

# Formbridge, for a reinvented educational alliance: conclusions on the transferability of Pédagogie de chantiers at European level...

## Introduction.

The Formbridge project is coming to an end in an encouraging context which seems to allow the partners of the project to think about the possibility of seeing their work being used to set up, at European level, innovative joint work between those involved in training, education and the labour market. This work focuses on a reinvented pedagogy for the benefit of the most vulnerable people in the labour market.

This encouraging context is double.

First of all, it is the follow-up to the Porto Social Summit, which in June 2021 made three major commitments that intersect the challenges and ambitions of our project. These commitments were made on the first day of the Porto Social Summit by the President of the European Commission, the President of the European Parliament, the Portuguese Prime Minister, the European social partners and civil society organisations.

These stakeholders also committed themselves to do their utmost to build a more inclusive and social Europe.

The summit fixed the following objectives for 2030:

1. At least 78% of people aged 20 to 64 years old should be employed;
2. At least 60% of adults should participate in training activities each year;
3. The amount of people threatened by poverty or social exclusion should decrease of at least 15 million, of which at least 5 million children.

In order to reach these 3 objectives – revolving around employment, training and the fight against exclusion – some reconsideration should take place **both** at the level of the access to training, the design of training, the pedagogical methods used **and** the collaboration between actors in the labour market.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Sectoral training funds <> companies, for the implementation of training, but also for the detection of the future needs of companies. Lifelong learning: companies< >workers< >training providers for the continuous evolution of skills.

This favourable context is also the result of the observation - on the part of companies - of a widespread fear of labour shortages. This fear is already leading to a change in the discussion on the profiles required of job seekers and on the quality of employment contracts, which should offer better prospects ensuring security, stability and pay. Emphasis is placed on the fact that it will from now on be necessary to pursue a voluntary policy of lifelong learning, but also on the fact that learning must be rewarding for the learners and the labour market. The debate is more about methods than about specific content.

This text of “political” conclusions aims at demonstrating the relevance of the method called “pédagogie de chantier”<sup>2</sup> which is not new, that has proven itself and deserve to appear, as a result of its transversal character, at the level of training methods offered to weakened publics and totally repeatable at European level

### Reminder of the project framework and its objectives: a triple reality to face...

The Formbridge project was aimed at young people leaving school with no or low qualifications. It was also, in practice, aimed at adults including migrants, far from the labour market, having low qualifications or education.

What are the common challenges faced by the target groups in this project?

1. *A proven risk of social and societal alienation*

A common aspect of the target groups is that, in addition to the issue of (non) qualification or dropping out of school, they are at a higher risk of long term unemployment, poverty, social exclusion and voluntary or forced non-participation in the life of their territories or communities.

2. *The observation that there is less or no participation in training offers.*

Added to the danger of social alienation, another hurdle is that these people have little to no participation in training offers.

For this group, finding a place in training and/or following a regular training is a true obstacle to participation.

This is due to three factors: two refer to the access to information linked to the administrative organisation of participation to offered training, and the fact that the content of training courses is often based on pre-competence requirements to be demonstrated as a prerequisite for participation. Another element is related to the pedagogy used.

3. *The increasing place of transversal skills.*

In addition to the possession of technical skills, the project partners have noted that while it is essential to coordinate actions between educational and non-educational actors and to find inclusive responses, the importance of acquiring transversal skills or soft skills has become obvious.

These are now recognised as essential because they have an impact on life, academic and social success, and have the positive effect of slowing down the drop-out rate<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> PdC in the text

<sup>3</sup> Transversal competences (OECD, 2012) are defined as those that can be transferred from one job to another and applied and developed in any area of a person's life. Transversal competences refer to other frameworks that have been developed and are widely recognized at scientific and institutional level. These include life skills, defined by the World Health Organization in 1993 as social and interpersonal skills that enable individuals to

They also have an impact on how to accept change in the face of developments that impact on the lives of companies and their workers. They open the door to more autonomy and to the acceptance of new technical or technological realities. These last two points are essential in the recruitment plans of companies.

The question of the appropriation of transversal skills for people who have dropped out or who have not been trained is certainly complex but must be addressed in any reflection on an adapted training methodology, as is the case with worksite teaching (pédagogie de chantier). We must voluntarily start from the principle that every person has "life skills", that they can be valued, and that therefore, they must be detected through the pedagogy set up also in work-study formulas which are aimed at people who have already been away from school or work for a long time.

It is advisable to start from the existing situation, to identify the assets of the experience and the values of the person applying for training.

4. *Not to remain within oneself but also to go towards the labour market, thus creating bridges with companies...*

In addition to the elements mentioned - organisational, administrative, methodological - the integration aimed at is the one which has as objective the **social inclusion** based on quality work in the service of an employer or on work synonymous with collective recognition, the first step towards the labour market. The work site is a place of socialisation and a tool for orientation, but it confronts the trainee with a work logic as required in companies.

We can therefore see the importance of the final objective, which is access to the labour market. This implies the acceptance by the actors of this labour market of "professional" competences acquired in a different way - informal - by the different target groups, but at the end of adapted training paths.

This refers to the need to create reference systems adapted to the progress of the targeted audiences, and accepted by the stakeholders in the world of work and training. In other words, this evokes processes of valorisation of skills acquired outside the classic institutional schemes practised by partners in the world of education/vocational training.

Among these reference systems, whose ambition is essentially professional and linked to the European key competences, attention must be paid to references that also integrate behaviours of the order of citizenship and cultural awareness in the broadest sense.

5. *Companies face the challenge of significant recruitment on the eve of 2030.*

On the side of the branches of activity or professional sectors, here is an example of a speech made today by Agoria, a Belgian employers' federation, concerned with planning the evolution towards 2030 of the workforce in its sector of activity<sup>4</sup>:

"In the future, the ideal candidate will be the result of "co-creation", not recruitment: the company will provide resources and clear paths for the candidate to evolve. The candidate will have to be motivated and willing to invest time!"

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cope effectively with the demands of everyday life, to relate confidently to themselves, others and the community, and to have a positive impact on contexts and individuals.

<sup>4</sup> Jeroen Franssen Lead Expert Talent and Labour Market Agoria.

For 2030, the same technology sector has the ambition to create a total of 40.000 additional jobs. Calculated differently, this is equivalent to the creation of sixteen jobs per working day. Some jobs will disappear, others will be transformed and new jobs will appear for the attribution of which it would be a question of "leaving no one (job applicant) on the sidelines". Today, companies are saying that a diploma is not an end in itself, that skills should not be linked to a diploma and that continuous training is shared responsibility between companies and workers.

The content of employability has changed in the debate developed, as it has become an ability to project oneself into the future and no longer a question of guilt. "Competence" and "appetence" are placed face to face. "What is an appetence and what is its place in the world of work? It is an inclination to carry out certain tasks, in a professional or personal context. Appetence is therefore an innate, natural and easily mobilised aspiration that usually leads to success."<sup>5</sup>

On the public side, Pôle-Emploi in France has a similar discourse, even if it is relatively classic and does not seem - at first sight - to respond to the concern of integrating fragile publics. Let us note: the need to adopt an agile state of mind, to constantly question oneself and acquire new knowledge, to learn to learn, adding that curious minds have the whole future before them. Pôle-Emploi stresses that beyond the initial training and professional experience mentioned on a CV, it is necessary to focus on the importance of the candidate's personality and behavioural skills (the ability to work in a group, resistance to stress, etc.).

In the context of the public targeted by the Formbridge project, we might ask ourselves whether, before talking about appetence, we should not first aim to restore appetite by reinforcing a widely accessible training offer built on a rewarding pedagogy, based on an alteration in which schools, integration organisations, skills centres and business stakeholders would play a role.

In addition, another trend is emerging very recently ...

Faced with a shortage that is becoming more and more pronounced, the idea is gaining ground in business circles that offering better opportunities that provide security, stability and salary is an ideal way of motivating the workforce and convincing them to regain self-confidence. The permanent contract is said to be popular and dehumanised work organisations are being challenged.

Companies in shortage sectors claim to want to provide some of the training themselves.

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<sup>5</sup> <https://www.academie-francaise.fr/appetence>

Pédagogie de chantier: a methodology adapted to the needs of publics furthest from training and/or employment.

From alternating to pédagogie de chantier

Pédagogie de chantier is a system of **alternating training** but as the Formbridge project as demonstrates, PdC is intended to go further than the classical templates both by the methods used and by the necessity to create “deeper” partnerships with training provider and later, with the business world.

It should be noted that this last phase will require a commitment from the social partners and public training bodies ... Our regret is that it remains not very concrete at the end of this project but an appeal in this sense must be launched towards the stakeholders pointed out here ...

#### *Definition of alternating training*

It is according to the accepted definition, a form of long-term education in which learners acquire professional skills by alternating between a training centre or school and a workplace. There are many operators and the targeted groups are as many without reaching the target public of the PdC.

It has been reminded above that the public targeted in the Formbridge project is generally not very concerned by operators for reasons of both selective practices and methodology.

Faced with a public that has been excluded from education or work for a long time, the "winning formula" will be one that offers:

- the most individualised support possible (known as job coaching),
- training actions in partnership with qualification operators
- and adjustment sequences favouring immersion in a company (internships) or in a workplace involved in the social and solidarity economy.
- a pre-qualification process.

This “winning formula” therefore has different objectives than those usually pursued in alternation:

- it foresees for shorter training periods
- It does not necessarily aim at direct access to employment but rather at the necessary preparation "to learn how to learn" with a view to accessing a job.

#### *The PdC*

The dynamics of the “work site” nourishes the person’s project by involving him or her in a territory, by confronting him or her with a pedagogical framework and a very large team. The work site is a place that opens up perspectives for change, through interview techniques, assessments, based on evaluation grids. Great importance should be attached during the process and at its end to the creation of broad partnerships which allow the support of jobseekers to be reinforced and completed towards the opportunities offered to them beyond the territory of the work site itself.

The foundations of the PdC and its pedagogical functions which also situate the role of the trainer or supervisor, are discussed more concretely in the description of the Formbridge project below.

## Formbridge

In concrete terms, the Formbridge project planned to work on a "rethought" pedagogical approach in order to foster "training bridges" adapted to the least qualified public.

Here we find the starting trio: a teaching/training method based on a different pedagogy, the stimulation of a neglected public and the creation of bridges.

Briefly described, we present here the foundations of "Pédagogie de chantier" and propose a useful model in the current context of job shortages which will require a methodological revision of selection and recruitment procedures:

1. A "work site" is based on a **concrete** data, i.e. an accessible, useful, innovative or even novel support of activity, which **opens** up pre-training **possibilities** and may allow entry into conventional training at a later stage;
2. A "work site" is a place of **socialisation**, i.e. encounters that can give confidence and help to build interest, but also constraints linked to life in a community and work is a community!
3. A "work site" is a place of encounter with the world of work, where one **takes up work habits corresponding to the expectations of the world of work**;
4. A "work site" is above all a **place to learn** technical gestures and transferable skills towards other activities with the objective of pursuing a qualification; consequently, it is also a **place of diagnosis and orientation** for the public who enter it.
5. The work sites are part of territorial projects linked to the local heritage, to the authorities in charge of the place where the heritage is located and to the people living in the area. They create requirements for a **plural dialogue with the whole territory**.
6. The "work site" mobilises operational and transversal skills, with the objective of carrying out **quality work leading to the trainee's autonomy**.
7. Voluntary is a key word for the educational team which must ensure the follow-up of the "work site".

The work site is therefore a place of diagnosis and proposals in which the trainer has multiple obligations such as:

- guarantee the smooth running of the work site in terms of health, safety, efficiency, organisation of group life, preparation of work sequences. It is therefore important to define the preparation and execution sheets and to develop evaluation grids. The sheets and grids will serve, step by step, as a temporal and material reference in the progress towards a final assessment shared by the trainee, the trainer and the environment.
- look at the trainee's work in order to understand and consolidate his/her learning and support him/her with a certain level of requirements. The trainee must be aware of his/her progress;
- Follow the work site itself, taking care of the communication with the territory, which must feel involved and respected by all the actors, but which must also be the bearer of respect;
- Think about the purpose of the "work site" which is designed to nourish the person's project and encourage participants to find the desire, strength and capacity to build a professional project.

For information, here is a list of all the work sites:

<b>Work site in Italy (IT)</b>	Creation of a Community Table
<b>Work site in Belgium (B)</b>	Preservation and enhancement of the natural heritage of Famenne-Ardennes
<b>Work site in Corsica (FR)</b>	Valorisation of the rural heritage in Corsica
<b>Work site in France ((FR)</b>	Dry stone paths.
<b>Work site in Germany (DE)</b>	Strengthening regional traditions and hospitality in Bavaria
<b>Work site in Greece (GR)</b>	Wool processing and dyeing with natural colours. Preparation of a dry stone botanical garden
<b>Work site in Greece (GR)</b>	Use of wool products for weaving and tapestry

Based on the definition of the work site pedagogy and through the 7 different work sites implemented, the partners met the objective of:

- to create a reference framework for the evaluation of the competences mobilised by the PdC experiences, in particular the transversal competences, recognised as fundamental competences for professional integration, citizenship and the well-being of the individual (EACEA 2010-2012).
- (re)connecting training courses to the evolution of the labour market and to the needs of companies and territories through the methodological approach of PdC, which represents an opportunity to link learning, citizenship and development of territories.
- Define the learning outcomes of the training pathways of different sectors in relation to the cultural heritage of the territories through the common European language ECVET
- Supporting the educational achievements of targeted youth and young adults with the contribution of business representatives to break the cycle of inequality, poverty and exclusion.
- Encourage and promote collaborative approaches and educational alliances with schools aimed at reducing school drop-out in their territory.
- To raise the awareness of the target group on issues of territorial solidarity, local social issues, economic and environmental issues and heritage protection in all senses of the word: geology, local customs (cooking, sewing or woodworking, the science of food, gastronomy), ancestral building techniques, urban life and natural landscapes...
- Integrate the requirements of today's society for the proper use of communication and information technologies, using IT, video and multimedia tools in general

These objectives have been broken down into three important dimensions: individual development, vocational training and the societal dimension, which includes both the civic dimension and the importance of the cultural dimension as a means of socio-professional integration.

## Message from the partners and limits encountered in the framework of the Formbridge project.

At the end of the project, we can deplore a lack of involvement - refused? or insufficiently proposed? - of companies and social partners in this experimentation. They are absent from the design of the PdC project, from the evaluation of the method and from the search for an exit towards a sustainable and quality integration, which is their primary concern.

This collaboration is essential for the success of the PdC project in a context of high demand for jobs, difficulties in filling vacancies, a growing shortage of talent and in the context of solidarity within the world of work.

There is certainly a wide variety of situations regarding the place reserved for the social partners in some EU countries. However, as the Treaty<sup>6</sup> recognises the contribution of the social partners and interprofessional and sectoral social dialogue, an effort should be made at the level of the European Commission services concerned with employment, social inclusion and vocational training to encourage the involvement of workers' and employers' representatives in projects such as this.

In addition, the context of technological change and the evolution towards an increasingly digital labour market is important. It should be noted that digital does not mean that only IT jobs are to be filled, manual profiles are required but coupled with the ability to embrace the digital world and the agile behaviours that go with it.

2030 is a pivotal date and in this context, it is also the needs of companies, including those in the social and solidarity economy sectors, that must be analysed before thinking about implementing training prior to hiring or on the job.

In this context, the role of training intermediary bodies also needs to be redefined and a large place must be given to sectoral training intermediaries (of professional branches). They must be capable not only of detecting trends in the occupations to be filled in the future, but also of helping to implement the said training with a view to the evolving reality of the labour market.

As mentioned above, this dimension is not addressed in the work sites.

We therefore went to Belgium to see what inspiring concrete experiences exist which it would be useful to take up. More and more, sectoral training funds with parity management controlled by the Belgian State are playing a role not only in initial and lifelong training but also in the detection of future trends in the requirements of the skilled or unskilled workforce.

Here is one example among many others<sup>7</sup>:

"Technobel"<sup>8</sup>:

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<sup>6</sup> Under Article 151 of the Treaty TFEU, the European Union and the Member States have the common objective of promoting dialogue between employers and workers. The aim of social dialogue is to improve European governance through the involvement of social partners in decision-making and implementation.

<sup>7</sup> <https://numeria.be/a-propos/>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.technobel.be/fr/>



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Technobel is a member of the network of Competence Centres, whose main mission is training in Information and Communication Technologies (ICT).

The Centre carries out 4 other missions: monitoring, teaching, skills management and information.

Technobel has taken care to validate its technological, organisational and pedagogical expertise by obtaining numerous labels and certifications. The Centre covers the fields of office automation, development, management, multimedia and networks, systems and telecommunications.

In particular, Technobel supports jobseekers wishing to train for ICT jobs or develop their skills.

A structured collaboration with such organisations would be a good practice to be validated in certain sectoral committees of the European social dialogue.

The partners involved in the Formbridge project have also identified messages intended to contribute to Community training policies aimed at the target groups in the project.

Here are the messages as they proposed them at the end of the project.

- To put in place measures to combat early school leaving by supporting innovative learning devices to regain an appetite for learning: the use of interactive teaching tools, a more practical didactic approach and situational learning.
- Promote informal learning of basic skills targeted at the needs of the learner.
- Develop public/private partnership devices proposing integration actions combining employment, training (technical and transversal skills) and socio-professional follow-up, for example, encourage, through attractive measures (fiscal, social, etc.), the granting of private funds to initiatives favouring training and professional inclusion.
- Supporting the actions and investments of communes and municipalities in order to promote local development and enabling them to include the use of trainees in training according to the work site teaching method in public procurement offers. This aspect is also linked to the question of a wider and more flexible promotion of social clauses in local or communal public contracts, allowing the PdC educational teams to better find their place in such contracts by reserving places for trainees.
- Initiate a regional or local policy of setting up local educational alliances and local financial resources dedicated to the "Pédagogie de chantier" approach.
- Disseminate, with the material help of the European institutions, the results of the project to regional and local authorities, integration organisations and schools and also to the European and national social partners in the framework of the social dialogue in order to make people understand the federating effect of the use of the local cultural heritage as a facilitator of the integration of adults in difficulty of integration and young people who have dropped out of school, through experimentations of the Pédagogie de chantier concerning the local collective heritage



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