



THE EUROPLASTIC LEONARDO PROJECT

During 2002, with the impetus of French plastic federation and ministry of Education, European Plastic Converter throws a European investigation in plastic training.

The questions:

- Which economic sectors are interesting?
- Which levels of qualifications are concerned?
- Which needs in these sectors?
- What is the appropriate level?
- Which are the techniques to consider ?

The results of this investigation are showed during the first European training conference organized by EuPC on the occasion of French plastic conference in Paris on 15 and 16th October 2002: this manifestation is at the start of EuroPlastic project.

The EuroPlastic project is based upon discussions as part of the Sustainable Professionalization Programme and on the suggestions of the preliminary working group set up by the French plastic federation, European Plastic Converter and the French ministry of Education which were quickly joined by Belgium, Italy, Greece and then Poland.

The need of European certification in plastics has become a major concern among all the companies whatever their size: all the plastics companies are meeting recruitment difficulties and they appreciate the setting up of a European competence breeding ground. The needs are mainly about the level of qualified production technicians.

The EuroPlastic project aims are:

- **the construction of the advanced technician in plastics industries certificate according to the methodology developed in the Sustainable Professionalization programme .**
- **the development of a training and certification methodology in plastics which will be available to the European countries.**

In addition to the needs spotted by the companies, the aim of this project is to reinforce the innovative skills of young and adults undergoing training – their ability to innovate, their open-mindedness and mobility –so as to help them tackle the technological changes, which are being undertaken by plastics companies, with additional assets and ambition.

THE PROFIL OF THE ADVANCED TECHNICIAN IN PLASTICS INDUSTRIES

- The advanced technician in plastics industries practises his/her activity mainly in the plastics processing industrial firms: in small size firms, he/she co-ordinates and manages the production shop; in medium and large size firms, he/she is in charge and runs a production cell.

- He/she is actively involved in the different stages of production, from organisation to start-up and monitoring.
- He/she has control over the entire production line and its environment: he/she is responsible for "good practices" as regards staff and equipment, in line with the performance indicators resulting from the technical and economic constraints of production.
- He/she ensures optimum management of the production and quality of manufactured products, in compliance with the Product Specification and production standards.
- He/she works towards the continuous improvement of the manufacturing process: he/she is a major player in solving the problems related to production, and his/her contribution is crucial in the search for solutions.
- He/she contributes to maintaining a high level of performance from the production line.
- He/she is involved in the company's business, and is a potential contact for the firm's customers, capable of taking in charge and meeting their demand.
- He/she can make capital suggestions concerning product development and production organisation : choice of materials, conformance quality of products, tool alterations, production process improvements, and compliance with quality, cost and delivery requirements.
- He/she participates in the organisation of production and management of projects. He/she contributes to the prevention of occupational hazards, the protection of environment, and the safety of staff and equipment.
- His/her industrial knowledge depends on scientific and technological knowledge closely associated with practical knowledge.
- His/her skills in communication and human qualities enable him/her to assume the role of a leader and manager capable of driving the operators of his/her team: harness competence, ability to anticipate, management of staff, information sharing, problem-solving approach, adaptation to socio-economic developments.

The position of the advanced technician in the European plastics companies depends on a sound knowledge in plastics, a practical and pragmatic approach of the different stage that help bring production from assembly and tool setting to staff management together with an intellectual and practical mobility.

He/she is an operational technician and manager.

THE ACTIVITIES OF THE ADVANCED TECHNICIAN IN PLASTICS INDUSTRIES

A- PRODUCTION CONTROL

Here, he/she has to:

1. Organise production
2. Lead production
3. Supervise production
4. Optimise production quality
5. Maintain production performance

B- PRODUCTION IMPROVEMENT

Here, he/she has to:

1. Analyse the Product Specification and suggest changes to the customer
2. Propose solutions to address the problems related to production
3. Participate in and contribute to the search for efficient solutions
4. Participate in the development and organisation of the production cell.

C- PREVENTION OF OCCUPATIONAL HAZARDS AND ENVIRONMENTAL NUISANCES

Here, he/she has to:

1. Identify, assess and treat the risks and nuisances
2. Propose prevention and protection measures
3. Participate in the implementation of proposed solutions
4. Contribute to the technological watch regarding safety and environment

D- MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP

Here, he/she has to:

1. Give sense to work : make aware of responsibilities, organise, supervise
2. Participate in staff management and harness competence

E- COMMUNICATION

Here, he/she has to:

1. Master the professional and technological communication tools
2. Master international English in work relations

THE DOCUMENT WHICH DESCRIBES THE DIPLOMA

- The professional activities frame of reference describes the activities and the tasks that the diploma holder will have to practice in the first years of his/her professional life. These activities are neither those of a beginner nor those of an experienced professional, but the qualifications required take into account the necessary period of adaptation.

The professional activities frame of reference enables to define the professional aim of the diploma: it constitutes the basis from which the frame of reference is built. It is used by the teachers in order to comprehend the professional objectives of the diploma. It is also necessary to validate acquired knowledge. Lastly it helps careers guidance centres and to national, European and international authorities in charge of professional certification.

- The specification of skills describes the professional skills and the associated knowledge. It specifies the conditions in which these skills will be assessed and specifies the expected results too. On this basis it is the foundation of the assessment. It is used with the specification of professional activities to build the assessment whatever its methods: selective examination, continuous assessment or validation of acquired knowledge.

The specification of skills is the reference for the educational establishment: it is a contract of objectives between the different partners of the training and the certification, the educational establishment and the company, the training officer and the trainer.

A skill is a concrete measurable or observable activity defined according to the requirements that are expected by the companies. The implementation of these professional skills is based on different resources: they can be material means, processes, information and of course knowledge.

This new certificate forms the first project of construction of a common certificate in the field of industrial sciences and techniques. The final certificate will be developed in order to be implemented in the ECTS (European Credit Transfer System) and European Credit in Vocational Education and Training (ECVET). It is made to meet the needs of plastics industries but its development should also enable to spot the knowledge linked to "plastic material" and the specificities linked to the job so as to extend more easily this sort of curriculum to other production industries.

- The skills frame of reference constitutes, with the professional activities frame of reference, the common basis from which the certification is built. The elaboration of the skills frame of reference include three steps:

1. In order to make easier the work of the person in charge with the training and the assessment, these skills must be grouped and objectives for the certification must be

defined: the duplicated skills are first cancelled then all the remaining skills are grouped around fundamental skills or abilities.

2. The knowledge associated to each assessed professional skill
3. The connection between skills and knowledge

THE EUROPEAN DIPLOMA AND THE CERTIFICATION

The certification can be defined as the operation which authenticates someone's skills in relation to the professional profile defined by the professional activities and skills frame of reference.

The certification concerns both people who benefit from it and employers who are likely to recruit them. It concerns the training system which builds knowledge and the whole professional body for which a good system of certification is a guarantee of the quality of the training and the adaptation of the work force to the needs of the economy. Last, it is also a tool to recognize the acquired knowledge.

One of the aims of a « European diploma » is the setting of a certification common to several European countries. All the people holding the diploma are judged on the same basis and are able to practice in all the countries who are signatories to the agreement, the job aimed by the diploma. The ability to practice the job is checked through objectives rather than skills.

1) The skills frame of reference forms with the table of abilities and professional skills to assess with the expected professional requirements, complemented with the professional activities frame of reference, forms the bases whose is built the certification: it is **the common part of European diploma**.

2) In a second part, the certification regulations and the implements of diploma installation (training timetable, training course, examination regulations...) are characteristic of every country : it is **the subsidiary part of the European diploma**.

Considering the diversity of the ways to obtain titles and diplomas between the countries and within each country, it is better that the objectives of certification of a European diploma are common to all the countries which will use these diplomas whatever the way to obtain this diploma: initial training, apprenticeship, continuing education, or acquired knowledge. However if these objectives are common to all the countries, the way to reach them and the practical details of certification come within the competence of the **principle of subsidiarity**.

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THE EUROPLASTIC PASSPORT

The students which are successful to the final exams, can develop your professional experiences by work experience placement during a long period (12 to 16 weeks) in a European plastic firm or in a industrial sector close to plastic industries situated in European country different of his own land.

The training centre and the national federation in connection with EuPC follow the research and the place of employment. Grants are search to help the mobility of the students.

At the conclusion of the training period, the training is validated by European Plastic Converter which issues the EuroPlastic Passport which summarizes the training course of the student during the two years of his studies and work experience placements.

The EuroPlastic passport is come within the Portfolio EuroPass.

All documents about EuroPlastic can be uploaded from www.europlastic.org.