesmen and companies to employ apprentices, conducting exams for in-company mentors for apprenticeships, participating in apprenticeship exams and proposing apprenticeship curricula in cooperation with the ministry responsible for trades and crafts.

The Croatian Chamber of Trades and Crafts and the Croatian Chamber of Economy are responsible for the training of in-company mentors.

The Agency for Vocational Education and Training is responsible for the external evaluation of apprenticeship exams.

It is also important to note that the county offices responsible for education, vocational schools, the Ministry of Science and Education, the Ministry of the Economy and Sustainable Development, the Croatian Chamber of Trades and Crafts: planning the enrolment quota

The Croatian Chamber of Trades and Crafts is responsible for issuing permits to tradesmen and companies to employ apprentices, conducting exams for in-company mentors for

apprenticeships, conducting trainee exams (and proposing apprenticeship curricula in cooperation with the Ministry responsible for trades and crafts – see Q14).

Namely, to implement apprenticeships, companies must have a permit for accepting apprentices issued by the Croatian Chamber of Trades and Crafts.

To obtain a license, companies must ensure the conditions for the acquisition of knowledge, skills and competences by apprentices in the actual work process and guarantee the quality of training in the workplace, in accordance with the curriculum.

This also means that the apprentice must have an appointed mentor who has appropriate qualifications and pedagogical competences. The permit has a validity period of seven years.

Supervision of the implementation of apprenticeships at employers is carried out by a committee consisting of representatives of the Ministry responsible for crafts, vocational education institutions, the Agency responsible for vocational education, the Croatian Chamber of Trades and Crafts and the Croatian Chamber of Economy.

Information on licensed companies participating in the implementation of apprenticeships can be found on the website of the Ministry of Entrepreneurship and Crafts "eNaukovanje" (<https://enaukovanje.portor.hr/login.htm>) or on the websites of the chambers: the Croatian Chamber of Trades and Crafts and the Croatian Chamber of Economy.

After the participants of the study visit were introduced to the entire system of vocational education and training with a special emphasis on apprenticeship, the participants had the opportunity to directly gain experience of this way of implementing education by visiting secondary vocational schools in order to learn about the specifics of implementation as seen through the eyes of the school, students, teachers and their principals. Then, a visit was organized to one of the leading crafts and companies in the county to gain insight from employers who participate in apprenticeship. Finally, representatives of the Croatian Chamber of Crafts, regional chambers of crafts, the Agency for Vocational Education and Adult Education and the Ministry of the Economy presented their roles and responsibilities in the implementation of apprenticeships with an emphasis on cooperation between all stakeholders of vocational education.

On the last day of the study visit, a group discussion was organized so that all participants could exchange examples of good practice from their countries as well as lessons learned during the study visit, which was a good basis for further WP activities.

Conclusions that were reached:

Group 1 concluded that one of the key problems in cooperation in vocational education and training is the inclusion of students in the exchange process between schools and enterprises, i.e. there is a need for a systematic approach and more standardized mechanisms of cooperation between schools and enterprises. to achieve the most effective involvement of students. In other words, communication mechanisms need to be improved with the aim of strengthening cooperation between schools and companies and obtaining quality feedback on students' progress during the work-based learning part.

Group 2 focused its discussion on enterprises and the challenges they face in the context of cooperation in vocational education and training. On the one hand, there is a very broad issue of the perception of the reputation and value of companies and mentors in companies, where apprenticeships do not have their place as a valuable option for students and their parents. However, this is linked to another problem, which is related to the lack of a sense of added value of

apprenticeships in companies. In this way, companies do not have a clear and concrete sense of how an apprentice could contribute to the company's business, which leads to a working environment in which the apprentice does not build his or her own identity as a possible future worker and employee. The group proposed as a possible solution raising a positive image of apprenticeships and crafts in general, and this process should start from kindergarten through primary school. This would contribute to the identification of students with the job, the profession as well as with the mentor who accompanies them during their work-based learning. Also, vocational teachers need to be empowered and improved so that they can recognize students' skills and offer them concrete and supportive advice regarding their professional interests.

Group 3 focused on communication between companies, schools and students as an important aspect of partnership cooperation. They concluded that cooperation at all levels is necessary to achieve the best possible results. The flow of information between all partners is a key aspect that needs to be addressed. A possible solution is the digitalization of communication and the reduction of administrative requirements that hinder partner communication and cooperation.

Study visit to Belgium

In line with the first objective, two study visits were organized within the project with the aim of presenting the vocational education and training systems in Croatia and Belgium, more precisely those vocational education models that emphasize work-based learning (apprenticeship, dual education). The participants of the study visits were representatives of vocational schools, companies and other institutions related to vocational education and training.

The second study visit was organized by the GO! Atheneum Geraardsbergen Secondary Vocational School, within which the participants were presented with the apprenticeship system as part of the entire vocational education and training system in Belgium.

Apprenticeship - a teaching method that focuses on the skills needs of the labour market of small and medium-sized enterprises - has a long tradition in Belgium. The first apprenticeship secretariat in Wallonia was established in 1907. The successor of this first historical institution can be considered the IFAPME network.

However, unlike apprenticeships in the Republic of Croatia, most apprentices in Belgium are young people over 18, since apprenticeships potentially attract young people who leave school early or students who have accumulated "school failure".

If provided by IFAPME or SFPME, the scheme is implemented through specific apprenticeship programmes. Such programs and related professional qualifications are developed with the support of representatives of sectoral social partners.

The social partners are part of the OFFA board, as well as part of the accreditation and mediation committee, and are part of most of the working groups established by OFFA.

OFFA signs cooperation agreements with sector representatives (social partners) involved in exchange training and education.

Vocational qualifications in the French-speaking part of Belgium are developed by the Service francophone des métiers et des qualifications (SFMQ) (French Service for Trades and Qualifications).

The SFMQ brings together the main stakeholders of vocational education and training such as: public employment services (PES), social partners, all vocational education and training providers, socio-professional integration operators, the Consortium for the Validation of Skills (Consortium

de validation des compétences, CVDC) for Belgium-FR.

Moreover, the social partners are part of the board of IFAPME and its local training centres IFAPME and are part of the board of the local training centre SFPME (EFP).

All three providers (CEFA, IFAPME, SFPME) sign cooperation agreements with the social partners at sectoral level involved in the training exchange.

The social partners sitting on the OFFA board are involved in the accreditation process of companies wishing to employ trainees

Experts or representatives of the sectoral branches are part of the examination board in schools and training centres (IFAPME/SFPME/CEFA).

Service providers provide training for students, create or participate in the creation of training profiles, participate in the management of the off-the-job training (OFFA), approve off-the-job training companies.

Before concluding the contract, the company must obtain approval (accreditation) from the training institution to provide “formation en alternance” (on the proposal of sectoral trainers if any).

The company submits an application for approval to the training institution. Within three months of submitting the application, the training institution (or sectoral trainers if any) visits the company to see if the company meets the accreditation requirements.

The company must provide a mentor (“company-appointed tutor”) who meets the conditions specified in the contract.

After the participants of the study visit were introduced to the entire vocational education and training system in Belgium with a special emphasis on apprenticeships, the participants had the opportunity to gain direct experience of this way of implementing education by visiting the secondary vocational school in Geraardsbergen to learn about the specifics of the implementation from the perspective of the school, students and teachers.

A visit to companies involved in apprenticeships was then organised to gain insight from employers. On the last day of the study visit, as in Croatia, a group discussion was organised for all participants to discuss what they had seen during the study visit and compare it with the apprenticeship system they had seen in the Republic of Croatia, but also with the apprenticeship system in their own country.

Some of the key conclusions were:

- there is a need to improve communication mechanisms to strengthen school-company links and enable comprehensive feedback on student performance during practical training; it is proposed to improve communication channels between schools and companies to optimise student involvement and feedback mechanisms.
- it is important to improve the image of apprenticeships and crafts from an early age, starting from kindergarten to primary school. In addition, it is also important to empower VET teachers to recognise students' skills and provide them with appropriate guidance.
- digitalisation of communication channels and reducing administrative requirements can facilitate seamless partner communication and cooperation.

Croatia

Initial VET

(prepared by Croatian Chamber of Trades and Crafts)

Cooperation between the “Elektroluč” trade and the Electromechanical Trade School Zagreb

“Elektroluč” is a trade and office of a certified electrical engineer, Josip Lučan. It was founded in 1991 to carry out, design and supervise electrical installations and power plants, as well as photovoltaic systems. The trade provides practical training for high school students and has a license for apprenticeships granted by the Croatian Chamber of Trades and Crafts.

For more than 20 years, it has been cooperating with the Electromechanical Trade School in Zagreb in organizing practical training for students studying to be electricians. Each student has a regulated apprenticeship contract and a mentor who has passed the master's exam. Special attention is paid to ensuring occupational safety measures. To encourage the development of skills in students, as well as for their dedication to performing their jobs, students are paid a monetary compensation prescribed by law and regulated by the apprenticeship contract during practical training.

The interest and desire of students to master skills, as well as the cooperation of the school and the practical training teacher with the “Elektroluč” craft are the most important links in the successful organization of practical training. Each student keeps a folder of the practical part of the apprenticeship, and the craft keeps records of hours in practical training and enters the grade at the end of each month in it. The practical training teacher, in cooperation with the mentor in the craft, monitors the implementation of the Annual Practical Training Plan.

The “Elektroluč” craft had 5 students on apprenticeship in the 2021/2022 school year. One of the students was J. M., who migrated to Croatia with his mother due to regional insecurity in Africa. The student did well at school and in practical training. In addition to English, in three years of schooling he mastered the Croatian language and passed the Assistant and Final Exams, earning the title of electrician. Another student, D. L., chose the topic of the Final Exam to create a circuit breaker protection and created an educational teaching aid for the Electromechanical Trade School in Zagreb with swimming pool lighting and an example of division into zones. All circuit elements and the necessary materials were provided by the “Elektroluč” trade. The teaching aid is located in the Cabinet for Modern Technologies in Electrical Installations of the Electromechanical Trade School in Zagreb and is used for educational purposes. After graduating from school, both students found employment in the “Elektroluč” trade and today work successfully as electricians.

Electromechanical Trade School in Zagreb and the “Elektroluč” trade continue to cooperate.

Parent meetings at the beginning of the school year

At the beginning of each school year, the head of practical classes organizes parent meetings at which, in addition to parents, the heads of practical classes by profession and some of the master craftsmen who accept students for apprenticeships are present.

They inform parents about the rights and obligations of all stakeholders in the apprenticeship process, the rules of conduct at school and in the craft workshop/licensed company, the number of hours that students must complete in practice, implementation plans and programs for a particular profession, i.e. the learning outcomes that students should adopt during the school year, the obligation to pay apprentices, the amounts of student fees for the current school year, possible scholarship opportunities, etc.

Tours of master craftsmen/mentors

At the beginning of each school year, the leaders of practical classes by profession visit master craftsmen/mentors who have signed apprenticeship contracts with scientists.

They are informed about implementation plans and programs for a particular occupation, i.e. the learning outcomes that students should adopt during the school year, the number of hours that students must complete in practice, the importance and method of recording student attendance, the amounts of student fees for the current school year, tax benefits, possible projects and possibilities of co-financing, etc.

Organization of five regional webinars: implementation of apprenticeships with employers in the context of occupational safety

Organizer: Croatian Chamber of Trades and Crafts (HOK), regional chambers (POKs) and the State Inspectorate of the Republic of Croatia

Lecturers: POK representatives (education advisors), representatives of the State Inspectorate of the Republic of Croatia

Participants: crafts and companies interested in licensing for the implementation of apprenticeships, heads of practical training in vocational schools and candidates for master's exams (possible future mentors)

Topics:

- Introduction and presentation - all participating education advisors from POKs + occupational safety expert
- Presentation on the procedure for issuing a permit (license) for conducting apprenticeships + relicensing + information on master's exams and exams in work pedagogy (POK advisor)
- Presentation on the implementation of occupational safety with employers in the context of licensing and conducting apprenticeships (occupational safety expert - representative of the State Inspectorate of the Republic of Croatia)
- Relevant legal provisions of the Protection Act at work and the Trades Act and the Ordinance on minimum conditions for apprenticeship contracts (answers to the most important questions: what is the role of the labour inspector in the process of issuing permits (license), what and why he checks, what documentation is required to be presented, frequently asked questions)
- Discussion

Based on the example of good practice of the webinar held in the OK Medimurje County, HOK initiated the organization of regional webinars throughout the Republic of Croatia with the desire to better inform employers about the conditions they must meet to be able to conduct apprenticeships and increase the number of licensed subjects. The main reason for organizing the webinar was the legal changes in the area of licensing, which introduced the time limit for the license and the obligation to relicense all licensed subjects with a license older than 7 years.

Webinars are organized in five regions during 2021. A total of over 240 participants took part in the webinars. Education advisors informed participants about all important topics related to licensing: the conditions, method and procedure for issuing licenses for employers who meet the prescribed conditions, the method and procedure for implementing relicensing, and the necessary documentation and details regarding the implementation of exams that prove the basics for teaching apprentices and master exams. Furthermore, the webinar focused on the role of occupational safety inspectors who themselves participated in the webinar and explained everything they needed to know about the procedure and method of implementing supervision of the application of occupational safety measures by employers who submit an application for a permit to accept apprentices, as well as the necessary documentation. Part of the webinar was intended for asking questions regarding previous presentations, and through the discussion, participants received

additional answers to questions they were interested in. Also, the webinars enabled the strengthening of cooperation between the Croatian Chamber of Trades and Crafts and the State Inspectorate with the aim of improving the quality of the licensing process and also improved cooperation with heads of practical training from vocational schools, who in a way became multipliers in everyday contact with crafts and companies, especially with those who are required to relicense.

Organization of a seminar for leaders of practical teaching on the topic of possibilities of improving the organization of the educational process of work-based learning in crafts

Organizer: Agency for Vocational Education and Adult Education

Lecturers: representatives of the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Economy, Croatian Chamber of Trades and Crafts (HOK), county chambers of the Croatian Chamber of Economy (HGK) and representatives of the Agency for Vocational Education and Adult Education

Participants: principals of secondary vocational schools, county representatives of HOK, county representatives of the HGK

Topics discussed:

- licensing of workshops
- number of hours of practical training
- enrolment
- age of students
- teacher training
- method of organizing apprenticeships
- standardization of the assistant exam
- cooperation between schools and employers
- encouragement of student enrolment in certain professions
- curriculum modernization
- investment in centres of excellence
- teacher work standards
- support for the system
- harmonization of legislation
- promotion and information

Conclusions were drawn up on each of the above topics from all the seminars held (there were 5 of them).

At the end of the seminar, all participants were required to evaluate the seminars and state what was most useful regarding the content of the seminars held, what was least useful to them, and how we can improve future conferences/meetings/seminars.

After all the seminars held, the representative of the Agency for Vocational Education and Training prepared a report in which she systematized the results of the evaluations from all the seminars held as a basis for planning future professional conferences.

Meeting of stakeholders of vocational education with the Ombudsman for children

TOPIC OF THE MEETING: PROTECTION OF THE RIGHTS AND INTERESTS OF CHILDREN DURING TRAINING
PARTICIPANTS:

- The Ombudsman for Children with associates
- Representative of the Ministry of Education
- Representative of the Ministry of Economy
- Representative of the Ministry of Labor

- Representative of the State Inspectorate
- Representative of the Croatian Chamber of Crafts

The Office of the Ombudsman for Children periodically holds a meeting of representatives of state bodies that have an influence on the creation and implementation of activities related to the protection of the rights and interests of students during professional practice, in accordance with a joint agreement on the exchange of information on the application of legal provisions and supervision over the performance of students' professional practice, in schools and with employers.

At the end of the meeting, the following conclusions were drawn, which were agreed upon by all present:

1. Further information and sensitization of employers on the rights of students on professional practice is necessary
2. Further information on employers on support and incentives for accepting students for professional practice is necessary
3. In order to ensure more complete protection of students and the effectiveness of supervision over the implementation of the Vocational Education Act, the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Sports will, in the next amendments to the Vocational Education Act, incorporate more detailed provisions on the protection of students into the Act, prescribe in more detail the conditions for conducting practical classes and exercises in order to specify the provision of Article 29, paragraph 7 of the Vocational Education Act, which prescribes the application of general regulations on employment relations, safety and protection at work in practical classes and exercises at the employer, then misdemeanour or criminal provisions as sanctions for violations of legal provisions by employers who accept apprentices for professional practice, as well as clearer provisions on supervision and jurisdiction for the implementation of inspection supervision, and submit the proposal for amendments to the Act to the participants of the meeting for their opinion
4. In order to further improve protection rights of students during professional practice The Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports will check whether the data in the e-matica can determine the number and type of violations of students' rights during professional practice, in which schools there were violations and with what consequences, and if this data is not visible, take the necessary actions to adjust the e-matica so that the same data is available
5. The competent authorities represented at the meeting will strive to find a systematic solution to ensure students' practical training through joint efforts

Joint implementation of apprenticeships through a joint license

There is a certain number of economic entities that would like to get involved in the implementation of apprenticeships, i.e. accept students for practical training, but cannot obtain a permit (license) since they cannot provide enough prescribed content of practical training in their economic entity. One such example is apprenticeship for the profession of automechatronic.

In the last few years, there has been great interest among final-year elementary school students in enrolling in the education program for this profession. On the other hand, the enrolment of students in the professions of auto electrician and auto mechanic is decreasing.

At the master's exam level, there are not a large number of people who have taken the master's exam for this profession, and there are still a large number of auto electrician and auto mechanic trades that want to accept students for internships. By submitting an application for a joint permit (license) to conduct apprenticeships through the cooperation of two trades or legal entities that can jointly cover enough of the prescribed content of practical training, it is possible to secure apprenticeship places for students in this sought-after profession. If a trade or legal entity is not able to provide 70% of the prescribed content of practical training, but can provide between 50% and 70%, it can obtain a license on the condition that it

concludes an Agreement on the joint implementation of apprenticeships with another licensed trade or legal entity. Then the Chamber issues a license for the joint implementation of apprenticeships. In this case, the apprentice concludes an apprenticeship contract with both places where he/she is doing his/her apprenticeship.

Conference on vocational education in Opatija

As an example of good practice, I would cite the conference held in Opatija, which included all stakeholders in vocational education who are directly involved in theoretical teaching and work-based learning.

The conference Cooperation for Better Education, for the first time in my many years of work (31 years of work in a vocational school), allowed direct comments from all those who educate young people to be heard, especially in today's times when there are many students with difficulties, but also students who are gifted and are given the opportunity to progress and learn throughout their lives after completing formal education, while remaining directly involved in their profession.

Given that all direct stakeholders in the education process participated in the conference (ASOO, MZO, MINGO, HOK, POK, PAAR, National University, school principals and craftsmen participating in the apprenticeship process and professional teachers and the principal of the school from Opatija, and the Guild of Hairdressers and Beauticians), it was very interesting to see that until now there had been no model where everyone could receive the same information about education and learning.

During the conference, models of vocational education were presented, especially apprenticeships, within which the Ministry of the Economy and Sustainable Development and the Croatian Chamber of Crafts and Trades play an active role, new digital tools in the field of vocational education for related crafts, as well as the perspective of cooperation between higher education and the economy.

Vertical mobility and further possibilities for its realization by creating new programs that would be an upgrade to already completed vocational programs were also presented, after which students who have completed three-year formal education could continue their education and learning in the profession itself (e.g. a hairdresser with a three-year school could graduate as a stage hairdresser and thus obtain a higher qualification that would be upgraded through years of work and gaining experience in certain jobs.

I would also highlight as an excellent example of good practice the panel discussion "Strengthening Partnership and Cooperation in Vocational Education" where decisions were made jointly and are related to "first-line" stakeholders - that is, students and mentors, and they certainly deserve a lot of work to be done on them so that they can be assimilated and become part of the educational process. These are:

- a sufficient number of hours of practical training in the economy.
- vertical mobility for people with a three-year education
- professional training of teachers from schools in the economy
- pedagogical training of mentors from the economy
- strengthen cooperation at all levels, including the implementation of apprenticeships
- promotion of enrolment in craft professions as the first choice of students when enrolling in secondary school.

If such conferences were more frequent and if what is still in its infancy were implemented, I think that the education system would gain in value and that crafts in other professions would become more respected and that the craftsman would gain a completely new role in the eyes of others who cannot survive without a craftsman of any craft profession, but are not aware of it.

Promoting alternative dispute resolution

ROUND TABLE TOPIC: RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS OF THE CONTRACTING PARTIES IN APPRENTICESHIP CONTRACTS AND METHODS OF RESOLVING DISPUTE SITUATIONS

PARTICIPANTS: Secretary of the Court of Honor and the Mediation Centre of the Croatian Chamber of Crafts
School principals
Parent representatives
Mentor craftsmen

The Round Table should encourage communication among participants and determine the level of knowledge of basic legal concepts and the rights and obligations that arise for the contracting parties based on concluded apprenticeship contracts, as well as the consequences of possible disputable situations. All of the above is aimed at eliminating or minimizing the risk posed by unclear or incomplete communication between project stakeholders.

The goal of the activity is to achieve a result in such a way that the participants increase their level of knowledge and awareness of the way to peacefully resolve disputes through expert and impartial mediators at the HOK Conciliation Centre or educated persons within the Chamber system in proceedings before the Court of Honor of the HOK and, in general, about bodies for alternative resolution of any disputed situations resulting from concluded apprenticeship contracts or other types of legal relationships in which they are. It is necessary to educate the participants of the Round Table about the methods and benefits of clear and precise communication, the requirements and expectations of the contracting parties, and the advantages of timely clarification of ambiguities or disputed situations with the help of trained experts.

Leaflets on alternative dispute resolution will be distributed to the participants of the Round Table, and a simulation of the resolution of a disputed situation will be performed with the aim of simplifying and bringing the entire mediation process closer together.

Pilot project for promotion of crafts professions in Croatia

(according to the project of the Krapina-Zagorje County Chamber of Crafts)

OBJECTIVE

To increase the enrolment of students in training programs for crafts professions with an emphasis on shortage crafts professions

TASKS

- hold a meeting with all project stakeholders (CEE regional office, crafts associations, secondary schools, county education offices, media), and with them
 - identify shortage crafts professions in the county
 - identify crafts professions that are not shortages, but are important for the county
 - select professions that will be presented in the current school year
 - select craft workshops that will participate in the project
 - select primary schools in which the promotion will be held
- determine the persons who will present the professions (representative of craftspeople, representative of the POK/MB, representative of the CEE, representative of the secondary school)
- design a promotion workflow
- agree on the exact dates of the promotion in primary schools

- agree on the dates of visits to craft workshops
- hold meeting with principals and/or professional associates of elementary schools
- develop a questionnaire for parents and 8th grade students
- predict the costs of promotion (transportation of promotion participants, transportation of students, promotional material - leaflets, brochures, T-shirts, bags will be provided by the Croatian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, any additional promotional material, representation, media releases)
- contact local media and inform them about the planned activities
- carry out promotional activities
- collect data on the number of students enrolled in training programs for the presented professions
- prepare a report on the project results
- make recommendations for further promotional activities

This project is based on the project of promoting craft professions in elementary schools in Krapina-Zagorje County, and we are reproducing it in full below.

The Croatian Employment Service - Krapina Regional Office submits to the Krapina-Zagorje County Chamber of Crafts a list of shortage craft professions by CES branches, which territorially corresponds to the organization of the associated OKKZŽ crafts associations.

After determining which occupations are in short supply in which trades association, the OKKZŽ organizes a meeting with the principals of the secondary schools of the Krapina-Zagorje County, the CES - Krapina PS and the Krapina-Zagorje County, at which joint activities for the presentation of trades and other programs are coordinated (the secondary schools present all their programs). The Krapina-Zagorje County Chamber of Crafts informs the associated trades associations about the Decision of the Management Board of the Krapina-Zagorje County Chamber of Crafts to hold the presentation, which consists of two parts:

- the first part is held in all primary schools of the Krapina-Zagorje County for 8th grade students and their parents,
- the second part of the presentation is organized in trades workshops or in practicums of secondary schools of the Krapina-Zagorje County during the "Open Doors of Secondary Schools", and the method of presentation, including transportation, is determined after determining the interest of students in visiting trades workshops.

Trades associations are then tasked with defining which tradespeople will present which occupations, and which trades workshop the students could visit in the area of their trades' association.

The Chamber of Crafts of the Krapina-Zagorje County defines the schedule of presentations at primary schools in coordination with the associations of craftsmen, primary and secondary schools of the Krapina-Zagorje County and the Croatian Employment Service - Krapina Regional Office. The schedule precisely defines the dates of the visits to primary schools (date and time, and which craftsmen will present which profession).

The presentation itself in primary schools begins with an introductory speech by the president of

the Krapina-Zagorje County Chamber of Crafts or the association of craftsmen, and the structure of the presentation consists of:

- choice of profession - how to align one's own needs and potential with the needs of the labour market - a representative of the Croatian Employment Service - Krapina regional office,
- presentation of the Unified Education Model - a representative of the Krapina-Zagorje County Chamber of Crafts or the association of craftsmen,
- presentation of shortage craft professions - a representative of craftsmen,
- possibility of enrolment and education for the next school year - representatives of all secondary schools in the Krapina-Zagorje County,
- questions from parents and students,
- distribution of a survey for students,
- distribution of promotional materials to all students and a CD containing a joint presentation of the Croatian Employment Service - Krapina regional office, the Krapina-Zagorje County Chamber of Crafts, and all secondary schools in the Krapina-Zagorje County.

The presentation lasts approximately: 90 minutes.

After the first part of the presentation in primary schools has been successfully implemented, and surveys have been collected from students to see if they are interested in visiting craft workshops, transportation of students to craft workshops or school workshops in secondary schools is organized, where the second part is held, which provides direct insight into the working environment, working conditions and requirements of the profession.

We suggest that in addition to visiting craft workshops, it is planned to connect the above-described part of the promotion of the profession with visits to fairs, exhibitions of traditional crafts, museums, fashion shows and similar events, wherever possible. For example, the Zagreb Craft College included a visit to the Museum of Arts and Crafts in the promotion, where students had the opportunity to get acquainted with the works of master goldsmiths, watchmakers, carpenters and musical instruments, or the Sisak-Moslavina County Chamber of Crafts organizes a visit to the traditional crafts fair in Topusko, where students have the opportunity to witness the skills of craftsmen live, and to test their abilities in the desired profession themselves. The Primorje-Gorski Kotar County Chamber of Crafts, for example, hired craftsmen and their apprentices to renovate schools in their county.

It is very important that after the activities are carried out, the project is evaluated in a way that data is collected on the number of students enrolled in the promoted professions. Based on the results obtained and the experience gained in implementing the project, it is also necessary to give recommendations for further improvement of promotional activities.

Zagreb Crafts Fair

In order to promote craft professions and enrolment in craft and secondary vocational schools in the area of the City of Zagreb and Zagreb County, the Zagreb Chamber of Crafts designed and launched the Zagreb Craft Fair in 2016.

The goal of this event is to introduce craft professions to final-year elementary school students to encourage greater interest in enrolling in craft and secondary vocational schools.

The concept of the fair is that master craftsmen, together with students of craft and secondary vocational schools from the City of Zagreb and Zagreb County, present various craft professions to final-year elementary school students.

Elementary school students are enabled to actively participate in the production of craft products and jobs in individual craft professions, and to become more familiar with various craft professions and education opportunities.

The Zagreb Craft Fair lasts two days and is held every year at the Zagreb Fair.

Admission to the fair is free, and the Zagreb Chamber of Crafts and Trades organizes free transportation to the fair for all seventh and eighth grade elementary school students, as well as return transportation to their schools after visiting the fair.

Every year, about 20 craft and secondary vocational schools from the City of Zagreb and Zagreb County participate in the fair, as well as a large number of craftsmen from various professions.

As part of the fair, various competitions and events were held, such as: "Golden Lipstick", a competition for hairdressers and beauticians of the City of Zagreb and Zagreb County, the "Golden Flower" open craft competition for florists, "Prom Fever" a humanitarian fashion show, Fashion shows of the School of Fashion and Design, Hairstyle shows for students of craft schools and master hairdressers, Culinary show, JoomBoos meet-up with popular YouTubers, etc.

The Zagreb Craft Fair is a unique opportunity for elementary school students to get all the necessary information related to enrolling in their desired craft profession, craft and secondary vocational schools from the City of Zagreb and Zagreb County, as well as future employment opportunities in one place.

The fair was extremely well received and evaluated by students and professional services of elementary schools, as well as by craft and secondary vocational schools, which recognized the great opportunities for promoting craft and secondary vocational schools and craft professions in the fair.

Promotional campaign "Discover your profession and live by your hands"

Due to the epidemiological situation, the Zagreb Crafts Fair was not held in 2020, 2021 and 2022, so the Zagreb Chamber of Crafts has created a campaign to promote vocational professions called "Discover Your Profession and Live by Your Hands". The campaign is intended for students who have completed the 8th grade of elementary school and was promoted on social networks, public media, billboards and in public transport in the city of Zagreb and Zagreb County. Promotional films about craft professions were recorded and shown on public TV, as well as promotional films about craft and secondary vocational schools from the city of Zagreb and Zagreb County, which are available on the website of the Zagreb Chamber of Crafts and the YouTube channel.

Promo films with presentations of various craft professions and promotion of enrolment in craft and secondary vocational schools were published on the OKZ social networks.

In the area of the city of Zagreb and Zagreb County, billboards with the message "Learn about the profession and live from your hands" were displayed.

Posters and leaflets "Learn about the profession and live from your hands" were placed in public transport vehicles: trains, trams and buses in the area of the city of Zagreb and Zagreb County

The posters and leaflets contained a barcode, the scanning of which leads to the website of the Zagreb Chamber of Crafts, which publishes all important information about enrolment in craft and secondary vocational schools in the area of the city of Zagreb and Zagreb County.

In addition, the Zagreb Chamber of Crafts has also produced promotional brochures about enrolment in craft professions, which have been delivered to all primary schools in the area of the

city of Zagreb and Zagreb County, to additionally inform students and parents about the possibilities of enrolling in craft professions.

Higher education

(prepared by the Faculty of Informatics and Digital Technologies)

Student internship

Student internship is a mandatory part of the undergraduate and graduate studies in informatics at the Faculty of Informatics and Digital Technologies (FIDIT). At the university undergraduate study in informatics, the course "Professional Internship" brings 4 ECTS credits, which represents about 80 hours of professional practice in a company, while at the graduate study, the internship is expanded to 6 ECTS credits, or 120 hours.

Students can do internships in companies of their own choosing or at FIDIT, where they participate in certain projects. FIDIT continuously updates the list of partner companies that accept interns, and the list is available to students before the internship begins. Students can also opt for an internship in a company that is not on the list, with the administrative procedure being almost identical.

Access to internships is via a referral issued by FIDIT, which contains the company's contact details. If students find a company for their internship, they are required to fill out the referral form themselves and submit copies to the company and the person at FIDIT responsible for managing the internship in the study program.

Students are expected to continuously keep a work diary via the Mahara ePortfolio platform, and the mentor and internship manager have access to its content.

Professional internship in a company

Based on the example of one student, it can be concluded that the internship complements their knowledge and expands it with technologies that they may not encounter during regular classes or that are not covered in detail. The student already had professional experience in developing web applications and decided to do an internship in a company that deals with their development.

During the internship, the student participated in team development of web applications, where he was responsible for developing the backend system, while the rest of the team worked on the frontend. As part of the development, he had the opportunity to implement the Continuous Integration / Continuous Delivery (CI/CD) workflow, which is not covered in detail in classes and with which he had no previous practical experience. Although he already had some professional experience, the internship allowed him to learn new skills under the guidance of experienced development engineers.

In addition to adopting new technologies, the student worked in a team environment where regular coordination of tasks, joint problem solving, iterative quality controls, and receiving advice and feedback from more experienced colleagues are expected.

Professional practice at FIDIT

Students have the opportunity to do an internship at FIDIT, where they most often participate in the activities of projects in which FIDIT is a partner and in the development of internal applications for

the needs of the faculty. This is a continuation of previous teaching practice, where motivated students can upgrade their seminar and final papers and, with the support of professors and mentors, turn them into concrete applications, research papers and other projects.

In the context of application development, students can take on a variety of roles, from designers to developers, being guided through the typical software development process. They use industry-standard tools and methodologies, set up development and testing environments, work with code versioning tools (Git/GitHub), CI/CD tools, UI design in the company, and other relevant technologies.

It has been shown that the best results come when students are tasked with developing or designing specific components that make up the entire application, such as the design or functionality of a login window. This allows them to focus on smaller, clearly defined tasks that they can develop independently, without having to worry about the entire system architecture. This approach improves their work because the specifications are clearer, and the tasks are tailored to their actual abilities.

The primary way to monitor progress is through code reviews, through which developers iteratively come up with the best solutions for a particular problem. During the reviews, students receive feedback on what is good and what needs to be improved. By the end of the internship, students successfully develop at least one component of the application.

Romania

(prepared by Colegiul Technic Reșița)

The dual education initiative in Reșița

The dual education initiative in Reșița was launched by the City Hall, thereby transforming this educational system into a pilot model called "trial education."

To promote this endeavour, a dedicated Facebook page for Dual Education was created: <https://www.facebook.com/acțiunea.face.diferenta/>

A flagship project is the construction of the integrated dual and university education campus in Reșița, valued at over 20 million euros, initiated and coordinated by the Reșița City Hall. This project will be financed through the National Recovery and Resilience Plan (NRRP), under the pilot program for the development of regional consortia for dual education, coordinated by the Ministry of Education across the eight development regions. The Government approved, by Memorandum, an increase in the budget allocation by over 250 million euros to support the consortia and regional campuses.

The consortium implementing the project consists of Reșița City Hall (leader), Babeș-Bolyai University, the two dual education institutions in the municipality – Banatul Montan Economic College and the Technical College –, Caraș-Severin County Council, Caraș-Severin County School Inspectorate, the German Chamber of Commerce, and 14 economic operators.

This integrated dual campus is innovative in that it offers two complete dual education pathways, from the pre-university level (level 3) to the university level (level 8), developed in partnership with the university, high schools, and private sector partners.

Key elements of success in dual education:

- Active involvement of companies in the professional training process, with the adaptation of educational programs to the current demands of the labour market.
- Provision of scholarships, equipment, transportation, and other incentives for students.
- Continuous promotion of dual education within the community through information campaigns and career guidance.
- Sustained investments in school infrastructure and in the development of teaching staff competencies.
- Development of long-term partnerships between schools, companies, and local authorities to ensure the sustainability and effectiveness of the programs.

These practices demonstrate that the success of dual education in Romania is based on strong collaborations, flexibility, and a clear focus on the needs of students and the labour market.

North Macedonia

(prepared by Chamber of Crafts Skopje)

Cooperation between the Auto -Traffic Vocational School Centre – ASUC "Boro Petrushevski" Skopje and Chamber of Crafts Skopje, Automotive Mechanics Section

ASUC "Boro Petrushevski" Skopje is a vocational secondary school specializing in traffic, mechanical, and electrical engineering, which has established formal cooperation with the Chamber of Crafts Skopje, Automotive Mechanics Section, to implement practical training for 24 students across 6 automotive repair workshops.

Objective of the cooperation:

Strengthening students' practical skills. Enhancing teachers' competencies through direct participation in the real work process. Advancing the skills of employees in the workshops.

Activities:

- Practical training for 24 students in six automotive workshops over three years.
 - Teacher participation in the workshops to better understand employer
 - Employment opportunities for top-performing students – six have already secured positions
- Users: Students, teachers, workshop employees and companies that gain access to qualified personnel.

Results

The cooperation addresses internship-related challenges, strengthens the connection between schools and employers, and ensures the development of a workforce aligned with labour market needs. All parties invest their resources and goodwill – a clear example of a win-win collaboration.

Cooperation between the Chamber of Crafts Skopje and Vocational Secondary Schools: ASUC Boro Petrushevski Skopje, SUGS Dimitar Vlahov Skopje and SUGS Lazar Tanev Skopje

In partnership with these schools, the Chamber of Crafts Skopje launched a campaign to promote vocational education by presenting available trades to elementary school students across Skopje.

Objective of the Cooperation

- Promote vocational secondary education.
- Support career guidance for elementary students.
- Presentation of crafts-based companies and their work processes.

Activities:

- Creation and distribution of promotional materials with slogans such as "Craftsmanship Offers Perspective".
- Organization of student visits to craft-based businesses to observe real work environments.
- Encouragement of direct employment for top-performing graduates.

Users:

Craftspeople, students, parents and vocational schools.

Results:

Craft professions were successfully promoted as attractive career options for youth. The initiative supported increased enrolment in vocational schools and strengthened the link between education and the craft sector. As part of this cooperation, the Chamber installed a bakery and pastry workshop in SUGS Lazar Tanev and a mechatronics workshop in ASUC Boro Petrushevski — a model of three-way benefit.

In-House Hairdressing Training at the Chamber of Craft Skopje

Within the Chamber's facilities, a hair salon hosts training sessions and presentations on cutting techniques, colouring methods, and trends in hairdressing. These sessions are led by master hairdressers from the section who have attended national or international seminars. Participants include section members, practical training teachers from vocational schools, and students. This approach ensures knowledge transfer to all three key actors in the vocational education process and keeps the craft community updated with the latest developments.

Cooperation between the Chamber of Craft Skopje and the Economic Chamber of North Macedonia

The Economic Chamber has developed the e-praksa portal — a platform for sharing information and updates related to the implementation of practical training in vocational secondary education. The Chamber of Crafts regularly updates the portal with lists of newly certified masters and mentors, which schools then use to contact employers for arranging practical training.

Serbia

(prepared by Secondary vocational school Pirot)

Cooperation between Tigar Tyres Company and Secondary Vocational School Pirot

The Tigar Tyres company has a long tradition in the production of tires dating back to 1959. Since 2009, the company has been part of the Michelin Group.

The main activity of Tigar Tyres is the production of passenger and semi-truck tires for cars and commercial vehicles, the production of outer tires for scooters and inner tires for bicycles.

Tigar Tyres is one of the largest exporters in Serbia, bearing in mind that 90% of the total production is intended for the foreign market. The company has a complete technological process, from the laboratory for testing raw materials and testing the final product, to the product development and engineering sectors. Continuous investment is made in the training and education of more than 3,500 employees, as well as in the improvement of living and working conditions in the factory.

For more than a decade, the company has been a reliable partner to the local community, providing support in key areas: education, health, traffic safety and ecology.

From the 2019/2020 school year, students of the Secondary Vocational School Pirot, Serbia in the profession polymer technician do part of their practical classes in the production facilities of the company. The company has accreditation, and all the mentors have licenses to work with students. Students in the company receive quality training in a state-of-the-art working environment. Each student has a Learning-at-Work Contract, signed by their parents and the company. Special attention is paid to the provision of safety measures at work. To encourage the development of students' skills, as well as due to their dedication in performing their duties, during practical classes, students are paid monetary compensation prescribed by the Law and regulated by the Contract.

Students develop independence, responsibility, teamwork and organizational skills and learn how to solve various problems they may encounter in the course of work. The student is able to prepare, shape and make compounds and semi-finished products, assemble semi-finished products, make tires and other rubber products, control the quality of semi-finished products and finished rubber products, pack and store products, process, analyze and present data related to technological processes.

The students' interest and desire to master skills, as well as the cooperation of the school and teachers with the Tigar Tyres company, are the most important links in the successful organization of dual vocational education.