



European project

"STRATEGIC ALLIANCES FOR QUALITY DUAL VET AND INTERNATIONAL MOBILITIES"

#doALLVET

PEER-LEARNING ACTIVITY C4

VET in Finland and follow-up on the Road Map for establishing strategic alliances for international mobilities

On-line, February 2021

















Contents

1.	Objectives	2
2.	Virtual Tour of Samiedu (15 th February 2021)	3
	Samiedu Virtual Tour	3
	Samiedu Vocational College: Key elements	
	Tips to organise a Virtual Tour	5
3.	VET in Finland: implementing the recent reform (22 nd February 2021)	6
	Some facts on the city of Savonlinna	6
	VET in Finland	6
	Presenting the VET System in Finland and the 2018 reform	6
4.	Follow-up on the Road Map for establishing strategic alliances for international mo (23 rd February 2021)	
	VET centres involved in the project until now:	12
	Main areas of interest among partners within this project	13
	Progress until February 2021	14
	Next activities	16
	Activity C3 – Poland	16
	Activity C5 – Germany	17
	Team Management Meeting 2	17
5.	List of participants	18
6.	Evaluation of the activity:	0















1. Objectives

According to the working plan, the purpose of activity C4 is to >>

- ✓ Understand the VET model of Finland.
- Discussion on key topics selected in the project aligned with the EU Recommendation on a European Framework for Quality and Effective Apprenticeships
- 7 Follow-up and working discussion on practical aspects of the international mobility strategic alliance.
- Practical discussion on how to promote and organise students' mobilities among partners for the school year 2021-2022, with special attention on how to promote international mobilities of students from vulnerable groups or with special needs.

Thus, the expected results of this activity are to have>>

- Number of conclusions and key ideas on the regions of Finland in relation with the key topics selected in the project.
- ✓ Summary of conclusions and key ideas on practical aspects of international mobility strategic alliance.
- ✓ Summary of conclusions and key ideas to promote and organise students' mobilities among partners for the school year 2021-2022.

Considering that the project has had to readapt due to the health crisis caused by COVID-19, activity C4 will be organised before activity C3 and will focus on >>

- 7 Facilitating the connection between centres from the countries/regions of the project's partners.
- → Experiencing a virtual tour of Samiedu.
- Understanding the VET model of Finland, in particular the recent reform and how it is being put into practice from the perspective of a VET centre such as Samiedu.
- 7 Following-up on the Road Map for establishing strategic alliances for international mobilities

To achieve this, this activity will be organised through 3 on-line meetings:

- **⊅** DAY 1: 15th February 2021, focused on "Virtual Tour of Samiedu".
- DAY 2: 22nd February 2021, focused on "VET in Finland: implementing the recent reform".
- DAY 3: 23rd February 2021, focused on "Follow-up on the Road Map for establishing strategic alliances for international mobilities.















2. Virtual Tour of Samiedu (15th February 2021)

Samiedu Virtual Tour

Samiedu is a public VET provider located in Savonlinna, in the East region of Finland. Every year they have nearly 1,600 students and 180 staff members distributed in their three campuses. It provides more than 50 different qualifications, including vocational upper secondary qualifications, further qualifications, and specialist qualifications. It is recognised as a high-quality centre and it has received four times the National Quality Award of Finland.

Samiedu receives students from all over Finland. In initial VET courses, students come mainly from nearby regions, but in the upper courses their composition is much more diverse. There are also students taking online courses. Right now, close to 70% of their students are adults.



In this session, Anne-Mari Behm and Päivi Uusitalo from Samiedu Vocational College, guided partners and participant centres from Castilla y León and Portugal in a virtual tour at Samiedu School. This visit was prepared by Samiedu as a tool for virtual internationalisation, in which they can give a first-hand experience to virtual visitors, show them their facilities and introduce them their teachers, courses and main activities.

During the visit, partners and collaborators visited Samiedu's facilities (including classrooms, workshops, restaurant, garage...), talked to teachers and staff, and listened to different videos and presentations. The session included a rich discussion with many questions from participant















centres of Castilla y Leon and Portugal. Next, a brief summary of the key elements discussed is presented.







Samiedu Vocational College: Key elements

Flexible & personalised pathways

Organised in modules

Work-based learning

Internationalisation and mobilities

7 Flexible and personalised pathways: Finland's VET system is based in modules and skills. Learning pathways are personalised and flexible, they depend on the student working experience, other studies and skills acquired. Accordingly, the courses' length is not fixed.















Students that join initial VET at sixteen after mandatory educations normally stay for three years until they complete their VET studies. But for those who join after having working experience or having completed other non-mandatory studies the amount of time it takes to graduate varies and may even be reduced to a few months.

- **7** Constant admission: Students can start their studies at any time during the year. This requires teachers' continued involvement in skills' evaluation and guidance.
- 7 Finland's VET system is based in modules and skills: Studies are organised in modules students can choose, thus creating their own learning pathway. Classes are normally formed by 15 to 25 students, and they vary from one to another depending on the modules the student is taking. Flexibility is the key element.
- → Work-based learning and practical learning: Samiedu collaborates with companies and other educational centres to provide work-based learning to its students. It also has its own workshops, garage, beauty saloon, restaurant, bakery, and other facilities, where students put into practice what they learn working with real customers. In other studies, such as Forest Machinery Operator, students work with simulators to acquire real-life experience.
- An important issue is that students do not get paid for this work, although they have access to government study grants.
- **Guidance and counselling** are an important part of the teachers' mission. There is an orientation course for students who just graduated from mandatory studies and do not know yet what to study. It is a one-year course in which they receive guidance, take basic skills' courses such as maths or English, and can get involved in different learning areas.
- **7 High degree of internationalisation:** Close to 90% of students learn two different languages, and 10% of students get involved in mobilities to other countries. English courses are adapted to the working area of students.
- International mobilities: they have mobility programs for students and teachers. Normally, around 70 students and 15 teachers are sent abroad, and near 40 students and 15 teachers are received from other countries. Once the health situation improves, they carry on with mobilities. English is the language used for mobilities. Exchange students that engage in work-based learning would, normally, not be paid.

Tips to organise a Virtual Tour

- 7 They use the digital tool "Thinglink", a Finish educational app to animate a presentation using 360° videos and photos. Links and other contents can also be added. Other 360 viewer is marzipano.net.
- 7 Videos and photos were taken by Anne-Mari Behm. To adapt them she used "Adobe 360".
- 7 The first time it takes quite some time, 20 hours estimated.
- 7 It could be considered to prepare a how-to guide with instructions to organise a Virtual Tour, depending on the interest for participants.
- **7** Tip: Keep it simple!













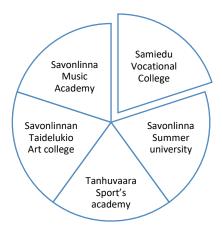


3. VET in Finland: implementing the recent reform (22nd February 2021)

Some facts on the city of Savonlinna

By Anna-Kristiina Mikkonen, President of the City Council.

City of Savonlinna Educational environment:



Key projects for the city:

- 1. Improving transportation connections: International border-crossing point with Russia.
- **2. Technology Park Noheva**: Creating an attractive environment for businesses in technology industry, their support businesses, start ups, research and engineer training
- 3. Top Five Implementations in Technology:
 - Center of Bioproduct Techniques: The value chain covers the new technology solutions in tree breeding, manufacturing processes of fiber based bioproducts and special products as well as water control and circular economy solutions in forest industry.
 - **▶** Fast mixture effects and chemistry control in new cardboard and biocomposite products.
 - **7** Forest Industry wastewater and sewage sludge treatment.
 - → Microcrystalline pulp and its implements AaltoCell.
 - **尽** Carbon dioxide collected from flue gases to be exploited into circular economy products.

VET in Finland

Presenting the VET System in Finland and the 2018 reform









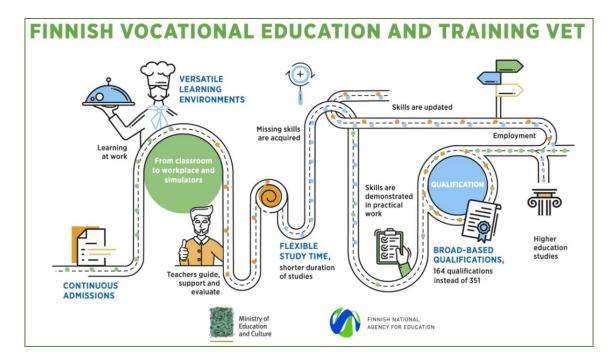






- → General aspects of education in Finland:
 - ▶ Teachers are highly trained and feel highly valued.
 - Annual instruction time is low.
 - ▶ There are almost no differences between schools.
 - Compulsory education is free of charge and in education in general has low costs.
 - Focus on learning rather than on testing. No ranking.
 - Focus on support and guidance.
 - Non-selective
 - Flexible grouping

Finnish Vocational Education and Training:



Close cooperation with the labour market

Work-based learning

Flexible learning pathways

No dead-ends

One of the key aspects of the VET system is that it focuses on **on-going learning** and not on testing. It is based on flexible learning pathways with no dead-ends and based on the national qualification system and accreditation of competences.

Other interesting features are that there is **continuous admission** throughout the year and the study time is flexible, depending on the personal competences and the learning plan designed. This plan is developed during the first two weeks and later on can be revised. To identify personal















skills and background and create this study path there has to be a lot of involvement of the teacher.

Studies are goal-oriented and practical. **Skills demonstrations** for evaluation are based in practical tasks, and frequently they are carried out at the workplace. A demonstration is usually carried out for every unit or module of the qualification. This assessment is with the teacher and a working life representative. It is surprising that there are no guidelines or regulations on the duration of the assessment!

Meals are provided to the students at the campus, and the **grant system** allows every student over 18 years old to receive a grant, the amount depending on the personal or parental income:

The **funding system** of the centres is organised as follows:

- ▶ 50% Basic funding.
- ▶ 35% **Performance-based funding**: Completed units and qualifications.
- ▶ 15% Effectiveness-based funding: employment or placement in further studies after the education as well as the feedback collected from students and working life.

The share of strategic funding is at least 4 % of the appropriation for VET.



This system encourages to:

- Target education and qualifications in accordance with competence needs
- Intensify study processes.
- Redirect education to fields where labour force is
- -Ensure that education corresponds to the needs of working life and quality is high.
- Provide readiness for further studies.
- Feedback from students is important: it relates to funding received and it is public.

Adult education is highly popular in Finland, and up-skilling and re-skilling are becoming more and more important. As a matter of fact, 70% of Samiedu students are currently adults, and this number is growing in recent years. The centre has a focus on life-long learning and continuous training in key competences.















Finish VET teachers are mostly required a master's degree, and specific studies to become a principal. Teaching it is a very respected and well-considered profession by society, and they are also very well paid, the amount depending on the study-level.

Personal competence plan

The 2018 VET reform aimed at improving the organization of vocational education to cater more effectively for learner individual study paths.

A personal competence development plan is now drawn up for each VET learner at the beginning of the VET programme (both in initial and continuing), usually within the first weeks.

The plan is drawn up free of charge by the teacher or guidance counsellor together with the learner and, when applicable, a representative from the world of work. It has to be updated during studies, as needed.

It includes:

- The plan includes information on various aspects: identification and recognition of prior learning; how and which missing skills are acquired based on the learner's current competence and the qualification requirements; how competence demonstrations and other demonstrations of skills are organised; and what guidance and support may be needed.
- The plan includes information on necessary supportive measures, such as language, mathematics and digital skills training. Based on this approach, learners only study what they do not yet know. Their prior learning and work experience are assessed at the beginning of studies by the teacher and/or the guidance counsellor. The qualification requirements are criteria for the assessment.

The time it takes to complete a qualification is further determined by the choices the learner makes and how learning is acquired. It is also possible to complete only part of a qualification. In this case, the learner will receive a certificate of one unit/module (or several units/modules).

Assessment of skills

Studies are goal-oriented and practical. Skills demonstrations for evaluation are based in practical tasks, and frequently they are carried out at the workplace. A demonstration is usually carried out for every unit or module of the qualification.

Competence is assessed in relation to the vocational and competence requirements provided in the national qualification requirements. The assessment is done with the learner, teacher and working life representative.

It is surprising that there are no guidelines or regulations on the duration of the assessment!















Once the competences of all units which are necessary to complete the qualification are demonstrated successfully, the qualification is completed.

Quality management

- The development of quality assurance in VET in Finland is strategic, on-going and comprehensive.
- The Finnish National Agency for Education supports training providers in the continuing development of quality assurance and contributes to development of quality assurance in VET in cooperation with the EQAVET (European Quality Assurance in Vocational Education and Training) network and other NRPs.
- **7** The National Agency for Education also disseminates good practices and information.
- So-called working life committees contribute to the quality assurance of organisation of skills demonstrations and to the evaluation of skills and competences.
- As mentioned, National student feedback surveys are carried out to find out how satisfied students are with vocational education and training provision and its effectiveness. The results are published in the Finnish education statistics service. Student feedback is an important part of Effectiveness based funding, and the response rate affects the funding amount.

Local autonomy in education is extensive in Finland, and there is no inspection system in place.

Education providers are responsible for the quality of their own operations and may decide on the system of quality assurance they choose to employ.

eLearning at Samiedu



eEDU is the project for developing e-Learning at Samiedu. For its implementation they count with a Project manager and 3 eteachers at Samiedu , 2 elearning specialists and 2 eteachers at Xamk South Eastern Finland University of Applied Sciences.

Its basic goals are:















- Developing a simple, user friendly, scalable and accessible online learning platform for our students → Integrative approach.
- 7 Improving and developing the existing LMS and its use at Samiedu.
- Improving our teachers' and students' digital competence skills and teachers' digipedagogical skills together with Xamk.
- Creating learning and teaching materials using digital resources e.g., podcasts, videos, 360 pictures/ videos, interactive learning tasks.

Other goals:

- Adopting a multidisciplinary approach in creating digital teaching and learning content: Minicourses designed both for higher education students as well as VET students.
- **7** Facilitating the progression to higher education for Samiedu's students.
- Increasing cooperation and collaboration with workplaces in creating digital learning materials e.g. podcasts, 360 videos.
- 7 Increasing collaboration with Xamk in offering digipedagogical training for teachers.
- **7** Building a joint production support for digital content creation with Xamk.

Digital Learning Platforms used:

- ▶ Moodle (version 3.9)
- Microsoft Teams (and O365), integration with Moodle.
- Virtual platforms ThingLink
- Software, applications depending on the field.
- Simulators e.g., forestry, logistics.

Guidance and support in digital learning environments

- Online lessons in Teams blended learning solutions.
- **7** "Meet your teacher" sessions: possibility to pop up and receive online guidance.
- Collective and individual feedback to students in Teams and Moodle
- **7** Possibility to contact the teacher via Moodle or Teams, by email or by phone.
- Use of channels, chat and discussion forums in Moodle/ Teams: for teachers' guidance and peer support.

Plans for the future:

- **7** Testing (a) digital application (s) to demonstrate skills in competence demonstrations at practical work and to document professional development.
- Studying more learning analytics tools to follow students' activity and learning outcomes in Moodle (e.g., Intelliboard, some AI app).









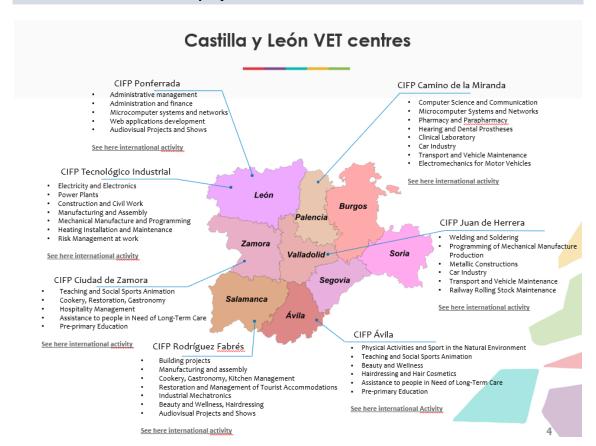






- **B**enchmarking and testing educational chatbots to increase students' engagement and to provide support.
- Offering guidance and training for teachers and staff members in producing multimedia teaching content e.g., make your own podcast webinar, digipedagogical program at Xamk in the autumn 2021.
- 4. Follow-up on the Road Map for establishing strategic alliances for international mobilities (23rd February 2021)

VET centres involved in the project until now:







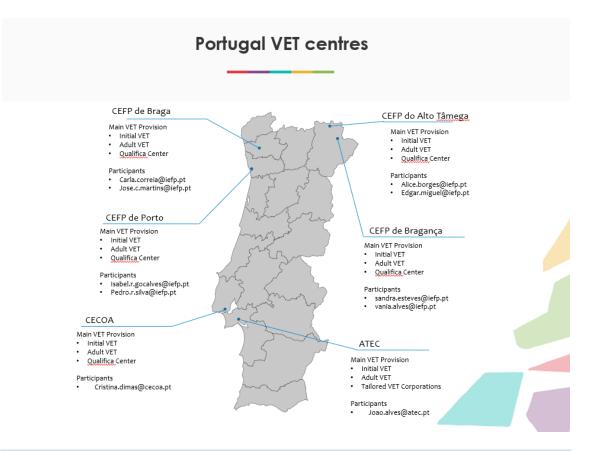












Main areas of interest among partners within this project

SETTING-UP STRATEGIC ALLIANCES FOR QUALITY VET & DUAL VET AND INTERNATIONALISATION:

- The development of **virtual mobilities** and other formulas of **virtual internationalisation**.
- **Establishing stable relations between VET Centres as well as with private companies and business** at home and abroad to increase the number of mobilities of students, teachers and staff in the future.
- Exploring digital learning methods like eLearning or b-Learning and combining them with practical learning activities.
- Sharing good practices and innovative experiences and improving VET and Dual VET quality















Progress until February 2021

Common objectives & interests	Progress
 ► Virtual mobilities and other formulas of virtual international activities ► Establishing stable relations between VET Centres & businesses from the partners' countries/regions 	 ✓ 7 VET centres from CyL are involved in the project ✓ 6 VET centres from PT are involved in the project ✓ 2 companies from CyL have been visited (Ibersnacks, Durex) ✓ 2 companies from PT have presented their experience (Portuguese Railway Cluster, Mobinov)
EXCHANGE OF KNOWLEDGE & INNOVATION • Exploring digital learning methods like eLearning or b-Learning and their combination with practical learning activities • Sharing good practices and innovative experiences	 ☑ 2 VET centres from CyL were visited (Medina del Campo and Salamanca) ☑ 3 VET centres from PT have shared their experience in VET and internationalisation ☑ Partners have participated in a Virtual Tour of the Finnish VET Centre Samiedu ☑ Finish VET Centre Samiedu has shared their experience in quality, initial assessment of skills and student's pathways and eLearning and innovations ☑ Several EU projects have been identified that could be contacted to create synergies to share learning & experience ☑ Several EU documents have been identified to help standardise VET mobilities to improve their quality

What is working well and what can be improved?

What do you think is working better in this project?



Cooperation between the parter network	All is running smoothly considering the circumstances.	Good understanding and relationship among partners.
The virtual activities	The common will to get the best and work together even in difficult conditions	The virtual communication is well. Partners are more used to use it as a tool. We make progresses to identify interested institutions for the cooperation. Now we should search for an
Communication		oportunity to establish ways of communication among them















What do you think can be improved in this project?



Everything is fine.	Implementing the cooperation between the vet centers.	Detailed activities agrnda sent early!
Detect the barrierrs to get to the goals	Virtual activities	Communication among the partners and pathways how to cooperate in times where
	virtual activities	physical contacts are not possible

How interested are you in the following EU projects





Next steps

- ▶ **Select EU projects** of interest that could be potentially relevant to create synergies: NETINVET project has been the best valued and Miguel Baiao from IEFP has direct contact to the project managers and will stablish contact to arrange a common activity.
- ▶ Encourage international English activities >> Put in touch the English teachers of the centres interested:
 - VET centre from Braga (PT) is interested in participating >> Trainees in Logistics.
 - o ZSTK
 - o Samiedu
 - o CyL: CIFP Tecnologico Industrial, and others (to be defined).
 - o SBH: to be defined















Partners will organise a "coffee break" for English teachers to get in touch and define the contents of the activity and facilitate the design of the activity. Tentative time for the meeting: FI proposes before 3 p.m. The activity will be organised between English teacher as a pilot and later could be open to other language teachers or teachers of other courses.

Finnish partners will coordinate the first activity and Castilla y Leon will give support when necessary.

- Encourage the preparation of virtual tours >> based on the Finnish example, teachers and students from other VET centres could prepare theirs.
 - o In CyL one centre will prepare a virtual visit based on the Finish experience.
 - o PT will see if there are centres interested in preparing this kind of visit.
 - o PL will see if this is possible.
 - DE will do the same.

Recommendation of Samiedu: Do not make it very complicated. I.e., It is not necessary to make a video or to use 360 pictures, a power point with videos and photos would make it.

Reinforce cooperation between centres >>

Skills' training: Sharing training courses on specific skills relevant for partners and VET providers, such as 'Setting up business' or 'Health & safety'.

Collaboration between centres that are getting prepared for skills' competitions (Currently Portugal is preparing students to compete in digital skills.)

Virtual activity on national/regional cuisine and how to prepare one recipe or on tourism

Plan an activity related with mechatronic or international commerce.

Present KA2 Erasmus projects

Next activities

Activity C3 - Poland

Dates agreed and tentative planning of the activity:

Day 1 19th April, Monday

- •Tentative: Virtual Tour:
- Including courses (Mechatronics)
- City tour
- •*Experience in virtual learning/tools

Day 2 26th April, Monday

- Polish VET system
- Representative of University of Lublin >> Cooperation between VET and university, and business sector
- •Focus on SME cooperation and innovation?

Day 3

- Sharing experience on
- projects executed (i.e. student internships with Germany)
- •Follow-up between partners















Activity C5 – Germany

Dates proposed:

- 9th June, Wednesday, 10am-1pm GMT+1.
- 14th June, Monday, 10am-1pm GMT+1
- 15th June, Tuesday, 10am-1pm GMT+1

Team Management Meeting 2

Date agreed to carry out the second Team Management Meeting:

• 24th March, Wednesday, 11am-12:30 pm GMT+1

A tentative programme will soon be sent to all partners.















5. List of participants

Participant Name	Sending Organisation
Mr. Agustín F. Sigüenza Molina	Consejería de Educación de Castilla y León
Ms. María Altamira Hernando Lara	Consejería de Educación de Castilla y León
Mr. Oscar García Delgado	Consejería de Educación de Castilla y León
Mr. Pedro Correia Santos	IEFP - Instituto de Emprego y Formação Profissional
Mr. Miguel Baião Santos	IEFP - Instituto de Emprego y Formação Profissional
Ms. Susana Luis	IEFP - Instituto de Emprego y Formação Profissional
Ms. Anne-Mari Behm	Itä-Savon Koulutuskuntayhtymä
Ms. Hanne Liukko	Itä-Savon Koulutuskuntayhtymä
Timo Welsby	Itä-Savon Koulutuskuntayhtymä
Paivi Uutsitalo	Itä-Savon Koulutuskuntayhtymä
Sana Laukkarinen	Itä-Savon Koulutuskuntayhtymä
Anna Kristiina	Itä-Savon Koulutuskuntayhtymä
Jonna Kokkonen	Itä-Savon Koulutuskuntayhtymä
Ms. Angela Bender	Stiftung Bildung & Handwerk
Ms Gabriele Stampa	Stiftung Bildung & Handwerk
Ms. Anna Wawruch-Lis	
WS. Allila Wawi ucii-Lis	Zespol Szkol Transportowo-Komunikacyjnych im. Tadeusza Kosciuszki w Lublinie
Centers	
Ms. Sandra Esteves	CEFP de Bragança
Ms. Vânia Cristina Alves	CEFP de Bragança
Ms. Carla Correia	CEFP de Braga
Mr. Jose Costa Martins	CEFP de Braga
Ms. Isabel Gonçalves	CEFP do Porto
Mr. Pedro Silva	CEFP do Porto
Ms. Ana Alice Borges	CEFP do Alto Tâmega
Mr. Edgar Miguel	CEFP do Alto Tâmega
Ms. Cristina Dimas	CECOA
Mr. João Alves	ATEC
José Jiménez Sierra	CIFP Ávila
María Lazar Gómez	CIFP Ávila
Mónica Garcia Rubio	CIFP Teconológico Industrial
Pilar García García	CIFP Teconológico Industrial
Enrique Blanco González	CIFP Teconológico Industrial
Beatriz Aguado Otero	CIFP Teconológico Industrial
Juan Jose Martínez Díez	CIFP Ponferrada
Nuria Rodríguez García	CIFP Ponferrada
Ramón Polanco	CIFP Camino de la Miranda













Elvira Alonso Merino	CIFP Camino de la Miranda
Mª Elena Montejo González	CIFP Rodríguez Fabrés
Marta Borreguero Gómez	CIFP Rodríguez Fabrés
Miguel Ángel Macho	CIFP Juan de Herrera
Carmen	CIFP Juan de Herrera
Inmaculada Gallego	CIFP Ciudad de Zamora
Mª Soledad García González	CIFP Ciudad de Zamora





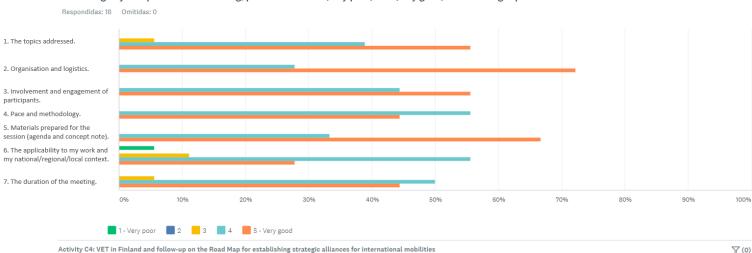






6. Evaluation of the activity:

According to your opinion on the meeting, please rate from 1 (very poor) to 5 (very good) the following aspects:













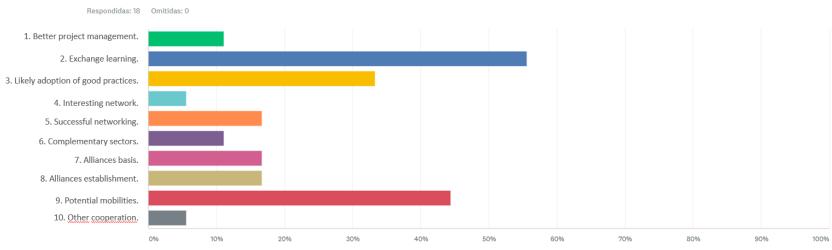


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According to your opinion on the meeting, please choose two sentences from the 10 below that summarise your experience in this activity:



 $Activity \ C4: \ VET \ in \ Finland \ and \ follow-up \ on \ the \ Road \ Map \ for \ establishing \ strategic \ alliances \ for \ international \ mobilities$















This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.









