



INCLUSIVE EDUCATION AND DIGITALIZATION OF VOCATIONAL TRAINING: EXPERIENCE FROM A STAFF JOB- SHADOWING VISIT IN FRANCE

2024-10-14

From October 1–5, 2024, vocational teachers Dalia Janulionytė, Erika Sinkevičienė, Galina Kmieliauskienė, Loreta Bajorūnaitė, Donata Zarauskaitė-Remeikienė, and administrative representative Kristina Rasymienė from Daugai Technology and Business School participated in a job-shadowing visit in the Burgundy region of France. The visit was organized under the school's Erasmus+ mobility project No. 2024-1-LT01-KA121-VET-000226077. The host organization was *CIFA – Inter-professional Apprenticeship Training Center*.

During the visit, participants became acquainted with the French education system, general education programs, innovative teaching methods, differences between apprenticeship centers and vocational lyceums, and the advantages of apprenticeships. They discussed the acquisition of professional practical skills in real workplaces in both Lithuania and France.



At CIFA, participants explored various inclusive education strategies, shared experiences, and discussed methods and best practices in implementing inclusion. The experience gained

at the Inter-professional Apprenticeship Training Center provided valuable insights into creating an inclusive learning environment. Students with special educational needs at CIFA are fully integrated into all learning stages and activities; they are given extended time to complete tasks and assessments, and are assigned assistants when needed. The center's communications manager introduced the training programs and presented the available facilities. The apprenticeship center provides apprentices with all the necessary materials, except uniforms and footwear.



Students are admitted to the center from the age of 16 (exceptions possible from 15) up to 29 years. A tripartite agreement is signed between the apprenticeship center, the employer, and the apprentice. First-year apprentices receive 40% of the French minimum wage, while in the second year they receive 50%. However, no scholarships are provided.

During the visit, staff also explored the digital learning tools used at the center and how these were integrated with its infrastructure and departments. They observed the use of digital and other equipment, including a virtual learning environment that complements traditional teaching methods (video-recorded lessons accessible to apprentices, computer labs, a virtual store for learning purposes, and VR glasses used in car painting exercises).

The participants discussed digital content and virtual learning tools with staff and observed how students used these tools in practice during lessons.



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What impressed the participants most was the close cooperation between French vocational institutions and employers, the supportive education system focused on free education, and the long-standing apprenticeship model. They also noted how France's tax system is aligned with business development and education funding (with employers contributing through specific levies).



The knowledge and experience gained during the visit will be applied in participants' daily work and in improving the school's practices. Their achievements were formally recognized: each participant received a Europass Mobility Document.



Daugai Technology and Business School received Erasmus+ accreditation (No. 2021-1-LT01-KA120-VET-000047366) in 2022, valid until December 31, 2027. Thus, mobility activities for staff and students will continue abroad until the end of 2027. The Erasmus+ program is an excellent opportunity for vocational school staff and students to gain knowledge, experience, and both theoretical and practical skills abroad, improve foreign language proficiency, and learn about life and culture in another country.



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