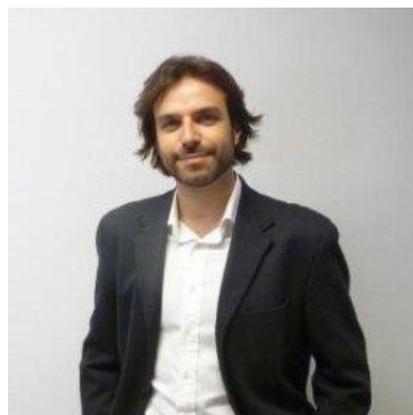


WBL-PRO Professional Peer Network: The team talks with the professionals – Jesús Boyano, Valladolid, Spain

Today we are happy to introduce to you **Jesús Boyano** from Valladolid, Spain. He is the General Manager of INFODEF. Instituto para el Fomento y Desarrollo de la Formación (<http://infodef.es/>) - a private and independent center for Research, Development and Innovation. The organization designs innovative tools, methodologies, products and services that respond to current social and economic challenges and enable to anticipate and drive the changes needed to achieve future goals and objectives in society.



Please review below what he has shared with us about a project - **LINK-Inc, 2015- 1- ES01- KA202- 015962**, funded with support from the European Commission - his organization has successfully implemented to answer a specific challenge related to the importance of the work-based learning for the migrants' and ethnic minorities' participation on the labour market:

"In today's highly competitive labour markets, the experience gained through Work-based Learning opens doors to later jobs. Youth unemployment rates in European countries with a strong tradition of WBL, such as Austria (9.0%), are lower than in countries with less developed WBL systems, like Bulgaria (21.6%), France (25.2%), Portugal (34.5%), Italy (42%) or Spain (51.4%).

Work-based learning is also particularly effective to re-motivate and retain learners who are otherwise at risk of dropping out. At-risk groups such as migrants or ethnic minorities are particularly in need of targeted support. Nevertheless, available evidence confirms that young immigrants and ethnic minorities rarely have the same chances to access good training places in the apprenticeship system.

Two main factors are behind the underrepresentation of these collectives in WBL.

Firstly, a lack of social and parental networks necessary to identify suitable placements themselves, requiring the support of the educational institutions. A second factor is discrimination, which is largely based on stereotypes and on a lack of knowledge and awareness about the benefits of the cultural diversity. Native citizens often perceive immigration or ethnicity as a nuisance or a threat and some employers may prefer to

involve native apprentices instead of involving migrants or ethnic minorities. The identification of cultural differences with problems and/or nuisances, rather than with opportunities and advantages, is in the base of this situation.

LINK-Inc project contributed to the increase of the participation of migrants and ethnic minorities in WBL by equipping VET and in-company teachers and mentors with innovative approaches to address cultural diversity in VET. As a result of the project VET professionals have been equipped with the adequate skills and tools to support young migrants and ethnic minorities in their allocation to training places.

The project has been successfully implemented by six partner organizations from Spain, Austria, Bulgaria, France, Italy and Portugal. The partners elaborated together:

- state-of-the-art report about the skills that VET and in-company trainers and mentors require to integrate cultural and ethnic diversity in WBL.
- LINK-Inc Training Curriculum supporting the enhanced professional development of VET and in-company trainers and mentors by developing innovative tools to facilitate the recognition of their competence profile and job description
- LINK-Inc Handbook including new approaches and innovative methodologies to apply and manage Intercultural Integration in WBL
- LINK-Inc Toolbox including new approaches and practical tools to apply and manage diversity in WBL
- Open Online Center promoting and facilitating the access to good practices, methodologies and products for Intercultural Integration in VET

More information about the LINK-Inc you can find on <https://www.facebook.com/LINKInc.Project/> and <http://link-inc.eu/>."

Feel most welcome to like our facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/wblpro> and join our linkedin group <https://www.linkedin.com/groups/13505202> to meet more of the professionals we talk with, learn more about our project and follow our progress!

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