

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

Central Baltic programme 2014-2020 projects that supported further developing vocational education programmes in Central Baltic area.



Project *EDU-RAIL* tackled the fragmentation of VET in the field of railway engineering, transport and logistics in the Central Baltic region by aligning five specialisation modules. The modules, 15 ECTS each, were developed by project partners in Estonia, Latvia and Finland.

What are result packages?

Result packages are part of the 2014-2020 programmes' capitalisation strategy. They promote programme achievements in logical entities by providing summaries of results and examples of good practices. They are all structured in the same way.

In total, there are 10 packages that summarise different thematics addressed by the Central Baltic programme. The themes of the different packages are:

- Export
- Labour market
- Sustainable management of the coastal and marine areas
- *Vocational education*
- Sustainable tourism
- Integrated urban planning
- New business development
- The development of transport corridors
- Small ports development package
- Water

Project ACUCARE promoted interprofessional collaboration between psychiatric and child protection services by mapping and reporting needs for training. As a result, an e-learning platform was created that contains a new 10 ECTS training e-course for the use of different vocational education training organisations.



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Scope of the package

This capitalisation package contains information about Central Baltic programme 2014-2020 projects that supported further developing vocational education programmes in Central Baltic area. Specific objective 4.2 'More aligned vocational education and training programmes in the Central Baltic region' aimed at contributing to the development and further integration of the Central Baltic labour market by developing aligned vocational education programmes.

Within SO 4.2, 21 projects were funded:

- 18 regular projects
- and 3 small projects.

The projects aligned 28 vocational education programmes in the Central Baltic area.

Background

The labour markets of Central Baltic countries are closely connected and lots of people are moving from one country to another for work. In addition, people are commuting for work to another country. Commuting is mostly in use between Estonia and Finland but to smaller extent also between other Central Baltic countries.

Sharing the same labour market means that employers expect their potential employees to have similar skills and knowledge as is customary in the country where they wish to work. Therefore, it is important that vocational education is based on and meets the needs of enterprises operating within the region.

At the same time, people wishing to go to work in another country need to know which are the expectations of the employers. Providing people with high quality skills and knowledge that match the needs of enterprises increases their possibility to find a job and thereby decreases unemployment and social exclusion.

Timeline

Projects supporting aligning vocational education programmes in Central Baltic region were implemented between 2015 and 2022.



Timeline of projects

Achieved results and effect

Vocational education and applied higher education institutions from Finland including Åland, Estonia, Latvia and Sweden collaborated to align ***vocational training programmes*** in different fields:

- Healthcare and social work
- Transport and logistics
- Tourism
- Entrepreneurship
- Sustainable economy
- Gardening

The biggest number of projects worked with curricula related to health and social care. Transport and logistics as well as tourism and business development training programmes were also developed by several projects.

Developing curricula and learning materials brought together ***lecturers and experts of industry*** from different countries. Good cooperation between schools and businesses allowed projects to learn about the best practices and take them into use in training programmes. Students participating in piloting and studying the aligned curricula acquired wider and more international understanding about the situation in the field and their skills are more competitive on the labour market.

In addition to aligning the curricula, projects created new ***teaching and study materials*** including e-learning materials. Through cross-border collaboration, new ***technical solutions, working methods and educational technologies*** were introduced in all partner schools.

Teachers' competence was increased by practical cooperation with colleagues from other countries and trainings organised by the projects. Teachers analysed together the existing and developed new curricula, planned, prepared and tested teaching and study materials. The opportunity to share thoughts, materials and know-how with colleagues from the neighbour countries was highlighted by the teachers as a great opportunity to enhance their skills.

Experiences and lessons learned

Developing ***online courses and e-learning*** materials helped projects to reach a larger target group and involve more students into piloting the training programmes. Teaching in an online environment was somewhat challenging as not all the lecturers had relevant experience. However, developing online study materials and training videos helped ***teachers*** and students to adjust to the Covid-19 pandemic situation where practice and face-to-face teaching was not possible.

Knowledge and experience of teachers was valuable in developing training programmes and study materials. At the same time, it was difficult to combine project work with their everyday teaching tasks. It was also noted that for cross-border educational project

language skills of project staff, including specific terminology in English are essential.

Projects that agreed on the goal of the project, terminology, division of **work and responsibilities** of project partners very early in the project implementation were more successful. Project partners had often different level of experience in international projects. In well managed projects more experienced partners shared their experience and transferred knowledge to others.

The **Covid-19** pandemic affected projects both positively and negatively. In several cases, projects had to adjust their time schedule and find other solutions instead of face-to-face events. On the other hand, the importance of the projects' results, especially e-learning materials and online study courses was more significant than was originally planned.

Development after the projects ended

The curricula aligned in the projects were **integrated into the study programmes** of the vocational and applied higher education institutions who participated in the projects. In addition, projects communicated their results to wider public and other educational institutions who can benefit from the cross-border aligned curricula. Several projects participated in national and international conferences, wrote research articles and used other methods to distribute the results of their projects.

Curricula aligned by the projects gave a good basis for **making the training more international and universal** across the borders. Projects produced up-to-date, good quality training materials that are based on the needs of employers and were developed in collaboration between teachers and experts from different countries. However, **training programmes need to be updated and modernised continuously** to keep up with the developments in the subject field and give the students the best and most recent knowledge. Participating schools have made plans to revise and update the training programmes regularly and modernise training materials when needed.

Participating projects

All together 21 Central Baltic projects were aligning vocational and applied higher education curricula. The projects can be divided into groups based on the subject of the curricula.

Healthcare and social work

- **DeDiWe** - multi-professional curriculum The Developer Digital Health and Welfare for IT, health and social care students and professionals

<http://database.centralbaltic.eu/project/3>

- **SimE** - study courses and simulation environment for increasing ethical competence of nurses

<http://database.centralbaltic.eu/project/72>

- **SAFHY** - aligned curricula of cleaning services and health care from the hygiene point of view and multilingual digital learning material

<http://database.centralbaltic.eu/project/14>

- **ACUCARE** - e-course, e-learning materials and an e-curriculum manual for teaching family work in open care and residential child care in foster care to nursing-, social work and social educator students

<http://database.centralbaltic.eu/project/48>

- **HPP** - health promotion study programs for vocational and applied higher education curricula

<http://database.centralbaltic.eu/project/57>

- **NURED** - aligned courses for nurses to improve teamwork, stress management and work management related skills

<http://database.centralbaltic.eu/project/56>

- **OnBoard-Med** - vocational modules in maritime emergency management, medical treatment, and occupational safety for maritime and nursing education

<http://database.centralbaltic.eu/project/53>

Transport and logistics

- **EDU-RAIL** - harmonised and modernised specialisation modules, teaching materials and methodology for railway engineering and logistics education

<http://database.centralbaltic.eu/project/28>

- **INTELTRANS** - harmonised and modernized Intelligent transport and traffic management modules, teaching materials and methodology focused on transport and traffic safety management

<http://database.centralbaltic.eu/project/119>

- **CoMET** - aligned vocational and applied higher education courses and maritime simulator centres for teaching navigation, marine engineering and cargo handling

<http://database.centralbaltic.eu/project/90>

- **UniLog** - professional higher level logistics training course

<http://database.centralbaltic.eu/project/93>

- **FinLat-Logic** - aligned logistics courses for work-based learning curricula

<http://database.centralbaltic.eu/project/126>

Information Technology

- **ITSVET** - ICT Security curricula

<http://database.centralbaltic.eu/project/5>

Tourism

- **BOOSTED** - curriculum, study programme and e-learning platform for advanced tourism business development

<http://database.centralbaltic.eu/project/55>

- **EPIG** - curriculum for gastronomic tourism

<http://database.centralbaltic.eu/project/121>

Entrepreneurship

- **NatureBizz** - training programme for green entrepreneurship and business development for micro entrepreneurs producing small-scale products and services based on local natural resources

<http://database.centralbaltic.eu/project/75> and <https://www.projectnaturebizz.eu/>

- **EDU-SMEs** - aligned curricula in business management and entrepreneurship

<http://database.centralbaltic.eu/project/9>

- **iSEE** - learning materials and case studies for social entrepreneurship training

<http://database.centralbaltic.eu/project/117>

Sustainable economy

- **Crea-RE** - aligned learning package Resource efficiency and circular economy for higher vocational education

<http://database.centralbaltic.eu/project/85>

- **SuFi** - online Sustainability in Finance training module for vocational education

<http://database.centralbaltic.eu/project/118>

Gardening

- **Become More Competitive!** - distance learning program in Landscape gardening

<http://database.centralbaltic.eu/project/135>

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS ENJOYED THEIR STAY AT MARITIME ENTERPRISES IN RAUMA

By WinNova, Hanna-Kaisa Desavelle & Tuula Raukola

At the beginning of this summer, five students from Liepaja arrived in Rauma for a work-based learning (WBL) period as part of the Finlat-Logic project funded by Central Baltic programme. The aim of the project is to align parts of WBL curricula of VET programmes of logistics, and to promote partnerships between educational institutions and companies in the Baltic Sea region. The project partners are National Centre for Education of Latvia, Länsirannikon Koulutus Oy WinNova, and Liepaja State Technical School.

Close cooperation of the partners was reinforced when five students of Liepaja got an opportunity for WBL in two companies operating in the Rauma Seaside Industry Park, Logistikas Oy and Transval Oy. After the four-week internship the students' overall comments were enthusiastic: fun – very fun, top experience! Students thought the best thing about WBL abroad was learning new things, such as driving a forklift and even doing paperwork in Finnish. The personnel at the companies were praised for welcoming the students and for being very



friendly. In addition, students felt that their work and rapid learning ability were valued. This was also reflected in the feedback of the companies. The students were described as motivated and initiative. Also, WinNova received good feedback from the students for taking care of the arrangements, and for having such fine facilities with machinery and equipment with which students can practice.

During the internship it became apparent that Finnish and Latvian studies differ in a few significant ways. The studies at Liepaja State Technical School include both vocational education and upper secondary school. In Finland upper secondary school studies can be integrated with vocational studies by completing a combination degree which is optional. The studies of warehouse logistics focus heavily on theory at Liepaja. For example, Latvian students had previously driven a forklift only on a simulator, which complicated the start of their internships. In Finland, vocational education includes practical training at school, such as learning how to use a forklift. The Latvian students thought this was great and it immediately led to the idea for future student exchanges: the first week of internships could be training the use of machinery and tools at WinNova.

Latvian students enjoyed their visit in Rauma a lot, although in their opinion the city was quickly seen. Bicycles were the number one for moving around. One thing the students said was lacking: “We should have been able to skate in June too!” Few of them got a spark to return to Finland and especially to Rauma Seaside Industry Park. A message from Latvian students to those thinking about participating in an international training period: “A really good experience! Try it! Don’t be scared.”

FinLat-Logic

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