Press release

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European professionals meet online to work on tomorrows vocational water sector professional

In many countries, especially in Europe, we take our clean drinking water for granted. You turn the tap and fresh, clean water appears as if by magic. But that drinking water doesn't just come from nowhere. Even within Europe, there are big differences when it comes to water. For example, several European countries are struggling with a shortage of young people interested in water-related education. And in Europe, we can learn a lot from each other. That's why European schools and professionals from the water industry have joined forces to train better educated water professionals at VET level.

The webinar of the *European Platform of Vocational Excellence Water* took place online from Tuesday 26th to Thursday 28th of May. In this meeting, five European regions worked together to shape the future skilled vocational practitioner in the field of water technology. CIV Water, based in Leeuwarden, is seen as an example for Europe.

Together with Dutch partners, Learning Hub Friesland, Vitens and Katapult, CIV Water shared its knowledge and experience on how to achieve good cooperation between VET education and the water industry. Due to the Corona crisis it was sadly not possible to meet in person. During the online meeting knowledge and insights were shared about how to stimulate cooperation and how to strengthen regional networks. CIV Water used their own experience to give the European partners insight into how they too can create more cooperation between education and companies in the water sector in their countries.

The outcomes of the webinar showed that there are still major differences between the various European regions. Nicola Murray from Glasgow College, Scotland confirmed: *"It was surprising to see that we all have a different starting point".*

All project partners were struggling one way or the other with water issues. *"One of our biggest challenges and common factor that unites us in Malta is the high freshwater scarcity on the island. It is vital to invest in the right talent and education to provide good and safe water for all,"* Edwin Zammit from MCast Malta said. Břetislav Skácel from CREA Hydro & Energy Czech Republic seconded that statement. *"Our water companies are missing skilled people. In addition, the lack of young people interested in the water-related education us a problem. That is why the PoVE Water project is particularly important to us. PoVE Water also helps us to influence public stakeholders and draw their attention to the importance of water-related education and the need to invest in this".*

Jānis Rubulis from Riga Technical University, Latvia: "*The water sector is critically needed for society. People and youth seem to forget it and youth in Latvia seem not to want to work for the water industry*".

The water sector needs to become 'sexy' again in the various European countries. That's why the webinar focused, among other things, on the Business Model Canvas training delivered by project partner Katapult. How do you set up a solid project in your own country to achieve this goal? CIV

Water therefore told the European partners how CIV Water evolved in recent years in the Netherlands. Take a look at the video here.

PoVE Water

PoVE Water is a transnational project that draws on existing and emerging vocational competences and skills needs in the water sector, translating them into an approach of vocational excellence. The project kicked off in January 2020 in Brussels. The project unites VET institutions, the water industry, research centres, H.E., (semi-) governmental institutions and water sector representatives from the Netherlands, Scotland, Latvia, Malta and the Czech Republic that share a common interest in developing the full potential of VET institutions to play a proactive role in support of growth, competitiveness and innovation of the water sector.

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Photo:

Screenshot webinar