

Promoting vocational further training – Opportunities for Enterprises, Trade Unions and Employers in Social Dialogue

Bucharest Declaration 2013



*We, the national and company representatives of employees and employers, worked together in a European social partner initiative for the promotion of in-company and vocational further training in 2013. Our common goal is improving the competitiveness of our companies and the fair treatment of employees. **In this respect vocational and in-company further training is of crucial importance to us. We want to use the social dialogue to outline the necessary initiatives and improvements.***

*With the support of the European Commission we had a transnational exchange of information and practices on current and future developments. We looked especially into company standards, the requirements of sector-specific policies and European perspectives in the wood/furniture and metal/mechanical engineering sectors. We agreed on joint sector-specific targets and have intensified our cooperation in company-related fields of action. Vocational and in-company further training with its respective national characteristics has been a central focus of our activities during the last months. **This was the basis to develop fundamental principles of further and vocational training. We jointly adopted the following declaration at our final conference in Bucharest on 19th November 2013.***

Fundamental Principles of Further Training

(1) Securing and strengthening the right to education! We commit ourselves to giving all employees equal access to vocational and in-company further training. We agree that all forms of discrimination – irrespective of whether based on ethnic or social background, nationality, religion, level of education or gender – be eliminated. The socially disadvantaged, the handicapped, foreign employees, immigrants and those with low qualifications deserve special support and assistance in this regard. Vocational training measures must be arranged so that there will be no conflict between the needs of family and career. That is why we need special approaches and a broader range of programmes tailor-made for all employee groups.

(2) Initial and continuing vocational training belong together! Based on the principle of “lifelong learning” vocational training of employees shall be organised as a systematic “qualification chain”. The first qualification acquired in initial vocational training shall be systematically and continuously reinforced by training workers throughout their working lives.

(3) Demographic change calls for more vocational and further training! We aim to make vocational training for qualified jobs in the wood/furniture and metal sector more attractive for young men and women. This will require an upgrading of the sector’s general image and continuous improvement of the quality of vocational training. We also wish to ensure that firms will in future continue to provide sufficient training places and jobs creating attractive working conditions and income.

(4) In-company further training requires reliable structures, improved resources and a training enhancing environment! We call for improvements in company infrastructure for further training (training resources at the workplace in terms of personnel, equipment and rooms), for sound company occupational planning, with job-specific content and programmes designed for the different target groups, and for more professional cooperation with external training centres. We want to see the instruments for systematic assessment of demand and training planning be applied more intensively. We want to see a systematic qualification management, clear rules for the release of trainees and employees from work with continued wage payment during further training and incentives for motivation and training for all employees.



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(5) Vocational training should pay off! We aim to improve the participation and involvement of employees in the planning and organisation of vocational training. This includes as far as we are concerned more information and strategic discussions. We want to encourage successful completion of vocational training programmes by having it rewarded with higher salaries and better career opportunities. It should therefore be possible to apply newly acquired skills at the workplace.

(6) Vocational training requires information, participation and co-determination! A sustained “vocational training culture” in companies can only be organised together with the workforce and their representatives. Where this has not yet been done, we want to define and secure in collective agreements the right of employees to vocational training in the entire sector. Company training agreements, in which the social partners locally define clear rules for participation and standards of further training, may support this.

Based on these principles we social partners within companies commit ourselves to:

1. Continuing the activities started within the BICO project partnership for the implementation of a systematic in-company further training management. In particular, we will continue the bilateral cooperation of employee and employer representatives, agree on an annual further training planning for our companies and organise, accompany and evaluate the measures that were agreed in it.
2. Applying the rules for the implementation of in-company further training, that were agreed upon in sector-wide collective agreements, and to adopting these framework agreements in our companies, if possible.
3. Defining additional or complementing company rules in company training agreements.
4. Disseminating our experience and the results in our sector and to sharing the strategies, methods and content practised by us with other interested companies. In particular, the training consultants trained within the project will advise and support the employee and employer representatives of other companies for their own measures upon request.

As representatives of national trade unions and employer organisations we commit ourselves to:

1. Ensuring a continuous review and further development of the applicable collective bargaining agreements for the promotion of vocational and further training.
2. Supporting the implementation of the collective agreements on further training in companies.
3. Continuously providing information and advice to our members.
4. Sustaining our cooperation in the field of vocational further training by having at least twice a year respective consultations in the sector social dialog.
5. Broadening the exchange and cooperation on issues of vocational and in-company further training. In particular, we will have a continuous exchange in this field with all stakeholders of business, trade unions, government and educational policy. We want to pool this interdisciplinary cooperation in a “Sector Skills Council”.
6. Contributing and advocating our experience and results and our medium-term targets and demands in the national tripartite social dialogue to get support. At the European level we will use existing bodies to disseminate information and to launch additional activities.

Bucharest, 19th November 2013

European BICO-Partnership

Bucharest Declaration 2013 --- Декларация от Букурещ --- BUKAREȘTO DEKLARACIJA --- Declarația de la București

Signatories to the Declaration



Bucharest, 19th November 2013