

At the first UIC World Congress on Railway Training in Madrid (2011) a study sponsored by the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop) was presented. This study reviewed methods for training of vocational trainers and provided a comparison between these methods and their day-to-day working realities. The study, which included a vision for the future of Vocational Education and Training (VET), stimulated the UIC Expertise Development Platform (EDP) to start a research project for the rail training sector.

At the second UIC World Congress on Railway Training in St. Pölten (2013) the first results of the UIC research (literature review and benchmark/survey) were presented. The scope of the project was restricted to Train Driver Trainers (classroom and practical route / road handling), Signalling engineering trainers and control / despatch trainers. In addition, the training leadership was also analysed.

The UIC benchmarking study recommendations tackled three distinct themes;

- The diversity of a common competence profile for the trainer role,
 - The diversity of trainer development post-appointment,
 - The common issues facing railway training organisations, where shared experience and approaches may be of value.
- Specific recommendations were made to develop a UIC EDP template competence profile for each of Trainer and Developer.

To identify 'good practice' an international exchange programme for trainers was started. The programme includes visits to training operations in other countries and the trainers work on four main objectives, under the UIC vision to 'Unite, Inspire and Connect':

- Knowledge sharing on training methodologies, trainer development and new training technologies,
- Developing a European behavioural competence framework for trainers,
- Developing ERTMS training,
- Collaboration between international VET institutions.

At the third UIC World Congress on Railway Training in Lisbon (2015) the first results of the international trainers program were presented. Four pilot trainer development workshops have been held to date. Feedback from attendees has been very positive. More importantly, the sharing of best practice was beginning to provide real financial benefits, with savings through collaborative working. The business case is thus highly compelling. A few weeks after the Lisbon congress we received a grant worth € 180,000 from Erasmus+, the EU programme for education, training, youth and sport.

However, it is evident that strong, supportive, visionary leadership is a critical pre-requisite to the success of such programmes. In addition, the project will need to address issues such as group sustainability, socialisation of new organisations and individual members and also the quality of facilitation, where English language competence is a key enabler to a successful outcome.

At the fourth UIC World Congress on Railway Training in Potsdam/Berlin (2017) we will present the results of this long term project. The trainers themselves will present the outcomes of the project, the training consultants/project leaders will present a vision on the project and a plan for the dissemination of the results.
