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***Country reports on the
expected skills and
knowledge of bricklayers
and carpenters***



1. MOST IMPORTANT SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGES

WHAT A COMPANY IS SEEING IMPORTANT WHEN HIRING A CARPENTRY AND BRICKLAYER FROM ABROAD

Country Report Germany

The clear favourite about the most important competences of an employee is practical knowledge. Social skills, theoretical knowledge and professional attitude follow far behind. At least a basic knowledge of German language is desirable, but not essential. Social skills such as the ability to work in a team are an important issue for German companies. In Germany VET teachers report that they have some degree of flexibility in interpreting the training regulations, which enable them to focus on companies' needs and consider regional differences. On the positive side, a large proportion of the German companies already have experience with foreign workers. Applicants can prove their competences by work samples, the most important selection criterion for German companies. 27 responses received this option, partly together with the item "Diploma/Recognition of previous learning" (10 responses) and/or references/testimonials (7 responses). German trainers generally think that German carpenters and bricklayers can work in companies abroad, depending on the local requirements and techniques. Some note that language might a barrier. German companies are willing to invest in adaptation, if further training is required. Most of them would pay for language courses. A master craftsman's certificate is needed to set up a construction company. Another possibility is to hire a craft master to open up a company.

Country Report Spain

The most important competences are professional attitude (9/10) and practical knowledge (7/10). Followed by theoretical knowledge (5/10). Less they care about Social Skills (2/10) and Language Skills (1/10). Considering the language level an employee should have, 4 of 10 Companies prefer the employee to be fluent Spanish speaker. For another three of ten an advanced level is sufficient as for another it is sufficient to have a basic level of Spanish. All the companies are willing to invest in adaptations (such as language courses, training) for the foreign workers. The companies are really interested in the growth of the company so investing into adaptations could help them reach their goal. It is well seen in Spanish companies when the future employee is willing to learn and to invest in his professional development. To present each one's competences to future Spanish employer, they care the most about Testimonials References (7/10) and work examples (7/10). Also, CVs are important (5/10). Spanish trainers generally think that their carpenters and bricklayers can work in companies abroad, depending on the local requirements and techniques. Regarding Spanish companies the majority (9/10) has experience with foreign workers. Formal/administrative processes are necessary like opening a



fiscal position, insurances, etc to open a business. It is not usual to open a company without experience. For this reason, it is common to ask for the help of administrative agency.

Country Report Belgium

According to Belgian companies, most important competences are practical knowledge (20/25) and professional attitude (16/25). This corresponds to the expectations of Belgian companies when they hire a new worker: they pay the most attention to work samples (18/25), where applicants can demonstrate their practical abilities, while diplomas are only considered important by few respondents (4/25). Most surveyed Belgian companies (15/25) do not have experience with foreign workers; therefore, some adjustments might be necessary. According to the Belgian VET-trainers their students are able to start working on construction sites as basic workers after their VET period. Further competences/skills could be acquired while working in the company or by attending specific courses. Some flexibility is also possible during the vocational training according to specific requests from the companies. Most of the Belgium companies (10/15) indicate that they are willing to invest in their employees training on specific professional techniques, which are requested in their business. Belgium companies have contrasting expectations regarding the language skills of their workers: the majority (12/25) expect basic skills and a significant number (10/25) expect fluent skills. In Wallonia (the Region of Belgium where the companies were surveyed), authorities still impose strict conditions for starting a business in the construction sector: the applicant must not only demonstrate technical knowledge (access to the profession, e.g., through a VET diploma) but also basic management skills. Therefore, it is advisable to get employed in a Belgian company first and then to consider starting a business after having gained valuable work experience in Belgium and/or having taken additional management courses.

Country Report Slovenia

Slovenian construction companies found that the most important competence a foreign employee is to have good practical knowledge (6/10), followed by a professional attitude (3/10), and one company believes that theoretical knowledge is the most important competence a foreign employee must have. Certain knowledge of the Slovenian language is also desirable. The vast majority of trainers confirm that Slovenian bricklayers and carpenters are able to start working on the construction site after their VET period. If you are applying to a Slovenian construction company, you should provide at least one certificate. They will be very grateful if you can provide some examples of your previous work and references. They will also have a look at your CV and your diploma (or a recognition of your previous education). Most Slovenian companies (7/10) have experience with foreign workers, and some also have experience with mobilities. Regarding the training program the Slovenian schools have little flexibility. To open your own business as a bricklayer or carpenter in, you must prove that you have the necessary professional skills (for example with a VET diploma) and basic management skills. To become self-employed, there are also many administrative steps to take, including registering with Crossroads Bank for Enterprises and the office VAT.



Country Report Italy

Most important competence is practical knowledge with professional attitude. Theoretical knowledge is not required at all from Italian's companies (10/10). Companies are not demanding certificates as they focus more on work samples and testimonial references, about missing certificates or knowledge, companies are willing to invest on the workers. Italian's companies ask only for a basic knowledge of the language. All Italian's companies interviewed have experience with foreign workers and are ready to invest on workers to trainee them. Regarding the training program the Italian schools have little flexibility. The vast majority of trainers confirm that Italian bricklayers and carpenters are able to start working on the construction site after their VET period. Italian government do not ask for specific educational level to open a construction company, only formal / administrative process is necessary as: Opening a fiscal position and stipulate an insurance.

⇒ Conclusion:

- Despite of the big differences in the countries in the vocational training of a carpenter and bricklayer, regarding what a company really needs from an foreign worker, *mobility is possible*.
- Additional adjustments and further training could be required in some cases