

**INTEGRATION OF WORK AND LEARNING:
A CHALLENGE FOR EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT SYSTEMS
IN TRANSITION COUNTRIES**

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TABLE OF CONTENT

1	Introduction and Background	3
2	The challenge of integrating work and learning.....	3
2.1	A new future for Apprenticeship?.....	4
2.2	Changes in economy, technology and work organisation	5
2.3	Educational Policy Responses	6
2.4	Societal and institutional constraints.....	7
2.5	The Learning Organisation	9
2.6	Strategies for Lifelong Learning	10
2.7	Increased blurring of Education and Work.....	12
3	Integration of Work and Learning in Transition Countries	12
3.1	Quasi-apprenticeship and the withdrawal of enterprises from vocational education	13
3.2	Quasi-taylorist work organisation and the role of experiential learning.....	14
3.3	Quasi integration of work and learning in Hungary and Slovenia	15
3.4	The economic and social environment for IWL in transition countries	16
3.5	IWL in Hungary and Slovenia	17
3.5.1	Hungary.....	17
3.5.2	Slovenia	20
4	Conclusion.....	23
5	References:	26

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1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

In 1996, the European Training Foundation (ETF) organised a workshop on „Qualification Challenges in the Partner and Member States“. That workshop was primarily focused on ways of including general competencies such as „problem solving“ into curricula for vocational education. The participants came to the conclusion that in order to do so it would be necessary to establish closer links between work and learning (ETF 1996).

The integration of work and learning was selected by ETF as an issue around which a new type of collaborative project could be developed. Such a project would have to be more aimed at innovation than the regular ETF-VET reform programmes and based on close co-operation between at least two transition countries. This chapter presents the background for that project. Its main purpose is to clarify some of the basic issues that have formed the starting points for design and organisation of the project on integration of work and learning (IWL).

In the next chapter an overview of the debate about the challenges posed by integrating work and learning is presented. A brief review shows that this challenge goes far beyond the domain of curriculum development *per se*. It is part of a more profound transformation of employment systems in modern market economies.

Since most of the recent debates about integration of work and learning have originated in western industrialised countries, the relevancy of this debate for the transition countries of Central and Eastern Europe will have to be addressed. This is the topic of the third chapter. The last paragraph of this chapter will be devoted to an initial assessment of integration of work and learning in Hungary and Slovenia until the end of the 1990s. The final chapter will draw conclusions and sets out how the ETF project has been implemented.

2 THE CHALLENGE OF INTEGRATING WORK AND LEARNING

It should be noted first that there are several notions in use in the international discussion about integrating work and learning: alternance, dual system, apprenticeship, integrated learning, and - more recently in the Anglo-Saxon countries: competence- or work-based learning. All these notions refer to alternatives for purely school-based education and some indeed refer to institutions with a long tradition. For the moment, it will be assumed that all these notions describe the concept of integration of work and learning. In a later stage the specific

¹ This chapter is based on a paper prepared in 1998 and on which basis the IWL project has been launched. I am grateful for remarks made on an earlier draft by Janko Mursak, Martina Trbanc, Ivan Svetlik, István Bessenyei, Györgi Mártonfi and Bernhard Buck.

connotations of these various notions may have to be spelled out more precisely (see for an historical overview Carton 1984, and for an overview of different theories and approaches Grootings 1988; Danau and Sommerlad 1996).

2.1 A new future for Apprenticeship?

At a recent OECD workshop on the future of the apprenticeship system, Vincent Merle has noted that „the desire to combine practical and school-based learning experiences is neither new nor original; it would be hard to find a pedagogical effort that does not share this ambition in some degree. The fact that many training institutions are now making explicit demands for alternating training suggests above all that it promises a solution to the problems now confronting the educational system” (1994 a:29).

In summarising the French developments, Merle distinguishes three kinds of alternating training, each different with respect to their goals, audiences and place within the overall education system:

- Practices aimed at offering those with low academic levels, or those who failed in the traditional school-based system, an alternative to the traditional mechanism of „first-you learn-then-you-apply“. By creating conditions to proceed from “know-how” to “knowing how to express know-how”, especially disadvantaged groups in society are assisted.
- Practices aimed at merely familiarising students with the concrete conditions of their future work situation, with a view of improving the transition from school to work, or - going even further - in a conscious attempt to „contextualise“ know-how. Examples can be found in the creation of vocational baccalaureates in France and in the development of higher vocational courses or schools in many European countries.
- Practices aimed at making the work activity the central locus for acquiring and developing occupational skills. This has traditionally been relevant for occupational areas where know-how was thought to be dominant over formal knowledge, especially in craft occupations. Traditional dual systems in German speaking countries are the typical example here. However, the relevance of practical experience for developing competencies has increasingly become acknowledged for all kinds of occupations.

All three types of alternance seek to mutually complement practical experience and school-based learning, but they differ fundamentally in why and how they do this. The first involves social integration and remediation of knowledge; the second, relating school-based training and work socialisation; the third, a process of professionalisation through the actual work activity (o. c.: 32).

From this diversity of alternating training situations and objectives, Merle concludes that alternating learning is above all a response to the variety of relationships to knowledge and ways of learning. Integration of work and learning, therefore, is not simply a pedagogical principle but serves to solve particular problems.

2.2 Changes in economy, technology and work organisation

But when IWL is not a new phenomenon and serves so many different purposes, what then is it that makes it **now** so topical. Why is it placed **today** so high on the agenda of educational policy makers in different highly industrialised countries? Basically, because it seems to be a good (and only?) response to the emergence of new types of knowledge, resulting from different uses of technology and work organisation by management of enterprises. This is a development that has been noted already for some time by researchers from western industrialised countries.

- In the US, Piore and Sabel published their „Second Industrial Divide“ in 1984. They argued that as a result of technological and work organisational developments - themselves responses to changes in international markets - basic principles and traditions of work and learning as developed in the course of industrialisation should be turned upside down.
- In Germany, Kern and Schumann argued in 1984 that new management strategies in German industry heralded the end of the division of labour and required new and more complex profiles of skilled workers.
- In France, among many others, Maurice claimed in 1986 that the basic paradigms of technology and work organisation were changing. However, he also insisted that possible responses to these changes are framed by societal environments and institutions particular to each country (effect sociétal) (Maurice a.o., 1982).
- In Sweden, Gustavsen, one of the leading Scandinavian work researchers, observed in the 1980s a growing trend towards more flexible forms of work organisation, asking - by consequence - for changes in workers' qualifications and skills (in Grootings a. o, 1989).
- In contrast, new forms of work organisation that were introduced in East European countries during the 1970s and 1980s were found to serve different ends, related to the particular shortage problems of enterprises in centralised and planned economies (Grootings a. o, 1989).

It has been recognised that in reality new forms of work organisation have been slow to develop. However, it now is generally accepted that these new developments on the employment side will continue and that they will imply some kind of „re-professionalisation“ of work in industry and services, especially for the front workers in enterprises and offices. The “high-wage/high quality” paradigm has increasingly replaced the old "low-wage/low quality" paradigm and has now become the dominant policy perspective for many governments in OECD and EU countries.

This means that a shared - and more general - challenge has emerged for advanced industrialised countries. There is a need for new types of qualifications asked by modern forms of work organisations that apply new kinds of technologies and are based on a fundamentally new approach towards the quality of products and services. Firms characterised as such are seeking a workforce that is able and willing to

- carry out more difficult tasks competently and to a large extent autonomously
- react in the right way to unforeseeable problems

- take over real responsibility by themselves or with other team members for a particular - smaller or larger - work sector
- develop their own skills so that they can continually meet new or fundamentally changing demands. (OECD a, 1994: 22)

2.3 Educational Policy Responses

Educational policy makers in most industrialised countries have sought to find the proper responses to these emerging trends. As a result, many countries have undergone - and indeed are still undergoing - quite radical reforms of their vocational education and training systems (OECD 1994b; OECD 1994c; OECD 1994d). Countries that traditionally had not given much attention to vocational education have started to invest heavily in improving the skills of their workforce (National Centre on Education and the Economy 1990).

A core issue for educational reform measures is to increase the level of competence of national work forces. This has led above all to increased attention for learning processes and learning results rather than for educational inputs only; to the assessment and recognition of individual competences (know-how) rather than formal knowledge and diplomas; to increased involvement of social partners in governance and provision; and to investments in overall quality control (Hövels and Römkens 1993; Grootings 1994; Collardyn 1996; Bertrand 1997).

In the US, for example, recognition of these new developments in employment has led Congress in 1994 to pass the School to Work Opportunities Act (STWOA). But there have been also other considerations, more US specific. The fact that in the US there are few clear pathways between school and work results in many students being unmotivated in school and spending years hopping from one low-paying job to another as they look for career opportunities. Second, experts and employers argue that many young people are completing school with low levels of basic academic skills, dysfunctional attitudes and work habits, and little occupational training; as a result they are ill prepared for well-paid jobs and career progression.

In response, STWOA promotes the development of work-based learning defined as „learning that results from work experience that is planned to contribute to the intellectual career development of students." The work experience is to be supplemented with activities that apply, reinforce, refine, or extend the learning that occurs during work, so that students develop attitudes, knowledge, skills and habits that might not develop from work experience alone (OTA: 1995). However, work-based learning is only part of a more ambitious programme that involves the creation of school-to-work transition systems through fostering partnerships among schools, employers, unions and public authorities. These systems are to include school-based components, work-based components and activities connecting the two. It is understood that, unless these other aspects of the programme succeed, work-based learning will be no more effective under STWOA than it has been in the past.

Most EU countries have initiated far going changes in their existing Vocational Education and Training (VET) systems as well. Buck (1997) argues that most vocational education systems have

generally used - and still do so - learning and teaching concepts that are based on the humanistic education paradigm that "education is learning through theoretical understanding". This has led to the belief that

- Only the school can provide and guarantee the prerequisites for a modern place for learning
- Personality can only develop in a learning environment far removed from utilitarian considerations
- The ability for mature judgement, the aim of personality development, can only be achieved by theoretical reflection on the realities of the world.

The traditional education paradigm has also led vocational education to adopt the principle of a comprehensive syllabus putting continuous pressure on teachers and students to present and adopt ever more knowledge. This paradigm proves increasingly to become obsolete against the background of changes in work and employment. Schools, as Buck argues, are to develop a new identity:

- The realisation that initial education today represents only the entry stage of a multi-phase learning process, greatly reduces the need for comprehensive syllabi, as there are institutions that cater for continuous education that may be far better equipped for certain subjects.
- Schools gradually realise that students are not able to acquire the "ability to act in concrete situations" solely through the methods and contents offered by the school.

This is the background for the present search for innovations in contents, methods and organisation of vocational education. The school is not losing its place in society but it is no longer seen as the only institution and location for work-relevant learning.

2.4 Societal and institutional constraints

Lutz, from whom the above characteristics of new workers' characteristics are quoted, remarks that the new skills now being sought after are striking in their similarity - albeit on a considerably higher technological level - with the traditional profile of the practical, mainly „manual“ trades. Thus, according to him, there is a new discovery of „professionalism“ as opposed to the largely de-skilling effects of traditional taylorist work organisations so far.

However, as he also points out, the same development in corporate structures that ask for such new professional skills of the work force simultaneously make it more and more difficult to acquire these skills in the traditional way inside the firm on internal labour markets. When enterprises reduce their vertical, horizontal and functional division of labour, there remains little opportunity for gradual learning during the working career. Consequently, workers of this kind have to be available in the external labour market (as a product of vocational education systems).

In addition, as changes in work organisation and corporate structures are themselves responses to increased international competition, with the industrialised countries moving away - forced by high wages - from mass production to the flexible production of high-value goods, the

employment structure becomes inherently unstable. This requires employees to be flexible on the external labour market, without having to fear a loss in occupational status and income.

Both requirements can only be met, if a well-established system of „professionalism“ exists in a country. And that means that those who are trying to „re-professionalise“ operational (subordinate) work must focus their attention on the social and organisational conditions underlying traditional occupational systems (and not so much - or not only - on the details of syllabuses and the organisational details of „alternance“ systems). "The success of any such policies hinges on whether these conditions can be reproduced or whether functional equivalents can be found for them." (o.c:24)

Lutz mentions three essential conditions, of which only the first one is educational in nature (and not elaborated further by the author):

- the existence of a real „pedagogic“ or learning environment in everyday industrial life
- the attractiveness of operational, „manual“ occupations (*Berufe*)
- the availability of well-functioning occupational labour markets.

The second condition indicates that the biggest difficulties are perhaps not to be found with the education system but with employment structures. „Without radical changes in salary scales, in non-monetary working conditions and rules, in systems and habits of classification and promotion, any attempt to upgrade practical vocational training are bound to fail“. By saying this, Lutz apparently criticises the decreasing social esteem that is connected to manual production work in his country, as compared to office and service jobs. As a result, non-managerial positions in industry threaten increasingly to be occupied by those who failed to reach other jobs.

It is not a surprise therefore that Lutz also argues that attempts to upgrade vocational education are also bound to fail „if the intention is simultaneously to use the necessary reforms in education to do some good for low achievers who are the victims of the school system...“. This obviously points at a contradictory situation, as there is sufficient empirical evidence that integration of work and learning as a "pedagogical principle" has become a cornerstone of successful policies aimed at disadvantaged groups in society. Does this mean that policies aimed at improving social cohesion are difficult to combine with policies aimed at re-professionalisation - seen as a condition for economic prosperity?

The third condition asks for labour markets in which

- workers with defined and specific skills and competencies (specific expertise) are available and in demand;
- at least the core skills of available and demanded qualifications are known to all the market partners and can be taken for granted by them;
- these core skills guarantee that newly recruited employees rapidly - at most after a short training period - reach high productivity under variable company contexts and conditions;

- employees with these core skills may expect the job on offer to comply with a more or less explicitly defined set of minimum standards of working conditions that are normally applicable to the occupational sector in question.

Such markets, Lutz argues, do not emerge naturally, nor can they be expected to develop more or less automatically as a consequence of innovative education policy which aims at strengthening „vocationalism” and „professionalism”. Again, this raises the issue of the impact of educational reform policy *per se*.

Méhaut and Delcourt (1994), in summarising the outcomes of a comparative analysis of a series of case studies on the training impact of enterprises, have shown how difficult it still is for firms to create a learning environment at the workplace and how much this is also dependent on general characteristics of national education systems and labour markets.

This short presentation of vocational education debates shows the scope of the present enthusiasm for integration of work and learning. We are discussing about more than simply a new pedagogical model; a model, moreover that apparently is sought to provide solutions for a wide range of - sometimes contradictory - problems, some of which are very country specific, and some of which are of a much more global and challenging nature. The related debates about the Learning Organisation and Lifelong Learning may further illustrate the situation.

2.5 The Learning Organisation

The integration of work and learning has not only become a challenge for educational institutions seeking to preserve, restore or increase their relevance versus new labour market requirements. Firms themselves are increasingly recognising a need to integrate continuous learning in their work environments in order to be able to respond flexibly to changing market developments. The concept of the "learning organisation" has been discussed since the beginning of the 1970s but has gained additional prominence only since the early 1990s both among educators and business people (Stahl, Nyhan and D'Aloja 1992).

Senge, who initiated the recent discussions about learning organisations with his "Fifth Discipline. The Art and Practice of the Learning Organisation" (first published in 1990), defines a learning organisation as - an organisation that is continually expanding its capacity to create its future. For such an organisation "it is not enough merely to survive. 'Survival learning' or what is more often termed 'adaptive learning' is important - indeed it is necessary. But for a learning organisation, 'adaptive learning' must be joined by 'generative learning', learning that enhances our capacity to create." (Senge, 1994: 14) A number of large American and multinational companies such as Harley Davidson, Kodak and Shell are presently involved together with MIT's Centre for Organisational Learning, in bringing these principles into practice. (Senge et al., 1994)

Organisations learn only through individuals who learn. Individual learning does not guarantee organisational learning but without it no organisational learning occurs. For the latter to happen, individual learning (in the sense of enhancing the capacity to create, or "*personal mastery*" as Senge

calls it, rather than of acquiring more information) has to be combined with four other disciplines of the learning organisation:

- Working with *mental models*, that is clarifying and scrutinising assumptions and generalisations,
- building *shared vision* that fosters genuine commitment and enrolment rather than simple compliance,
- *team learning* or rather dialogue, to develop the capacity of team members to suspend assumptions and enter in a genuine thinking together,
- and above all *systems thinking*. "Systems thinking" is the fifth discipline, integrating the four others and "fusing them into a coherent body of theory and practice. It keeps them from being separate gimmicks or the latest organization change fads. Without a systemic orientation, there is no motivation to look at how the disciplines interrelate. By enhancing each of the other disciplines, it continually reminds us that the whole can exceed the sum of the parts." (Senge, 1994: 12)

Building a learning organisation, at least in the view of the Harvard group around Senge, means much more than improving skills and qualifications of workers. It affects the whole management structure of an organisation. The most important innovation to be achieved is the infrastructure that will enable people to develop capabilities within the context of their jobs. "Until people can make their 'work space' a learning space, learning will always be a 'nice idea' - peripheral, not central. (Senge et al., 1994, p. 35)

But using the work space as a learning space has become extremely different from traditional on-the-job learning because of the increased complexity of work situations as part of complex systems. This complexity is not the result of an increase of details ("detail complexity") but because the effects over time of interventions in the work process are no longer obvious ("dynamic complexity"). One needs an understanding of the overall system in order to be able to decide on the nature of intervention.

However, while the learning organisation is seen as a necessary response to changes in the organisation's environment, there is little or no attention in this approach for the interrelationships between internal organisational development and national education and labour market policies. An overall policy perspective can be found in the new debate about lifelong learning.

2.6 Strategies for Lifelong Learning

The scope of integration of work and learning has been further widened by the recent discussions on lifelong learning (OECD 1997, 2001, European Commission, 2001). Integration of work and learning is no longer an issue pertinent to a specific period of (preparation for working) life but now spans the whole life cycle of every individual. As a consequence, problems of IWL are not confined anymore to the particular institutions of vocational education and training alone. The concept of lifelong learning embraces individual and social development of all kinds and in all

settings - formally, in schools, vocational, tertiary and adult education institutions, and non-formally, at home, at work and in the community. (OECD 1997: 15)

All education ministers of OECD member countries have accepted the crucial importance of learning throughout life for enriching personal lives, fostering economic growth and maintaining social cohesion and have agreed on strategies to implement it (o.c.: 21). Such strategies, ministers agreed, need a whole-hearted commitment to new system-wide goals, standards and approaches, adapted to the culture and circumstances of each country. They should include:

- To strengthen the foundations for learning throughout life, by improving access to early childhood education, particularly for disadvantaged children, revitalising schools and supporting the growth of other formal and non-formal learning arrangements;
- To promote coherent links between learning and work, by establishing pathways and bridges that will facilitate more flexible movement between education and training and work, aimed in particular at smoothing the initial transition between the two, and by improving the mechanisms for assessing and recognising the skills and competences of individuals - whether they are acquired through formal or non-formal learning;
- To rethink the roles and responsibilities of all partners - including governments - who provide opportunities for learning;
- To create incentives for individuals, employers and those who provide education and training to invest more in lifelong learning and to deliver value for money.

A similar perspective for education policy making has been presented in the European Commission's White Paper on Teaching and Learning: towards the Learning Society (European Commission 1996). In it, the Commission gives three important considerations why there is an urgent need to invest more and more efficiently in knowledge and in developing a more flexible education system:

- Giving priority to quality in education and training has become vital to the EU's competitiveness and to the preservation of its social model; indeed Europe's very identity over the next millennium depends on this.
- The demand for education and training is continually increasing on the supply side, the emergence of the information society is providing a new potential.
- Social exclusion has reached such intolerable proportions that the rift between those who have knowledge and those who do not, has to be narrowed. (1996, p.49)

These policy orientations have been supported by the Study Group on Education and Training Report on Accomplishing Europe through Education and Training, prepared at the request of the Directorate XXII of the European Commission (1997). UNESCO's Report of the International Commission on Education for the Twenty first Century "Learning: the Treasure within", presents a similar message (Paris 1997).

2.7 Increased blurring of Education and Work

Taken together then, as Stern (1996) argues, in the emerging economy where production intertwines with on-line learning, the dichotomy that has divided education and schooling from work and productive enterprise has begun to break down.

Integration of vocational and academic curriculum, active pedagogy that treats students as "knowledge workers", and work-based learning in enterprises inside and outside the school all blur the conventional boundary between education and work. These policy initiatives are logical responses to the recognition that productive knowledge is increasingly important. Although education always will include some rote memorisation and abstract exercises, and work will always include some following of orders from supervisors or clients, these no longer suffice. More than in the past, education for work must prepare a person to ask good questions and use good judgement in a practical context.

But, as the discussion about lifelong learning shows, the debate about IWL now not only includes space dimensions (institutional location, society and system) but also the dimension of time. As a consequence, the discussion about integration of work and learning tends to become opaque as it covers almost everything. For any concrete activity, it will be necessary to state clearly its scope and objectives. But at the same time each single activity has to be seen within the context of the wider debate and should therefore also define its potential contribution to it.

3 INTEGRATION OF WORK AND LEARNING IN TRANSITION COUNTRIES

When considering a project on integration of work and learning in Transition countries, the first question to be raised is: To what extent are these issues and debates of any relevance to the countries of Central and Eastern Europe. Or, more specifically:

- Which are the country specific issues for which IWL could provide a solution in the transition countries of Central and Eastern Europe?
- Is there concern for a contribution of IWL for improving social cohesion?
- Do the countries presently share the more global concern for a re-professionalisation of the workforce?
- Is there any discussion about leaning organisations during the present enterprise restructuring phase?
- What are the prospects and potentials for developing lifelong learning and what are the main obstacles?
- And finally what can be the role of a project on integration of work and learning in this context?

3.1 Quasi-apprenticeship and the withdrawal of enterprises from vocational education

Most countries of Central and Eastern Europe have developed until the late 1980s forms of “quasi-apprenticeship”. These were school-based forms of vocational education for basic types of mainly, but not only, industrial occupations with a share of practical work in enterprises or training workshops. Typically, the schools that were providing such form of vocational education were part of the state enterprise structure. The periods of practical work were rather intended to prepare prospective workers for their future jobs within these enterprises or state organisations than to provide practical training, in the proper sense of the word.

Preparing their own workforce used to be one of the responsibilities of state enterprises, and they considered this to be in their own interest. There was a constant need for hoarding labour imposed on them by unpredictable shortages produced by the centrally planned economic system. Enterprises normally availed of relatively well-equipped training facilities, depending on the strategic role of the enterprises and the related ministry within the national economy. Very often, practical learning was nothing more than simple productive work for the sponsoring enterprise.

This approach was also founded in political and ideological principles, which regarded traditional apprenticeship as a special form of exploitation. The dominant socialist pedagogical approach considered each kind of work, but especially work in material production, as having an intrinsic educational value regardless of its contents (Medves and Mursak 1997)). The educational value of productive work was of a political nature rather than a professional one, however. This particular experience with integration of work and learning also explains a profound scepticism among students, teachers and enterprises against the very concept.

Basically, all semi-skilled and skilled workers occupations had their place in this “quasi-apprenticeship system”. In some of the countries the basic vocational schools were actually called apprenticeship schools, leading to much confusion among some of the western consultants that have flooded the countries during the 1990s. These schools also formed part of the compulsory phase of education and were free of charge for students as far as they prepared them for their first occupation. When practice learning took place inside an enterprise, students received a small wage or compensation. Students were supposed to remain in the enterprise after finishing their studies.

These vocational schools were also the schools that were hit first during the first phase of the transition. State enterprises, even before being nationalised, were forced to operate on the basis of real costs and soon lost the soft budgets from their ministries. As a result, they abandoned what they did not really need, such as their vocational schools and training facilities. Following the restructuring of governmental responsibilities, many of the technical ministries lost their educational budgets as well. Full financial responsibility for vocational schools came in most countries to rest on the shoulders of the Ministry of Education, with the exception of Hungary where VET was placed under the responsibility of the Ministry of Labour. These ministries were not always primarily interested in vocational education, and now had to distribute less money

among more schools. In some countries, such as in the Czech Republic, enterprises had to return their training facilities to the state, after becoming independent.

It may be relevant to stress some of the main features of quasi apprenticeship in order to understand the context of the present interest for apprenticeship in some of the Central and Eastern European countries.

- Apprenticeship, or rather quasi-apprenticeship, was widespread involving around 50% of basic school leavers. However, it was part of the employment system rather than of the educational system. It was a strong tool regulating the transition from school to work in the interest of manpower provision of enterprises rather than serving occupational interests of young people.
- Its coverage reflected the employment structure of the countries, i.e. large industrial (mostly heavy) and administrative organisations characterised by a strong division of labour. Accordingly, schools forced their students into early specialisation for narrow and - normally - dead-end occupational profiles.
- It was co-financed by various governmental agencies from the state budget.
- Governance of the system was in the hands of central state administration, though shared by different ministries and agencies, each with its own interests and influenced by its own lobbies.
- Participation rates were centrally set in function of manpower planning (and bargaining) of individual enterprises.
- Curricula were centrally decided with input from the Ministry of Education for the general parts and from the relevant technical ministries for the vocational parts.
- The practice part was more characterised by periods of - simple - practical work in the future work place than by practical learning integrated with theoretical learning.

Hungary has started in the late 1980s to partly transform some of its basic vocational schools in apprentice schools or to include apprentice classes. Slovenia is developing since the early 1990s an apprenticeship system, along the German lines, parallel to the existing vocational school system. Overall, however, VET has become more and more scholarised and even this form of “quasi - apprenticeship” has initially collapsed everywhere and in all countries enterprises find it difficult to fully engage in new forms of apprenticeship, mostly for financial reasons.

3.2 Quasi-taylorist work organisation and the role of experiential learning

Hungarian work researchers have pointed already in the 1980s at some typical characteristics of industrial enterprises in their country (Ládo et al. 1989). Although formally organised along strict taylorist principles with a radical division of horizontal, vertical and functional labour (reflected by narrow occupational profiles of operational workers and numerous technician and engineer

positions), in reality enterprises functioned largely on the basis of, and very often only thanks to, an informal structure of semi-autonomous groups. Also in other socialist countries enterprises showed similar characteristics (Deppe and Hoss 1980; Deppe and Hoss 1989; Grootings a.o.1989).

Hungarian researchers called this phenomenon "quasi-taylorism". Its causes were to be found in the typical shortage problems created by centrally planned economies where enterprise managers did not have any control over necessary resources (hence their continuous hoarding). For the production of low quality products, with low levels of technology, experienced production workers were always able to find ad-hoc solutions for production problems caused by shortage of resources. Either, based on their practical technical skills, they were able to use alternative methods or materials, or due to their developed social contacts within the organisation, they were able to organise production where the hierarchy failed. Workers became skilled through work experience and experiential learning and not because they were properly trained. However, these skills were largely enterprise specific and remained without recognised value on the external labour market.

The new forms of work organisation that were developed in Hungary and Poland during the 1980s were basically an attempt to institutionalise the central role of groups of core workers. They led to a further segmentation of internal labour markets and increased problems of transition from school to work for young school graduates (Grootings a.o. , 1998).

3.3 Quasi integration of work and learning in Hungary and Slovenia

After the initial period of recovery from the war and relatively successful industrialisation during the 1940s and 1950s, political leaders in both Hungary and Yugoslavia (of which Slovenia was one of the republics) have from the 1960s on tried to solve increasing economic problems with political liberalisation and economic decentralisation without fundamentally touching the basic principles of the economic system, nor the power hegemony of the Party. It has been the economic collapse at the end of the 1980s that has paved the way for political change first and following that for the introduction of changes in the economic system. These were introduced in Hungary and Slovenia by the new democratically elected political leaderships in the form of macro-economic stabilisation programmes and by restructuring and privatisation of enterprises. Both countries also started to remove the legal barriers for free entrepreneurship and the liberalisation of employment relations, by making it easier and less expensive for enterprises to lay off workers and by introducing more flexible (not lifelong guaranteed) employment contracts. The nature of the enterprise has radically altered as did the relation between management and the workforce.

Both Hungary and Slovenia have shared a period of increasing decentralisation in economic and political decision making since the 1970s. While this process in the case of Slovenia was framed in a costly institutional self-management system, that favoured strong co-operation between enterprises and public institutions (such as schools) at the local level, in Hungary the same process of decentralisation was led by regional and local Party structures but has resulted in quite similar local alliances between enterprises, local administration and local public institutions such

as schools. These decentralisation tendencies strengthened even more the instrumental relationship between schools and enterprises that was so characteristic for centrally planned economies with their structural problems of soft budgets and shortage of resources. It is important to point out that when we speak about enterprises very often these have been large industrial plants, normally the sole or major provider of employment in the region, while the vocational and technical schools were the suppliers of young new labour for that enterprise. Both enterprise and school were the constituent parts at the local level of the same system of (centrally) planned economy.

This particular relationship between enterprises and schools created the conditions for what one could call a “quasi” integration of work and learning. There was institutional co-operation between enterprise and school, including the sharing of learning sites (theoretical learning in school and practical learning in the enterprise). The curriculum was completely geared to the needs of the enterprise, and enterprises often supported students through systems of scholarships that at the same time obliged students to take up employment in the enterprise after finishing of their studies. There was a specific economic ratio underlying the relations between schools and enterprises. But the integration of work and learning was at the same time very narrow and one-sided and, above all, because it was led by stagnating industrial companies, it structurally lacked any capacity for innovation

The withdrawal by the state from enterprise-related decision-making has had immediate implications for the relations between enterprises and institutions that remained within the domain of the state, such as schools. Even before their full privatisation enterprises found themselves in a situation where they had to produce for market prices and quality. The need for enterprises to cut on costs (or to free cash to pay off debts and/or finance investments) has led them to cut on non directly production-oriented expenditures, including in particular those related to social care (such as housing, child care and holiday facilities) and education and training (education departments, training centres and workshops, scholarships, support to schools). Cost cutting has also influenced employment and recruitment policies, especially in the form of a radical reduction of staff overcapacities (first by soft means such as early retirement but later also by dismissing workforce) and reliance on the labour market and short term or fixed contracts instead of the earlier policy to bind students already before leaving school and securing that they would stay in the enterprise through unlimited time contracts (and penalties for early leaving).

From the above, it is clear that the integration of work and learning has followed quite another logic under the conditions of centrally planned economies than it has done under market economic conditions. This “systemic” character of education and employment institutions has to be taken into account when discussing further possibilities for IWL under current transition conditions.

3.4 The economic and social environment for IWL in transition countries

What has been briefly illustrated for Hungary and Slovenia is generally true for all Central and East European transition countries. They have all experienced a very close integration of work

and learning until the beginning of the 1990s, content-wise, institutionally, financially and, as a matter of fact, during the whole working life of the individual. This situation has been shaped by the logic of production in a centrally planned economy as it became introduced after the Second World War and which was based on achieving planned output rather than on the efficient use of resources to satisfy market demand.

This quasi-integration of work and learning under conditions of central planning has almost completely collapsed with the introduction of the market as the principal steering mechanism in the economy. During most of the 1990s there has been an increasing disintegration of work and learning especially institutionally as many enterprises have closed or reduced their own training facilities, terminated their intimate relationships with schools and stopped financing students. The moment the state withdrew from the enterprises the enterprises have withdrawn from education and training. In most countries it has not been a priority for transition governments to step in, either for political or budgetary reasons.

Increasingly, however, as Central and East European countries are becoming integrated in the global economy, they are - or will soon be - faced with similar challenges as developed market economies. One of these challenges is the need to search for qualitatively new ways of integrating work and learning in order to develop – on a lifelong basis – a highly qualified and competent workforce that is able to produce goods and deliver services of good quality and price for a world market. In EU countries the search has been going on already for decades and has resulted in a gradual but fundamental reform of national VET systems at large. In most Central and East European countries the issue of integration of work and learning under market conditions has so far hardly entered the policy debates. It is obvious that an active role of the state and the public education system will be required to make things happen but enterprises will also understand their own interests, and some already do.

3.5 IWL in Hungary and Slovenia

Hungary and Slovenia are among the countries that are undergoing a period of intensive and fundamental transformation of their VET-systems. Both governments aim at improving the links between education and the labour market. Particular emphasis is being put on facilitating and improving the transition from school to work and on re-establishing relations between schools and enterprises. The core of this policy is oriented at restoring a vocational education system that can respond to both the educational aspirations of the young generations and to the requirements of today's labour markets. Integration of work and learning has received only marginal attention from policy makers so far though.

3.5.1 Hungary

In Hungary, the political and economic developments of the last 10 years have resulted in an extremely liberalised labour market characterised by few regulations. This labour market is radically segmented along several dimensions:

- traditional industrial occupations with third world wage levels versus post-industrial occupations with wages that are approximating Western European levels;

- old generation versus young generation;
- male versus female;
- legal versus illegal employment;
- shrinking branches and depressed regions versus booming branches and regions, etc..

After several years of severe crisis the labour market has gradually reached a state of relative balance. Young people entering the labour market have bad chances in traditional occupations (that only require a qualification of secondary education), but they are very much in demand where a new type of labour force is recruited. This also means that youth with traditional secondary (general and vocational) education have high risks to become (and remain) unemployed. Youth with higher and more modern forms of vocational education find relatively easy employment. In contrast, older generations with relatively low levels of education try to hold to their existing jobs. In case of unemployment, they face severe problems on the labour market.

Career patterns for those in the age of 18-25/30 have also changed dramatically. They can be characterised by large private investment in (often not formal) education and training; by attempts to gather work experience during and between courses or by attending courses while working full-time; and by continuously changing education and work areas whenever promising opportunities emerge. The transition of school to work has become more complex and also covers a much longer period of time.

Changes in the education and labour market training systems are under way, but have rather followed the events. Young people were forced by the overall employment system to seek for alternative education routes. Those who did, however, became competitive on the labour market and do find employment in modern enterprises, often in joint Hungarian and foreign ventures. Surveys also point out that in the course of this process diplomas and certificates of traditional occupations rapidly lose their value. New manpower recruitment becomes more and more based on relevant competencies rather than the possession of a formal diploma.

In general, the involvement of enterprises in vocational education has sharply decreased. The number of apprentices went down to 30% of an age group (from formerly 50-55%). Practical training places in (large) enterprises went down by 60-70% and only one third remained. As a result, practical training presently takes place mostly in school workshops (40%) or in small enterprises (30%). At the same time, however, apprenticeship is no longer a dead-end training route any more. Large groups of young skilled workers now follow on with their studies (at 17-18) and achieve a full secondary school certificate (Abitur) after two years. Youth also have the possibility to enter - new - forms of post-secondary education. Many young people presently delay their entry on the labour market, stay longer in school and achieve higher educational levels.

With new regulations that will come into force in 1998 (the National Core Curriculum of the Ministry of Education and Culture and the National List of Recognised Qualifications of the Ministry of Labour), a further restructuring of the education and training system is under way. This involves the introduction of many curriculum changes and the implementation of a series of

new training routes (post secondary education, specialisation courses after secondary education in the so-called World Bank model schools, adapted curriculum for apprentices, etc.

Further development is hampered, however, by a number of unsolved issues. Foremost among these has been for a long time insufficient communication between the two main ministries involved at that time: the Ministry of Education and Culture and the Ministry of Labour. And while, in contrast to many other countries in Central Europe, social partners also take part in the discussion on vocational education and employment policies, their efforts to be involved in decision-making and in development are not yet fully realised. Part of the explanation for this situation lies in the radical decentralised nature of the Hungarian education system. Local governments (mainly municipalities, but also county level self-governments) are maintainers of schools and together with the local supporting labour market institutions are as important actors as schools and enterprises. But on the other hand, because of their important position in the system, local governments can also act as principal organisers of communication between schools and enterprises. They are also in a position to support innovative projects and they sometimes do so. Possibilities for innovation in VET are particularly good in Hungary due to the existence of the Vocational Training Fund, financed from contributions from employers and employees.

In summary, one could say that the situation in Hungary is momentarily quite diffuse, both in terms of labour market development and vocational education policy making. Different patterns in the relations between education and work are developing and consequently, there are very different policy issues at stake. There are perhaps three major areas where the integration of work and learning are most prominent at present.

- One is in initial vocational education for youth, where as a result of the economic restructuring (especially the large) firms have given up their traditional role in the former "quasi apprenticeship" system. The loss of practical training possibilities inside enterprises has led to a larger role for schools and for small firms. Are they able to develop a true alternative for the quasi apprenticeship practices of the earlier times?
- The second can be found in firms that belong to the modern and/or post-industrial sector and that increasingly are competing with other firms on a global international market, even inside Hungary. These firms are faced with similar challenges of as firms elsewhere and for them life-long learning and continuous innovation indeed pose the question as to how to improve the further integration of work and learning.
- The third area concerns the elder generation of unemployed, that have low formal qualifications and are difficult to retrain and re-employ.

The discussion about integration of work and learning is for the time being not very well developed among the main policy makers, as a recent policy review by the OECD has indicated. Most initiatives are still understandably focused on restoring relations between enterprises and schools. Nevertheless, and fuelled by efforts to prepare for EU accession, there is growing awareness of the relevancy of this debate for the future of Hungarian society and there is an increasing interest among practitioners and policymakers to undertake action. The fact that VET

has been placed under the responsibility of the Ministry of Labour also provides guarantees that labour market and work relevancy will remain a high priority for future VET reform policies.²

3.5.2 Slovenia

The developments in Slovenia show remarkable similarities with those in Hungary. The country also shares the same pre-war traditions. Although after 1945, with the implementation of socialist ideology and policy, the existing apprenticeship had been declared as a special type of exploitation of youth and the State strengthened its control over youth education, enterprises maintained an important role especially with respect to practical training. The dominant trend, however, was characterised by an increasing role of the State, culminating in the 1967 education reform as a result of which all forms of vocational education became part of the formal school system.

Already during the 1980s strong criticism and opposition developed against the so-called Career-Oriented Education system implemented in the 1970s. This system effectively abolished secondary general schools (gymnasiums) and gave all secondary schools the task to prepare pupils for certain vocations. In the wake of these reforms, also the existing apprenticeship system was abolished. All secondary schools provided a standard programme of general education during the first year of schooling. Subsequent years were oriented towards preparing for certain skills. In practice, this increased the gap between schools and enterprises. The traditional co-existence of theoretical and practical learning during the school year was replaced by an obligatory 6 months work preparation phase at the end of the studies. It was foreseen that 80% of secondary school leavers would directly enter the labour market and only 20% would continue higher education studies.

The main idea behind this reform was to decrease cultural and social differences between the traditional gymnasium and the vocational schools and to make secondary education more responsive to the needs of enterprises. It became generally recognised that the new unified type of secondary school was unable to fulfil any of its goals. It became also recognised that the problems in education were closely related to the ongoing crisis of the employment system. The specific characteristics of the self-management system had led Yugoslav enterprises during the 1970s and 1980s to become concerned with keeping their existing workforce employed at relatively high salary levels instead of investing in productivity increasing technology and employing young labour. The employment crisis in Western Europe simultaneously reduced the possibility for labour to go abroad and instead caused the return of immigrant workers. These developments gradually led to a situation in which the large enterprises lost their interest in employing young school-leavers and - to a certain extent - in being involved in education as such. This situation continued into the 1990s.

After years of intensive discussions preceding and following the transition to becoming an independent nation in 1991, a basic consensus has developed among the main stakeholders about

² The present Government has abolished the Ministry of labour and placed VET under the responsibility of the Ministry of Education. Most of the responsible staff have been transferred to the Ministry of Education.

the principles of the educational system that is to be developed in Slovenia. A new concept for VET was spelled out already in the early 1990s in the Government's White Book on Education.

The Government's new educational policy aims at restoring a distinct vocational education and training system providing basic vocational education for all (youth and adults) at a level compatible with European standards. Particular emphasis is given to improving the links between education and the labour market and to facilitating the transition from school to work. To that end, a number of new types of vocational education are being introduced, at secondary, post-secondary and tertiary level, which are providing curricula with a strong practical orientation, foresee practice placements in private or public enterprises, and promote training for self-employment. The structure of the vocational education system has become more diversified with, in principle, alternative pathways leading to the same occupational qualification, facilitated by bridging programmes. Simultaneously, access to higher education is improved by a more differentiated structure of both secondary and tertiary education.

The Adult Education Act provides a new framework for continuous education of adults, both general and vocational. It foresees the introduction of a certification system, which allows adults to have their previously acquired skills and knowledge assessed and recognised through a certification procedure based on credits. Credits allow the acquisition of formal educational qualifications. The certification system will make it possible for the relatively large number of adults who do not have formal higher educational qualifications to both improve their levels of skill and knowledge and to have these formally recognised.³

The new Acts also re-organise responsibilities for educational management and governance based on the principle of „partnership“ between the Ministry, schools and social partners. The shared responsibility for management and governance should lead to involvement of social partners in provision and financing of vocational education and training. The new Apprenticeship system, including the training for Master Craftsman, will be governed together with the Chambers of Crafts and Economy. Discussion concerning the exact division of responsibilities, especially with regard to examination and certification, are still going on. The Chambers are faced with a major problem of insufficient financial and professional capacities for fully realising their intended role. Trade unions are hardly involved at all, concentrating as they are on traditional industrial relations issues of wages and employment.

While the MOES is still reluctant to undertake an overall restructuring of vocational school provision, it has taken the initiative to see whether practical training could be concentrated in Inter-Company or Regional Training Centres. In co-operation with the Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs (MOLFSA) and the two Chambers, a plan has been worked out which seeks to make more efficient use of existing practical training facilities in the large industrial schools that formerly belonged to enterprises. These schools are often well equipped but increasingly underused as a result of changing educational aspirations of youth. The concept

³ The Act on National Occupational Qualifications regulating procedures and responsibilities for the assessment and recognition of non-formal learning has been passed by parliament in 2000.

foresees that the practical facilities of these schools will be accessible for all regional institutions for vocational education, including those for adults and the unemployed. The MOES also considers investing in Regional Training Centres as an alternative for the eventual failure of firms to provide practical training places to apprentices.

The policy to make vocational education more labour market relevant and practice oriented has also led to the initiative to introduce changes in the composition of the teaching force and in the institutions that are preparing teachers for vocational education. A start has been made with the development of a new infrastructure for in-service training for vocational teachers and first discussions have been held to see whether a separate structure for pre-service training for vocational teachers should be developed. In addition, new teachers have been recruited from the experienced work force for the newly introduced vocational courses for secondary school graduates and for the non-university type of higher vocational colleges. These teachers are now being prepared for their jobs.

While pursuing modernisation and reform of VET, the Ministry has chosen for a gradual and pragmatic approach, which especially takes care of making good use of existing resources in the country, including the present teaching force. There is a conscious policy not to repeat the mistakes made with the implementation of the former Career-oriented Education system. In the course of this development there will be a change from the traditional orientation on curriculum inputs towards one based on „output“ standards. This will imply for VET to become based on occupational profiles and definitions. Initiatives have already been taken, together with MOLFSA, to review the existing system of occupational classification as the principal reference for vocational education. The change towards output standards will also necessitate the development of a National System of Occupational and Educational Standards, which would provide for an overall coherent framework for individual standards. The availability of national standards would further allow to proceed with the decentralisation of both curriculum development and delivery, and to integrate a certification system for the recognition of qualifications achieved in (informal and formal) adult education and training. This, in turn would make it necessary and possible to pay increased attention to the quality of learning processes. Thus, a new mix of input-, process- and output-oriented policy measures is under development. And this forms the overall framework for attention to integration of work and learning.⁴

As is the case for Hungary, it must be said, however, that most of the discussions have for a long time lacked any future-oriented perspective. Efforts have been concentrated at realising the immediate restoration and modernisation plans. This, of course, is completely understandable given the urgency of these measures and the few – also human – resources that are available for this immense task. Against this background, integration of work and learning have become already relevant in at least four particular areas:

⁴ The new policy concepts have been developed under the Phare MOCCA programme and the resulting Memorandum on the further development of VET in Slovenia has been approved by the National Council of VET experts in 2000.

- The first relates to efforts of the Chambers to assess and determine the quality of practical training places offered by enterprises in the framework of both the new apprenticeship system and the post-secondary professional courses.
- The second concerns the initiative of the Ministry of Education to reorganise existing school workshops into Regional Practical Training Centres.
- The third area involves modern industrial and/or service enterprises that wish to invest on a continuous basis in the education of their workforce.
- The fourth one is formed by the expected need to retrain and re-qualify large numbers of school drop-outs and adults that do not possess any formal qualifications besides their work experience.

4 CONCLUSION

Within the VET debates in EU member states there is a growing consensus that the workplace can (and should) be an important learning and training source and that human resource competencies matched with new forms of work organisation and technology are representing key competitive resources for enterprises. This is also reflected in the fact that IWL is an important focus of action programmes at European level, such as the Leonardo da Vinci programme.

Behind this debate are structural changes on domestic and world markets — from supplier-oriented to demand-oriented and globalised markets - to which economies in industrialised countries are adapting. Propelled by the increased use of new technologies and forced by growing public concern for the environment, companies are challenged to ensure their competitiveness by radically transforming organisational and production structures as well as work processes. Through the implementation of new organisational concepts (such as that of the “learning organisation”) companies are trying to evolve a general strategy that is aiming at improved flexibility and customer orientation. These concepts require a workforce that possesses a high level of professional qualification able to adapt on a continuous basis to changing qualification requirements.

As a result of these developments, schools for vocational education and training are increasingly forced to frequently redefine their curricula, their pedagogy, their teaching and learning methods. The new orientation of vocational education is based on developing a learning culture, oriented to the principle of action and reaction, based on personal experience, innovative ideas and specific competencies. This new learning culture provides the context in which people are prepared to (1) develop competencies for lifelong learning and (2) avoid acquiring knowledge and skills which will soon become obsolete.

For the partner countries in Central and Eastern Europe there are still important areas of uncertainty regarding the relevance and implementation of IWL. The concept is linked to and embedded in a wide range of developments in divergent fields of research, policy and practice. Examples of these divergent fields are the system of vocational education and training, the

organisation of work and labour relations. All these fields are presently undergoing systemic reforms and clear and stable institutional arrangements have not yet been able to develop fully.

All partner countries are still in the process of adapting their inherited centralised curriculum structures to the changed conditions of democracy and market economy. While many retain a centralised input approach to control the progress of reforms, some complement this with output-oriented measures such as the definition of standards. However, less discussion and measures can be observed about the required re-professionalisation of the workforce through providing them with experience-based competencies and applicable knowledge, which is at present a topic for public debate in EU member states and which would require a fundamental review of processes of learning and teaching.

Thus, the *specific background* of the ETF funded IWL project is formed by the particular transition situation of VET and employment systems in the partner countries. The transition is characterised by the restoration of labour market relevant vocational education and training and restructuring of enterprises. While policies are still dominated by attempts to deal with problems inherited from the past, there is an urgent need to prepare for future challenges. As described earlier, these are resulting from increased competition on international markets and create the need to be able to respond pro-actively and flexibly to continuously changing work situations. There is an increased need for closer integration of work and learning, both institutionally (integration of learning and working sites) and during the life of individuals (life-long learning). This context creates new situations and problems for students and workers as individuals, as well as for the institutions where they learn and work. The experience of quasi integration of work and learning has to be transformed into real forms of integration.

Hungary and Slovenia have started already at the end of the 1980s with a fundamental transformation of their VET-systems. Both countries have aimed at improving the links between education and the labour market. Based on the foregoing analysis, it can be argued that integration of work and learning, though not yet a priority on the agenda, will be of increasing importance to all the countries of Central Europe. Reforms of the VET systems in most countries have principally been steered by attempts to solve major deficiencies of vocational education and training inherited from post-war policies. However, the systemic changes that have resulted from these initial reform policies have brought the VET systems increasingly in line with recent developments in EU member states.

Both Hungary and Slovenia are under great pressure to intensify their efforts to complete initial reforms and to continue to develop their VET systems in view of their forthcoming accession to the EU. A key issue in this respect is the improvement of relations between training institutions and enterprises as a precondition for establishing lifelong learning for all. Other transition countries are - or will soon be - in a similar situation.

Policy makers in both countries have recognised this challenge. They are faced, however, by training institutions and enterprises that either do not yet fully share the commitment to integration of work and learning, or - even if they do so - miss the operational tools and

instruments for realising this in practice. The contribution of the ETF project on Integration of Work and Learning, therefore, has tried to serve two clear purposes.

- The first is to increase - inside and outside the two countries - the awareness of the increasing importance of improving the integration of work and learning.
- Secondly, its contribution will consist in assisting the countries in developing practical tools and guidelines for supporting existing initiatives and potentials for a further integration of work and learning.

The chapters that follow present the results of the work done.

In each of the two countries national project teams have been established (see annex). The teams have initiated co-operation with selected vocational training centres and companies. Training institutions have been assisted in becoming “*training companies*” and companies have been assisted in becoming “*learning organisations*”. In each case there has been a similar cycle of activities that has included analysis (identifying the “work” potential of training centres, respectively the “learning potential” of companies), development of concepts, methods and materials, implementation of measures, development of train-the-trainers programme, evaluation and dissemination. Teams have applied a particular change development approach focused on process learning. This approach will be clarified in the next Chapter

The two national teams have worked closely together and have organised a regular exchange of experiences. The trans-national design of the project also allowed for the identification of the particular national aspects that are relevant for the further integration of work and learning. The analysis of these national specific aspects is important in view of future dissemination of the results of the project. The national context for an understanding of IWL issues will be presented in Chapter 3, together with a description of the pilot cases from each of the two countries. These case descriptions will provide evidence of attempts by individual schools and enterprises in Hungary and Slovenia to improve integration of work and learning under the new conditions of market competition.

Each team also has established its own national project council, composed of key representatives of the main institutions involved in work and learning. The councils have secured policy relevancy of the work and have facilitated access to training centres and companies. Results have been presented and discussed with national stakeholders in particular with regard to the policy implications that can be drawn from the IWL project for the further reform of VET in Hungary and Slovenia. Chapter 4. provides an assessment of the existing obstacles and opportunities in legal and institutional frameworks of education and employment systems that have developed during the initial transition period of the 1990s. Based on this analysis, the two teams have identified policy areas and priorities that could contribute to creating favourable conditions for schools and enterprises to better integrate work and learning. This chapter also includes updates on policy developments that have taken place in both countries during the course of the project. Chapter 5, finally, contains a concluding reflection on the experience of the project as a whole.

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