Co-funded by
the European Union



AGAINST THE GAP BETWEEN TRAINING AND LABOUR WORLD - GAP

23PCP0001-2023-1-BE01-KA220-VET-000166111

GLOBAL METHODOLOGY FOR VET CENTERS

I General definition of the central concepts	Page
General Definition of Insertion	3
Involved parties	4
Competence domains	5

II Definition of Accompaniment

Intro	6
Core of values	7
Code of negotiation	8
Assessment of needs	10
Pathway: Pedagogical tools	12
Stakeholder engagement/Networking tools	15
Continuous assessment	16
Sustainability	18
Acknowledgements	19

I GENERAL DEFINITION OF THE CENTRAL CONCEPTS

The overall objective of GAP is to enhance the methods used by the Vocational Training Centres (VET) to target the integration (insertion) of vulnerable adults. Into vocational and social life.

The aim of this guide is to support the VET professional in identifying the most successful job insertion process, in detecting any weaknesses and in implementing new approaches and tools which will contribute to a higher success rate.

GENERAL DEFINITION OF INSERTION

Insertion goes beyond simply placing individuals into jobs; it is a comprehensive process that equips a person with the tools, confidence, and opportunities to fully participate in society. By fostering skills development, insertion ensures that individuals are prepared to adapt to the evolving demands of the labour market. At the same time, it promotes social connections and networks that strengthen community belonging and support systems. Citizenship empowerment plays a central role, encouraging active participation, responsibility, and awareness of rights and duties. In the end, insertion aims at sustainable employment, not only by securing a job position but by enabling long-term professional growth, stability, and resilience. In this sense, insertion is both a social and professional **pathway** that supports individuals in achieving successful, meaningful inclusion. Thus, the definition that we can obtain is the following:

Insertion is the act of empowering individuals for social and professional successful inclusion through skills development, social connection, citizenship empowerment and sustainable employment.

INVOLVED PARTIES

Knowing each other's roles makes the process easier and more successful. Each role plays a complementary function that ensures learners are not only trained but also supported towards full professional and social insertion. Together, these persons create a holistic ecosystem in which trainees can succeed, making the training pathway not just an educational process but a genuine facilitator for sustainable insertion.
The definition of the terms is important to understand the roles:

- Trainee: An adult learner enrolled in a structured program designed to develop their knowledge, skills, and abilities in a specific area, with the aim of insertion.
- Trainers: are the individuals who guide the learning process of adults in structured programs. This role can involve both facilitating skill development and knowledge acquisition through interactive methods, as well as directly teaching lessons to impart specific competences and knowledge.
- Pedagogic coordinator: individual responsible for piloting and orchestrating the pedagogical aspects of training programs. They ensure consistency and quality of the training offered, working closely with trainers and other centre staff.
- Didactic tutor and organization tutor: as didactic tutor, he/she provides the classroom with *support* training materials and supports individual students in gaining competences and skills also through support sessions. As organizational support, this individual helps the trainees organize and stay in contact with students and trainers for organizational aspects. This role can be taken on by the same person as the pedagogic coordinator or another tutor. Those roles can be split between several individuals.
- Job-coaches are dedicated professionals who act as guides and mentors for trainees on their journey towards employment. They go beyond technical skill development by focusing on the entire job search process. Their core responsibilities include empowering trainees to develop the skills and behaviour necessary for successful job hunting, including the mental preparation, and establishing connections with potential employers to facilitate job placement. Often, the job-coach enters the scene when the trainees are close to completing their path in the VET centre.
- Internship tutor: individual in the training institution who organizes the internships or apprenticeship within the dual system, he supervises the students also during this experience and works closely with the company mentor
- A Tutor or internship Mentor is a seasoned professional who guides and trains interns within a company setting. They oversee the learning process, share their expertise, and evaluate the intern's progress to facilitate their successful integration into the workforce. They usually serve as evaluators for trainees concerning the internship.
- Regulatory bodies, or Managing Authorities are structures, usually public bodies, that play a threefold role toward the training structures: Coordinator, organizer and funder. As coordinators, they develop strategies and public policies, and coordinate the actions of the different actors. As organizers, they establish the regulatory framework and oversee its implementation, including the controls. As financers they provide the financial means and fund the specific programs. They can also make themselves, partly or in totality, through dedicated institutions, some of the actions of the ideal pathway.

COMPETENCE DOMAINS

The European Union identifies 8 key competences for lifelong learning.
These eight competences represent a balanced integration of hard and soft skills. The EU competence framework ensures that they include transferable abilities which employers increasingly value in dynamic workplaces.

- Literacy: The ability to understand, use, and interpret written texts.
- Multilingualism: The ability to communicate effectively in different languages.
- Mathematical Numeracy: Competencies related to STEM fields, including problem-solving and critical thinking
- Digital competence IT skills: Proficiency in using digital technologies and tools.
- Personal, social, and learning to learn.
- Citizenship competence skills: Understanding of civic rights and responsibilities
- Entrepreneurship: Skills related to initiative, creativity, and risk-taking.
- Cultural awareness and expression: Understanding and appreciation of different cultures.

To Assess these competences, the VET centers can use reflective journals, performance views, questioning, written tests, case studies etc

While the eight competence domains proposed by the EU provide a solid framework for developing skills, GAP partners approach is group them in a division that specifically addresses VET centres.

Skills can be divided into:

- **Technical professional skills** to be identified by the VET centres together with the labour market and which are directly linked to the training programme.
- **Transversal/life skills/soft skills** which are applicable abilities across various jobs, tasks and context such as problem solving, interpersonal skills, Critical and innovative thinking,
- **Basic skills** (maths, reading, writing) fundamental abilities essential for navigating daily life and work.

These acknowledge the need for trainees to build not only technical and cognitive skills but also practical, social, and behavioural competences that facilitate their transition into sustainable employment.

II DEFINITION OF ACCOMPANIMENT

INTRO

A Methodological support for the VET centres will enhance the competences of VET Professionals and the Trainees.

Think of establishing a coherent model that links objectives of the centre with the **Activities,** the **Outputs**, the **learning Outcomes** and the **Impact**.

For example:

If your Objective is to increase the employability of the trainees:

- Activities will include the organisation of workshops on CV writing, interview skills, and job-search strategies or to establish partnerships with local companies to offer internships and job-shadowing opportunities.
- The Outputs in this case will be the number of workshops delivered; number of participants trained. Number of partnerships and internship placements created.
- The learning Outcomes will be the improved readiness for employment from the trainees (measured through self-assessment grids or employer feedback) and the Increased job placement rates after graduation.
- The Impact of course will be the long-term reduction in the unemployment rates of your centre and a larger impact, in the region.

Don't lose sight of the fact that investing in people's skills is essential for ensuring a competitive, prosperous and inclusive future for the EU.

In March 2025 the European Commission launched the Union of Skills which is aligned with and reinforces the objectives of GAP Methodology. The VET centres should take it into account.

The Union of Skills aims to enhance the skills and competitiveness of the EU workforce and ensure access to quality employment opportunities.

There are 4 important pillars

- Build skills for quality jobs and lives through a strong educational foundation, with an inclusive lifelong learning approach.
- Upskill and reskill an agile workforce mastering the digital and clean transition, notably those with lower and middle skills.
- Circulating Skills: facilitate recruitment by businesses across the EU.
- Attract, develop and retain top talent in Europe

Core of Values

The GAP partners agreed that defining the core values of a VET centre represents a crucial step in shaping the training pathway. Core values are not simply aspirational statements; they provide the foundation for creating meaningful and encouraging learning environments. When appropriated in institutional practice, these values influence the daily work of trainers, coordinators, and staff, shaping the culture of the centre and the professional trajectories of learners. This approach is fully aligned with the European Framework for Quality Assurance in Vocational Education and Training (EQAVET), which emphasises quality, relevance, and learner-centred pedagogy systems as essential to achieving excellence in VET.

A first dimension of these values is the emphasis on **industry relevance**. VET centres must ensure that their programmes reflect both current and emerging labour market needs. Strong collaboration with employers, professional associations, and sectoral networks allows centres to anticipate skills demands and prepare learners for the evolving economy. Equally important is the principle of **learner-centeredness**. Every trainee enters the system with individual goals, previous experiences, and diverse learning styles. By positioning the learner at the core of training pathways, VET centres can provide personalised guidance and foster motivation, echoing the European Pillar of Social Rights, which guarantees equal access to education and training opportunities tailored to individual needs.

Commitment to excellence and quality constitutes another essential value. Continuous improvement, and high-performance standards ensure that training remains rigorous, credible, and effective. This value resonates with the EQAVET cycle of planning, implementation, evaluation, and review, which frames quality assurance as a dynamic and ongoing process. At the same time, **inclusivity** reaffirms the social dimension of VET. Training opportunities must be open and supportive of all learners, regardless of gender, ability, socio-economic status, or cultural background. Inclusivity contributes to social cohesion and prevents exclusion, reflecting EU policies on equal opportunities and anti-discrimination.

The values further highlight the principle of **lifelong learning**. Skills acquisition is not a one-time event but a continuous journey. VET centres must encourage curiosity, adaptability, and the willingness to reskill or upskill as industries transform. This aligns with the European Key Competences for Lifelong Learning framework, which underlines the importance of developing learning-to-learn competence and fostering adaptability. Linked to this is the commitment to **innovation and adaptability**. By embracing new technologies, pedagogical approaches, and workplace trends, VET centres maintain their responsiveness to the rapidly changing demands of the labour market, thereby supporting resilience at both the individual and institutional level.

Ultimately, the success of VET centres can be measured through employability. This involves more than the acquisition of technical skills; it requires nurturing transversal competences such as problem-solving, communication, and entrepreneurial thinking. Employability also relates to the ability of learners to create opportunities for themselves, thus fostering active citizenship and economic participation. To achieve these goals responsibly, VET centres must operate with ethics and integrity. Transparent, accountable, and fair practices strengthen trust between learners, employers, and communities, while modelling the professional conduct expected in the workplace.

Finally, the effective functioning of VET systems depends on collaboration and partnerships. By building strong networks with industries, local authorities, families, and educational institutions, VET centres expand opportunities for trainees and reinforce their role as hubs of regional development. Within this collaborative framework, the principles of sustainability and social responsibility must also be integrated. Centres should not only prepare learners for the labour market but also promote environmentally responsible practices and social values.

Taken together, these values articulate a vision of VET that is learner-centred, socially inclusive, and future-oriented. They provide a complete framework for professional vocational training that is aligned with European priorities, capable of preparing learners for meaningful labour market participation while also strengthening their role as active and responsible citizens.

AGREEMENT AND CODE OF CONDUCT NEGOTIATION

Establishing a code of conduct allows to set the limits to the relationship between the trainee and the training centre and to indicate the obligations that both parties undertake when committing themselves to the training centre.

The steps for a successful code of conduct are the following:

1- Define the Purpose

The primary purpose of establishing a Code of Conduct in a VET centre is to promote a safe, respectful, and productive learning environment where all members can succeed. It serves as a framework that sets clear behavioural expectations for everyone involved in the educational process.

The code helps ensure that students understand their responsibilities and the standards of behaviour required to support their academic and professional development. Equally, it provides guidance for teachers, trainers, and administrative staff, fostering mutual respect and accountability across all levels of the institution. By involving these key stakeholders—students, educators, and administrative personnel—in the development process, the code becomes a shared agreement that reflects the values and culture of the VET centre, ensuring collective ownership and commitment to maintaining a positive and inclusive learning atmosphere.

2- Gather Input and align with the centre's Core Values

This is an important step in developing a Code of Conduct that aligns with the VET centre's core values. This process involves open discussions and consultations to identify which behaviours are considered acceptable and which are not, ensuring that expectations are clearly defined and understood. It is also important to explore the challenges that students, teachers, and staff face within the learning environment, as these insights help shape realistic and supportive behavioural guidelines.

The Code should incorporate references to systems of support such as mental health services, counselling, and grievance procedures to assist individuals in managing difficulties and resolving conflicts appropriately.

Throughout this process, the guiding principles of respect, responsibility, integrity, inclusion, and safety should remain at the forefront, forming the ethical foundation upon which the centre's culture and community are built.

3- Draft the Code

It is essential to ensure that the document is clear, concise, and written in a way that is easily understood by everyone in the VET centre community. The language should be straightforward and inclusive, reflecting the rights and responsibilities of all members—students, teachers, and staff alike.

The code should begin by outlining the key expectations that guide daily behaviour, such as regular attendance, respectful conduct, and effective collaboration among peers and educators. It should also clearly define the unacceptable behaviours, including acts of harassment, discrimination, dishonesty, or cheating, emphasizing that such actions undermine the values and integrity of the institution. Furthermore, the Code must specify the consequences for non-respect of these rules, ensuring that disciplinary measures are fair, consistent, and transparent.

Alongside these requirements, clear reporting and claim procedures should be established to give everyone a way to voice concerns or report violations.

The inclusion of support mechanisms (counselling, mentoring, mediation) reinforces the institution's commitment to both accountability and care, helping individuals to learn from their mistakes and contributing positively to the learning community.

4- Formalize and Communicate the Code

After the Code of Conduct has been collaboratively developed, it should be communicated effectively across the VET centre. This process begins with obtaining formal approval from the institution's director or manager ensuring that the code is officially recognized as a guiding policy. Once approved, the document should be made easily accessible to everyone by publishing it in multiple formats such as printed copies, email distributions etc.

The code should be Introduced in orientations and staff onboarding sessions this helps implant its principles into the centre's culture from the beginning. To reinforce accountability and shared responsibility, both trainees and staff should be asked to sign an acknowledgment form confirming that they have read, understood, and agreed to follow the Code. Through these actions, the VET centre demonstrates its commitment to maintaining a respectful, transparent, and unified learning environment.

5- Monitor and Review Regularly

The Code is a document that should be revised annually. VET centres might gather feedback for the precedent year to adjust or update the possible changes to the document. Stakeholders, trainees and staff might have new challenges they have faced or some input and this is valuable information to make the code better.

This said, the code should not be too long or difficult to understand, it is a dynamic document that should be responsive and as simple as possible.

The key components often included in a good code or agreement are the following:

- Attendance and punctuality rules.

- Safety and hygiene regulations.
- Respect for diversity and inclusion.
- Use of mobile phones and devices.
- Participation expectations. With clear data if needed.
- Feedback and communication norms. Channels and person of reference.
- Conflict resolution procedures. Including the name of the person to act in mediation in case of conflict.
- Clear consequences in case of non-respect of the rules.

5. Monitor and Review Regularly

- Gather feedback annually
- Adjust based on new challenges or stakeholder input
- Keep the code dynamic and responsive

Negotiating a code of conduct in VET is not just about managing behaviour—it's a pedagogical tool that supports learning, professionalism, and empowerment. It aligns with the goals of VET: not just to teach skills, but to prepare well-rounded, responsible, and workplace-ready individuals.

Assessment of Needs

Assessing the pedagogical needs of the trainees and the staff supporting the trainees in a VET centre can be done in various ways.

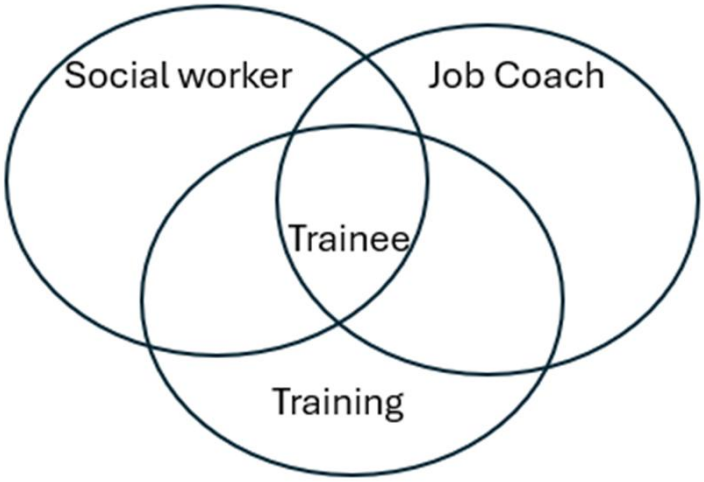
Before collecting the information, we should clarify if we want to assess the needs of the individual trainees, the group or the centre. Also consider if we focus on the technical skills, the practical skills, the soft skills, the wellbeing etc.

How can we do this assessment?

▪Interviews and conversations
▪Questionnaires
▪Skill assessments
▪Focus groups
▪Trainer and staff observations
▪Consult the labour market
▪Consult external stakeholders

How can we do this assessment? It is a multi-layered process. It works best when you combine systematic tools with human-centred approaches.

As an illustrative example of this multi-ayered approach, we include the pictured designed by one of the directors of a VET centre in Belgium where the Trainee should be in the centre of the focus and the VET professionals of the institution should work in a collaborative manner :



To assess the needs, we propose the following steps:

Clarify the needs to be analysed.

Collect Data in a qualitative and quantitative way (For Trainees and for Trainers) You can use simple tools like auto-evaluation questionnaires (e.g. see 1st Personal Counselling Session Tool in the Reception Step of the Pathway) or deeper tools like personality tests (e.g. Holland test) Individual meetings are also important to collect qualitative data.

Schedule regular meetings to cross check information (e.g., trainee self-reports vs. teacher observations). Spending some time on this cross information is essential in the process of insertion.

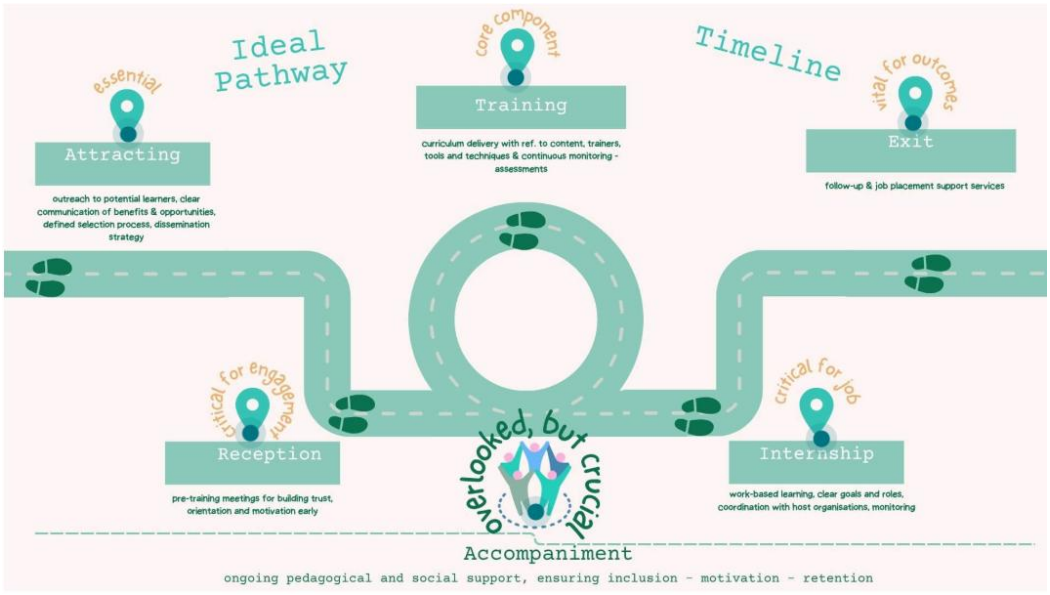
Analyse and Prioritize: Consider both short-term training adjustments and long-term development plans.

Make the assessment an ongoing process, not a one-time activity. We can find several examples of assessments in the Tools presented in GAP platform to cite some:

- Digital Action Plan
- 1st Personal Counselling Session
- Self Confidence Evaluation
- Action plan for inclusion
- Progress evaluation grid
- Company profiling grid

IDEAL PATHWAY

The partners evaluated the processes followed by VET centres in their respective countries throughout the training development. Based on this, **a six-step 'ideal pathway'** was created and serves as the backbone of the GAP project making the selection of the right tool easier for the professionals in the VET centres.



When designing the pathway, we concentrate on 5 main ideas or concepts that span horizontally across these steps. The concepts are the following.

Inclusiveness: It strengthens social cohesion & economic resilience, so ensure that individuals from diverse backgrounds—including those with disabilities, migrants, women, and other underrepresented groups—have equal access to training, employment support services and opportunities. Develop inclusive pathways by recognizing and addressing barriers to participation, offering tailored support and flexible approaches that meet the needs of ALL trainees.

High quality services: Vocational education and training pathways are valued equally alongside general education, so make certain that you deliver high-quality services in terms of skill development, fundamental knowledge, and access to higher education.

Tailored approach: You are dealing with a nonhomogeneous target group, so create personalised action plans with specific, attainable targets considering their individuality, strengths, and weaknesses.

Relevance for the labour market: businesses, professional associations, chambers of commerce, etc. are considered as the key labour market stakeholders in the field, so form strong and mutually beneficial partnerships and identify labour market's needs. You can involve all by creating an innovative and modern course curriculum.

Identifying the tools that help in the processes in VET centres is an important step towards a better overall understanding by staff and trainees. This comprehension can be achieved by following the ideal pathway or at least adapting it to the specific needs of each centre.

IDEAL PATHWAY's 6 STEPS:

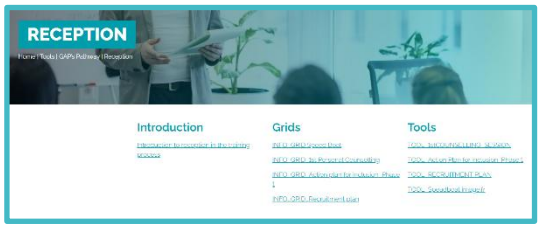
1. Attracting Trainees:

Attracting trainees is a crucial step in ensuring the success of vocational training programs and their integration into the labour market. A well-structured strategy not only increases the number of participants but also ensures that the right candidates enrol in the training programs, maximizing their chances for professional development and employment.



2. Reception of Trainees:

The reception is the period from the first moment of meeting with the trainees to the start of the actual training.
Pedagogically, this involves activities like beginning to tailor the project to the trainee, Conducting the entrance-evaluation, assessment & self-assessment of the trainees, and initial evaluation of specific needs.



3. Training and Education

Training is the process of improving a person's skills, knowledge, and competences to enhance their performance in a specific activity or sector.

The ongoing, self-motivated, and voluntary pursuit of information and skills throughout one's life is known as lifelong learning. It encompasses social, professional, and personal development in addition to formal education.



Essential, for a successful job insertion as it gives people skills & competences, information, and self-assurance they need to join and succeed in the labour.

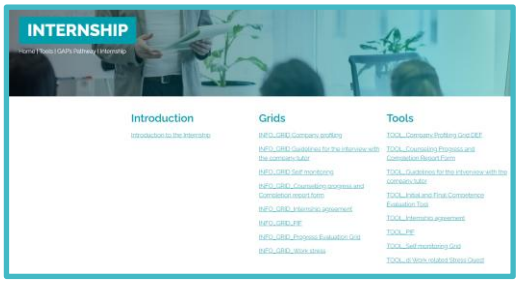
4. Pedagogical and social Accompaniment

A crucial component of the training pathway for labour market insertion, is the ongoing pedagogical and social accompaniment (support), which not only improves individual's capacities but also facilitates wider social and economic inclusion.



5. Internship

An essential part of Vocational Education & Training (VET) is the internship, which is a brief, structured learning opportunity that engages trainees in a real-world professional or job setting. In this approach, it closes the gap between theoretical instruction and practical application, allowing trainees to build, use, and strengthen their competencies in accordance with the needs of the labour market. The key elements of an internship are as follows:



6. Exit

Exit accompaniment plays a crucial role in preparing trainees for the labour market.

It ensures that trainees not only complete their training successfully but also transit into employment effectively.



STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT/NETWORKING TOOLS (LINK TO E-LEARNING MODULE 3)

Within the GAP project also a guide for developing the Network around a VET centre has been produced. Networking is very important for the trainees: it gives them a wider perspective, increases the chances to get a job to an employment and improves the success in the insertion process. Each step of the pathway has different stakeholders involved that are also part of this Network.

Creating engagement in a VET centre is about connecting trainees to the learning process in meaningful, motivating, and empowering ways—at emotional, cognitive, and behavioural levels. It is in relation with the development of a Network and to know the community and the scope of action.

The GAP Project proposes a practical guide and e-learning module for building a strong network to support trainees in their journey toward employment.

Within VET centres we can consider the Educational Network as the connections between different stakeholders, such schools, teachers, institutions, employers, NGOs and policymakers and all these are crucial for improving the quality, relevance and inclusiveness of education.

GAP aims to support VET centres to establish Networks with local stakeholders to bring together local partners who can develop and deliver supported internships in the local area with the goal of creating routes that will support unemployed people into paid employment.

Working with stakeholders and creating a collaboration network will support VET Centres in different steps of the GAP pathway such as:

- Attracting and Recruiting Trainees
- Training and Education
- Internship
- Exit accompaniment

Approaching local stakeholders can be a challenging task that requires a variety of skills.

In GAP Platform you can find tools that can help you to identify and understand all relevant actors, their roles, interests, influence etc: classifying by High, Low medium, etc. The tool is *Power-Interest Matrix for Employment Initiative*. You can use the tool to gather information about the stakeholders. It can be constantly updated and should be saved in a common folder within the VET organization so that all staff who are involved in internship or apprenticeship organization can access the information.

Attracting and recruiting trainees:

We need to:

- Understand the local and economic context, identify the target group (NEETs, unemployed, people dissatisfied with their current workplace, vulnerable groups) and know **what the legal**

requirement and possible incentives are to train that group, take into onto account the existing political changes can also impact the needs.

- Identify relevant stakeholders that can support this step. For example: Local labour agencies (they can provide database, or they are interested in contracting/make agreements) or policy makers interested in our view related to tools for insertion on the labour market
- Identify tools to collaborate with the relevant stakeholders (make & maintain contact, agreements, feedback)

Training and Education

- Stakeholders can validate the curricula and skills & competences that should be in line with labour markets needs or specific clients' needs (from different industries)
- Identify relevant stakeholders. For example: private companies, trade unions, association of companies & universities
- Identify tools to collaborate with the relevant stakeholders (make and maintain contact, agreements/contracts, surveys**/**interviews for feedback, evaluation prior and after interventions)

Internship

- Identify in the first step the organisations interested to provide internship: companies, industries, public organisations, NGOs, etc.
- Identify tools to collaborate with the internship providers (make contact, agreements/contracts, understand their rules, feedback, evaluation of the interventions etc.)

Exit Accompaniment

- Understand local economic context and current labour market opportunities
- Identify relevant stakeholders: labour offices, companies
- Identify tools to collaborate with the relevant stakeholders (make & maintain contact, agreements/contracts, feedback

The stakeholder engagement and the establishment of a network is very important for the good function of a VET centre. By maintaining active collaboration with key stakeholders—such as employers, public authorities, social partners, community organisations, and families—VET centres ensure that their training programmes remain relevant to labour market needs and socially responsive. A well-structured network facilitates information exchange, supports the design of work-based learning opportunities, and enhances the transition of trainees from education to employment. Moreover, it strengthens the centre's capacity for innovation, resource sharing, and continuous improvement. Within the GAP framework, stakeholder engagement is therefore not a peripheral activity but a **core mechanism** that underpins employability, inclusion, and long-term institutional sustainability.

CONTINUOUS ASSESSMENT

Continuous assessment helps to verify that the curriculum and skills taught remain aligned with current labour market demand, they equip students with employability skills, improve the teaching quality, and help to build stronger industry connections.

The assessment holds a central role in the GAP project, as it ensures that the training process remains dynamic, responsive, and aligned with both learner development and labour market needs. It is not limited to the periodic measurement of knowledge; rather, it is conceived as an ongoing process of observation, reflection, and adjustment that accompanies trainees throughout their learning and professional integration pathway. It serves as a bridge between education and employability, allowing VET centres to monitor progress, identify gaps, and provide timely feedback that supports learners' growth and motivation.

It is particularly important in vocational education, where practical competences, attitudes, and soft skills can be developed progressively through experience and reflection. By incorporating regular formative assessments—such as self-assessment activities, peer evaluations, and workplace-based observations—VET centres ensure that trainees remain actively engaged in their own learning process and understand how their skills translate to professional contexts.

In the GAP methodology, continuous assessment also supports the quality assurance and improvement of the entire training system. It allows trainers and coordinators to gather evidence on what works and where adjustments are needed, both at the individual and institutional levels. This feedback loop reinforces the principles of excellence, adaptability, and learner-centredness that underpin the GAP framework. Furthermore, it ensures coherence between the different stages of the GAP Pathway—from orientation and training to insertion and follow-up—by maintaining a clear link between objectives, learning outcomes, and real-world performance.

On a broader scale, continuous assessment contributes to the development of a culture of reflection and lifelong learning within VET centres. It encourages trainers and learners alike to view learning as an evolving process rather than a fixed goal. This approach is essential for fostering employability and adaptability in rapidly changing labour markets. By embedding continuous assessment practices into their daily operations, VET centres not only enhance the effectiveness of training but also ensure that their programmes remain relevant, inclusive, and forward-looking.

Ultimately, in the GAP project, continuous assessment is a key instrument for bridging the gap between training and the world of work. It empowers learners to take ownership of their progress, enables educators to tailor support to individual needs, and provides institutions with the evidence needed to sustain high-quality, impactful vocational education. In the context of GAP, continuous assessment is not limited to measuring outcomes at the end of a course; it is an ongoing process that monitors progress, identifies challenges, and guides improvement throughout the entire training pathway. This approach allows trainers and coordinators to adapt pedagogical strategies in real time, ensuring that each learner receives personalised support and achieves meaningful competence development. Moreover, continuous assessment strengthens the quality assurance cycle within VET centres by providing evidence-based insights into the effectiveness of teaching methods, the relevance of training content, and the overall impact on employability. It also fosters communication among trainees, trainers, and employers, creating a feedback culture that enhances motivation and accountability. In essence, within the GAP methodology, continuous assessment acts as a bridge between learning and practice—helping VET centres to continuously refine their approaches, validate progress, and sustain excellence in professional preparation prefer cete response

SUSTAINABILITY

It involves aligning educational practices, curricula, and partnerships with long-term economic, social, and environmental goals.

This could be done by:

Strengthen Partnerships with Industry: Collaborating with sustainable enterprises and industry leaders to ensure that training reflects real labour market needs.

Encourage work-based learning like apprenticeships and internships in sectors with a strong sustainability focus (e.g., renewable energy, green construction).

Promote Lifelong Learning and Upskilling Ensure that adult learners and workers in transition can access relevant training programs To begin with, VET centres must adopt flexible and modular training pathways when possible, that allow adults to engage in learning according to their professional and personal circumstances. This includes offering part-time, evening, and online courses that make participation feasible for those already employed or in career transition. The use of mixed learning and digital tools—such as the GAP platform for the VET professionals—can further enhance accessibility, enabling learners to progress at their own pace while maintaining a balance between learning and work responsibilities.

Foster Local and Community Engagement Encourage VET institutions to partner with local communities and employers.

Integrate Green and Digital Skills into Curricula. Equip students with transversal competencies

Sustainability in lifelong learning also depends on public policy and funding mechanisms that incentivise participation. VET centres should work in cooperation with public authorities and employers to establish funding schemes, learning vouchers, or co-financing models that make adult education financially viable. Embedding GAP ideal Pathway within national or regional lifelong learning strategies could help ongoing resources and institutional commitment.

Thanks

We would like to thank all the centres and professionals involved, who have given us their vision and told us about their processes and the tools they use to make their training courses successful and who have also explained to us what needs to be improved in these processes.

To reach the aim altogether 27 semi-structured face-to-face and or online interviews were conducted with the support of a questionnaire.

A total of 27 centres responded to the questionnaires:

Belgium 7 centres from AID ; AID Soleimont, Le Perron du Lilon, Coften, Alter Form, Agora, CEFAID, La Chom'hier.

Greece 4 centres from MEK (Municipality of Thermi - Employment services, VTC Stathis Pantazis, VTC KPP, University of Macedonia)

Bulgaria 7 centres from TTB (University of Library Studies and Information Technologies, AED Bansko, Association with socially beneficial activity LEDA- Razlog, Center for professional training at Center for Development and Success Ltd, WIFI Bulgaria, PI EM CONSULTING LTD, Edih Trakia)

Italy 5 centres from FLC (VET center Fondazione Luigi Clerici Ancona, VET center Fondazione Luigi Clerici Milano Montecuccoli, VET center Fondazione Luigi Clerici Milano San Giuliano, VET center Fondazione Luigi Clerici Milano Lodi, Filippo Rosati, Coach specialized in Orientation and Inclusion in VET and technical Institutes

Rumania 5 centres from ACDC (University of Suceava, Bucovina Institute, Employment Office Suceava, Employment Office Botosani, Chamber of Commerce Botosani)

The questionnaires were carried out between May and July 2024. And results collected until October 2024.

This publication has been developed with the financial support from the European Commission in the framework of Erasmus+ programme. The information and views set out in this publication are those of the authors. The European Commission and the Belgian National Agency may not be held responsible for the use, which may be made of the information contained herein