I Background and Objective

The study visit was arranged by the International School of Law and Business, Vilnius, Lithuania as a part of the EU’s Lifelong Learning Programme 2007-13 (LLP) that is coordinated by the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training, CEDEFOP. Its objective is to support policy development and cooperation at European level in lifelong learning, notably in the context of the Lisbon process and the education and training agenda 2020 (E&T2020), as well as the Bologna and Copenhagen processes and their successors.

The background to the purpose of the study visit is the issue that education, training and employability are strongly related. Feedback from employers indicates that too many graduates do not have the right mix of knowledge, skills and competence that is required in the labour market. Higher education should be more responsive to the needs of changing society and labour market, open up education and training systems as well as strengthen dialogue with employers. It is important to integrate social partners and employers into the training, curriculum design and academic offer formulation processes. Partnership between education and industry helps the students to acquire relevant professional competencies at the very early stages of professional life and allows the enterprises to benefit from the qualified workforce as well as minimize training expenses.

The aim of the study visit is to share successful practices and present examples of successful cooperation between business community and the education institution in Lithuania and from other EU countries that are representative of the participants.

The study visit participants were from a good mix of backgrounds including employers, business associations and technology parks, vocational schools, etc., also with representation from governmental authorities. The participants also included professional educators, owners/managers of SMEs,
representatives of education and training networks and associations, representatives of educational services, labour offices, and representatives of employers’ organisations from 12 countries, including Great Britain, Italy, Poland, France, Denmark, Slovakia, Hungary, Croatia, Spain, Turkey, Portugal and Greece.

The programme had a good coverage of theoretical and practical sessions comprised of:

- initiatives and models of higher education institution-industry collaboration;
- projects, developed in partnership with employers (Business Idea Fair, Law Clinics, etc.);
- initiatives and actions to improve the availability of information on present and future occupational demand and related skill requirements (Career Days, Round Table Discussion, etc.);
- teaching strategies, including new methods of learning (such as e-learning), allowing to adapt to the needs of people in employment;
- curriculum development process, involving the experience and expertise of business sector representatives and social partners.

2 Findings

This section summarises the findings of the group while visiting host institutions, discussing issues with the hosts and within the group. Sessions were organised with the study team members during the visit in Vilnius to put together and give an overall picture.

This section describes not only the issue of “Promoting Synergy between Business and Education, training and employability” but also the related topics presented in the workshop by participants.

The issue of training graduates and students with skills and knowledge that are most relevant to employers seemed to be prevalent in most of the participants’ countries.

1. One of the objectives of the study visits programme is to exchange examples of good practice among hosts and participants. Therefore this section identifies and describes all aspects that in the group’s view make programmes, initiatives and projects worth exploring as demonstrated in the presentations from host and participating countries.
The Table below summarises all good practices that the study team learnt during the visit (both from the hosts and from one another). It details were based some presentations in the workshop that are relevant to the practices in those countries.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>title of the project/programme/initiative</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>name of the institution that implements it (if possible, provide a website)</th>
<th>contact person (if possible) who presented the programme to the group</th>
<th>whom the project/programme/initiative addresses</th>
<th>what features of the project/programme/initiative make it an example of good practice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Lithuanian Innovation Policy             | Lithuania        | Ministry of Economy of the Republic of Lithuania                          | Dr. Almantas Danilevicius, Director of Innovation and Knowledge society department | Maritime Valley (Klaipeda) Nemunas Valley (Kaunas) Santaka Valley (Kaunas) Saulėtekis Valley (Vilnius) Santara Valley (Vilnius) | • Innovative and clusterized traditional industry  
• High value-added services sectors  
• High-tech sectors  
• Transnational Regional Cooperation  
• Innovation vouchers |
| Field Visit - Northtown Technology Park  | Lithuania        | Tadas Armonas, project manager Northtown Technology Park                  | Companie and start ups in Lithuania                                  | Companies and start ups in Lithuania          | • NTP Virtual office- Different companies can corporate and Complementarity  
• Hubs and virtual offices - new companies to start up to at a lower cost  
• Opportunity for networking |
| The Positive Quality spiral              | Denmark          | Aarhus Business College                                                  | Hans Th. Hjorth Educational Consultant                              | College graduates in Denmark                  | • Sandwich programme, Students are encouraged to ask the problems in their companies  
• Lower levels of employees are actively involved in solving problems and improving businesses |
| Fair of students ideas                  | Lithuania        | International School of Law and Business (ISLB), Vilnius                  | Dr Raimundas Kalesykas Dean of the Faculty of Law                    | Students of ISLB                              | • An opportunity for students to meet representatives form different business  
• A chance to test business skills and sell their ideas  
• May find job opportunities by demonstrating their skills |
| Education-industry collaboration: development of internship models | Lithuania | Printing Industries association | Brīgita Balcūnaite, President Assistant, Printing Industries Association of Lithuania | Students of ISLB and                          | They have three parties in the internship models - students, mentor and tutor (enterprises)  
Some companies pay the students under the internship  
An opportunity for students to have a proper work experience  
Prepare the students for professional life |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Mentor</th>
<th>Mentees</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Greece   | National Bank of Greece (NBG) - American College of Thessaloniki (ACT) | Dr. Costas Klimis - Senior Marketing Analyst, NBG - Adj. Professor of Marketing, ACT | Wider public (i.e. adults & kids) - small business owners & self-employed - Greece | - i-bank store: Concept store that brings electronic services to brick-and-mortar. It includes educational & Corporate Social Responsibility element.
- Fosters innovation through the organization of annual contests with the participation of 7 Universities.
- Connection with the younger generation, that act as “volunteer educators” to teach grown ups about use of internet and computers (“Deixitous” project to bridge the digital gap).
- Change of perception of the Banks among younger generations. |
| UK       | Enterprise, Innovation and Sustainability Staffordshire University UK | Dr. Stephen Malone Academic Group Leader | | - Universities fill the gap that has been left by the abolition of support agencies such as the RDAs and the Business Links.
- Consultants were paid by the government and then by the clients but now University positioned consultants provide a mix of pro-bono and paid-for work.
- Initial advice is free for start ups and select others, develop relationships, improve entrepreneurs knowledge.
- Build credibility for University.
- University consultants have added advantages such as independence, impartiality and also university resources. |
| Portugal | Vocational School of Aveiro, Portugal | Ana Ribeiro Deputy to the Principal, AEVA | VET students, ex-students, unemployment women, handicapped people | - Information and nurturing (entrepreneurship and business creation)
- Maturation and finalization (of the business plan, giving support in the preparation and elaboration of business plan)
- Test and experimentation (of business ideas, by giving support to the test of a business idea). |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language Skills and Career</th>
<th>Hungary</th>
<th>Juhász Gyula Faculty of Education, University of Szeged, 6725 Szeged, Hattyas sor 10, Hungary</th>
<th>Zsuzsanna Gál, Language Instructor, Center for Vocational Training, Further Education and Distance Learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>TISZK – Regional Integrated Vocational Centres</strong></td>
<td><em>TISZK – Regional Integrated Vocational Centres</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. development of infrastructure, mobility of teachers and pupils, responding to the needs of the labour market in a more efficient way 2. integration of the dispersed school system in order to utilize funds in a better way (EU and national)</td>
<td><em>1. development of infrastructure, mobility of teachers and pupils, responding to the needs of the labour market in a more efficient way 2. integration of the dispersed school system in order to utilize funds in a better way (EU and national)</em></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>RFKB – Regional Development and Training Committee – regulation of demand of the labour market and the supply of VET schools</strong></td>
<td><em>RFKB – Regional Development and Training Committee – regulation of demand of the labour market and the supply of VET schools</em></td>
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</table>

*You can describe as many good practices as you find necessary. You can add rows to the table.*
2. To promote and support policy related to “Promoting Synergy between Business and Education”, discussions about such policies and their implementation are included below:

2.1 It is intended to cover the approaches taken by participating countries (both host and participants’) all facilities and issues related to “Promoting Synergy between Business and Education”. The participants are not all directly working in the business schools that handle the above topics, but all work in related areas such as e-learning, VET and CPD.

a. Under the internationalisation assistance programme, e-learning is offered to innovative SMEs in Lithuania. The programme aims to design an e-learning package in order to develop individual and organisational competencies. In comparison to this, in the UK very few assistance programmes are in place currently, the e-learning industry is driven by the private sector investments.

b. Hubs and virtual offices - Croatia, institutions have incubators, but not accessible for all such as start ups. Hubs help companies of all sizes, especially small ones, and young entrepreneurs from college.

c. Danish model, PQS (Positive Quality Spiral), it deals with quality development, management of changes and project work. They provide a longer period, systematic approach with more feedback on effectiveness. Many participants thought it is a good model to be implemented in capturing problems that happen on the shop floor of companies that may not be addressed by the management properly.

d. iBank store of national bank of Greece (NBG) in Greece has a better social responsibility, communicates with young people in informal ways. Opportunity for education and promotion of innovation, creating innovative platform of communication. Lifelong learning program for community provided by the bank. It also acts as a venue for cultural participation in business and banking activities. This practice is not prevalent in many other participants countries, even though in UK there are SME education supports offered by Goldman Sachs.

e. Adult participation in CPD in Lithuania and EU 27 countries are declining. The key reasons cited were lack of funding and support for companies to have a structured programme. It is felt that participants share the same views about the issue in their own countries.

f. Transition to the labour market by Escola Profissional de Aveiro and the way the students develop projects according to the enterprises needs. Apart from the 420 hours of working practice during the 3 years course, the students, when needed and according to their technical profile and what they are studying at that time, go to enterprises once or twice a week for the development of these projects and do not attend the technical subjects classes with their mates. Instead, they are evaluated for the work done at the enterprises. Feedback is given to the teachers by the tutor at the enterprises.
2.2 Challenges faced by participating countries (including host) in their efforts to implement policies related to the issues discussed in the same order is presented below. It is also identified if these challenges are common to any countries and if not any reasons for not having similar challenges.

a. E-learning is an emerging area in many participants countries, however there are limitations due to interactivity, availability of technology and infrastructure (e.g. fast broadband), etc.

b. At times, it is felt those hubs and incubators are not fully utilised. Due to cultural expectations (such as more stable income and risk free life), graduates are expected to find a job with big companies and not become entrepreneurs.

c. Entrepreneurs mindsets, they don’t expect academic help. It is felt, even though entrepreneurs are obsessive learners, some may not have had formal business training and their time commitment to their business prevents them from accessing support from individuals and universities who genuinely possess better knowledge.

d. In Croatia, a common challenge is to make internship useful for all three parties, students, businesses and university.
- No sense of urgency to finish education and start businesses.
- Making internship model effective for all parties.

2.3 Name and describe effective and innovative solutions you have identified that participating countries (both host and participants) apply to address the challenges mentioned in question 2.2. Please mention specific country examples.

a. E-learning is a great way of providing flexible and affordable coaching to entrepreneurs and businesses. It also provides the opportunity for entrepreneurs in formulating the study requirements and programs whilst the academic to learn to offer exactly what the businesses need.

b. Financing businesses is important to encourage more graduates and young professionals to start-up businesses. Innovative approach of financing start ups (like the iBank annual innovation contest of NBG in Greece), hubs and virtual offices in Lithuania and elsewhere must be encouraged even more.

c. Denmark - Implementing PQS (Positive Quality Spiral). Ten point description is recommended for participants countries in translating the employee grievances and feedbacks on problems in cood of practicing this is by carrying out a desk study on needs in each country and the benefits the method will bring.

d. Social responsibility of banks like playing an educational role for the community i.e. “deixtous” project of National bank of Greece, creates a positive image about the purpose of financial institutions. In order to implement this across the other countries, it may be necessary for banks to see their functions differently than being profit oriented in all their functions.
e. CPDs are currently very common in countries like the UK, however, the initiatives, such as in Lithuania, to support and monitor the purpose and effectiveness as an independent body may be an effective way to practice CPD.

2.4 **Assessment of the transferability of policies and practices.** Could any examples of good practice presented in this report be applied and transferred to other countries? If so, why? If not, why not?

Some of the practices and policies that are transferable and recommended as a good practice for participants countries are discussed above. These practices include:

- E-learning, a flexible and affordable method of training employees and students. With high broadband speed and young people becoming familiar with technology, there is no reason why it cannot be practised widely across Europe.
- PQS - A model used for capturing the employees views on any problems in organisation and offering a structured solution.
- iBankstore of NBG - The model if replicated by financial institutions across the EU will change the image of banks.
- SIAP Department hold at Escola Profissional de Aveiro, whose main purposes are: promote the relationship between EPA and the enterprises of Aveiro region; promote the involvement of business in the updating and development of EPA training practices; adapt the school curriculum to the needs of the business in the region; encourage the inclusion of students in the business of the region within its area of training; follow the career of the students after insertion in the labour market; create an observatory for the students' professional paths; implement internships in companies in the region with the development of professional projects in accordance with the professional profile of students; promote the development of vocational and personal skills in a real context; establish of partnerships to develop specific projects with the view to provide services and, at the same time, aiming the development of individual projects adapted to individual profile of students; development of activities according to specific needs of companies with definition and selection of the professional profile appropriated for the achievement of their objectives; develop activities in partnership aiming the development of entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial skills in all actors involved;
- The Evaluation process of the work practice at Escola Profissional de Aveiro: Tutor (at the enterprise) and mentor (teacher of the technical area); three visits to the company; establishment of a protocol; interim and final evaluation; final report by the student; (Teacher, enterprise, student and sometimes the family are involved in the process)
3. Creating networks of experts, building partnerships for future projects is another important objective of the study visit programme.

All participants agreed there are benefits to be gained by creating a common e-forum to discuss the issues faced in implementing any of the above lessons and other opportunities that every participant’s organisations may come across.

It is felt that the common topic improving the synergy between business and education is a common interest for public and private organisations. The related areas of interests are e-learning, CPD, VET that are more prevalent across the participants’ countries could benefit from future partnerships and collaborations between members.

All participants are part of the linked-in network and the above interest will be discussed and viewed shared through an interest group.
TO SUM UP

4. What is the most interesting/useful information that the group believes should be communicated to others? To whom, do you think, this information will be of most interest?

The group view is all participants’ countries can benefit greatly by cross sharing of information and practices that we were presented with during the study visit. Most of the interesting aspects were discussed above.

The information may benefit other Business schools and businesses that what to their employees to be trained of skills that directly benefit the company.

II Organisation of the visit

This part of the report will not be published but it will be made available to the organiser and will be used by national agencies and Cedefop to monitor and improve implementation of the study visits programme.

We recognise the value of on going feedback as a way of ensuring that the programme is at all times a responsive and dynamic initiative, meeting the needs of its various participants and target audiences. In this section you are invited to give us your feedback on several factors that, in our opinion, contribute to an effective visit.

1. Discuss within the group and check if you agree or disagree with the following statements. Please mark only one box (☑) that expresses most closely the opinion of the entire group. Please use Question 2 of this section to elaborate on your responses, if needed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>All agree</th>
<th>Most agree</th>
<th>Most disagree</th>
<th>All disagree</th>
<th>Not applicable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>e.g.</td>
<td>The size of the group was good.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1.</td>
<td>The programme of the visit followed the description in the catalogue.</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.2.</td>
<td>There was a balance between theoretical and practical sessions.</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<td>1.3.</td>
<td>Presentations and field visits were linked in a coherent and complementary manner.</td>
<td>☑</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>All agree</td>
<td>Most agree</td>
<td>Most disagree</td>
<td>All disagree</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.4.</td>
<td>The topic was presented from the perspectives of the following actors of the education and training system in the host country:</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4.1.</td>
<td>government and policy-makers</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.4.2.</td>
<td>social partners</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.4.3.</td>
<td>heads of institutions</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4.4.</td>
<td>teachers and trainers</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4.5.</td>
<td>students/trainees</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.4.6.</td>
<td>users of services</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.5.</td>
<td>There was enough time allocated to participants’ presentations.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.6.</td>
<td>The background documentation on the theme provided before the visit helped to prepare for the visit.</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.7.</td>
<td>Most of the group received a programme well in advance.</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.8.</td>
<td>The information provided before the visit about transportation and accommodation was useful.</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.9.</td>
<td>The organiser accompanied the group during the entire programme.</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.10.</td>
<td>The size of the group was appropriate.</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.11.</td>
<td>The group comprised a good mixture of participants with diverse professional backgrounds.</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.12.</td>
<td>There were enough opportunities for interaction with representatives of the host organisations.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.13.</td>
<td>There was enough time allocated for discussion within the group.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.14.</td>
<td>The Cedefop study visits website provided</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>All agree</td>
<td>Most agree</td>
<td>Most disagree</td>
<td>All disagree</td>
<td>Not applicable</td>
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<tr>
<td>information that helped to prepare for the visit.</td>
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</table>

2. If you have any comments on the items 1.1. - 1.14 above, please write them in the box below.

1.5 It was felt more time during and after the presentation would have been better even by reducing the number of related topics from host country.

### III Summary

1. Having summarised all your reflections and impressions, please indicate how satisfied you are with your participation in the study visit. Indicate the number of participants for each category, e.g.

- Very satisfied: 10
- Satisfied
- Somewhat satisfied
- Not satisfied
- Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied

2. What elements and aspects of the study visits do you think could be changed or improved?

1. More time for discussion.
2. Visit to a VET school would have been better
3. More group work for any solutions for issues raised in presentations
4. Formalising time allocated for group report writing.

3. If there is anything else you would like to write about that is not included in the above questions, please feel free to write below or attach a separate sheet.

None, Thank you.

**THANK YOU!**

Please submit the report to Cedefop (studyvisits@cedefop.europa.eu) within one month of the visit.