

# Lifelong guidance to play a key role - newly established expert group starts its work

Since 2000, increasing importance has been accorded at European level to guidance in recognition of the pivotal role it plays in supporting lifelong learning. It thus helps to realise the goal set by the European Council at Lisbon of making the European Union the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based society in the world by 2010.

At the end of 2002, the Commission set up a Lifelong Guidance Expert Group (LGEG) as part of the implementation of the Council Resolution on the promotion of enhanced European cooperation in vocational education and training (see Cedefop Info 3/2002) and the follow-up to the Commission's Communication on Lifelong Learning (see Cedefop Info 3/2001).

The expert group's 25 members have been invited on the basis of their individual expertise rather than as country representatives. To promote a broad-based perspective, they have been drawn from the social partners, from European consumer, parents, and youth associations, and from international bodies, as well as from education and labour ministries. The second meeting of the

group, in late February, was hosted by Cedefop, which assists the Commission in assuring the secretariat. Three further meetings are scheduled in 2003.

The overarching aim of the group is to strengthen guidance policies, systems and practices. The mandate identifies 4 priority areas for attention:

- a common understanding of basic concepts and underlying principles for guidance,
- the quality of guidance provision,
- the European dimension of guidance for education, training and employment systems,
- guidance issues concerning social inclusion, access to lifelong learning and the links between education, training and working life

The group will concentrate on generic issues, such as quality, which will have a wide impact, rather than focussing narrowly on the needs of

individual target groups. Guidance is a transversal and cross-sectoral issue and lifelong guidance provision is for all persons, regardless of status or location. Accordingly, the group has decided to tackle issues from the consumer/citizen perspective, but to maintain a debate with, and to target proposals at, policy makers and practitioners with a view to achieving a lasting impact on policy and practice at European and national level.

In mid-2004 the group must present a report to the Commission outlining

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## Italy Apprenticeship: first national survey on external training

**Isfol (Institute for the development of workers' vocational training) has conducted a national survey among 1 500 firms whose apprentices received training in the framework of external training programmes. The survey analyses the characteristics of the firms opting for the external apprentice training approach, whereby the firms' evaluation of the results of the training actions gives pointers to the future design of training activities.**

The 'new apprenticeship', specified by the Treu Law (Art. 16 l. 196/97), has been successively fleshed out at regulatory level by the agreement between the government, regions, municipalities and mountain communities of 2 March 2000, presidential decree 257/00, and ministerial decree of 16 May 2001. The latter tasks Isfol with the organisation of tests for audits and modalities for the accreditation of basic and transversal skills, defining standards

for the skills to be attained in the field of external training. Article 68 of Law 144/99 identifies apprenticeship as one of the possible three routes of compulsory education, and enhances its role as a strategic instrument within the education and training system. The apprenticeship route offers youngsters aged 15 to 17 in Italy an alternative to school-based education or long vocational training programmes.

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## Europe/Cedefop Tracking the skills of the future

**Conference of experts presents initiatives and results on the early identification of changing skill needs in Europe**

Early identification of new skill needs is gaining increasing importance in a rapidly changing social and economic environment. Decision-makers in politics and industry can only ensure adequate educational and training provision or initiate the necessary reforms, if they are delivered timely information on the skill needs of the future.

Findings on changing skill needs are indispensable to reach the goal set by the European Council in Lisbon in 2000 to make the European Union the "most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world" and to make lifelong learning a reality. In the context of an action framework on this subject, the European social partners therefore

accorded top priority to identifying and anticipating the necessary competences and skills in 2002.

In collaboration with the German Federal Ministry of Education, Training and Research, the Fraunhofer Institute for Industrial Engineering (*Fraunhofer Institut für Arbeitswirtschaft und Organisation*) and the Social Science Research Center Berlin (*Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin für Sozialforschung*), Cedefop organised a conference on the early identification of skill needs in May 2002. The conference offered a first-time opportunity for experts to present approaches and results on the early identification of skill needs to specialists from EU and candi-

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# "Youth constructing Europe"

## Letter of the Director

2002 ended with major developments, such as agreement on the enlargement of the EU and the Copenhagen declaration on enhanced co-operation at European level in vocational education and training (see Cedefop Info 3/2002). During 2003 and 2004, Cedefop, like the European institutions and other bodies involved in vocational education and training (VET), will be confronted with the task of implementing the measures and activities agreed.

In the period until enlargement actually occurs (1 May 2004), Cedefop will be working with the European Training Foundation (ETF) and the (ten) future member states (FMS), so that from that date they will participate fully in all our activities. We took the opportunity provided by the holding of the biannual meeting of the Directors General for Vocational Training in Thessaloniki in March, to have a briefing session with the Directors General from the candidate countries. The FMS are for example already participating, in an observer capacity, in our training of trainers (TT) and reference and expertise (ReferNet) networks. Due to their involvement in the Leonardo da Vinci programme, they have for some years participated in the study visit programme which we operate on behalf of the European Commission. Cedefop Info will, in future issues, include more information on VET developments in the FMS. Contrary to many assumptions, the educational levels of citizens in these countries are in fact just as high, and in some ways even higher, than in member states (see article on page 3). The integration process should therefore be seen as a learning and enriching one for all of us. Particularly given our geographic position, we are also conscious of the need, again working with our ETF colleagues, to ensure that the remaining three candidate countries (Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey) are to the maximum extent possible able to draw on the results of our work.

Work to implement the Copenhagen declaration has set off at a frenetic pace with the establishment of a series of working groups, some within the "common objectives" framework. The first deadline for many of these groups is an interim report due during the summer. These reports will be used by the Commission as a basis for its report to the spring European Council meeting in 2004. To support the work of these groups, and in particular to keep those in the VET community informed of progress, Cedefop has at the request of the Commission, created a number of virtual communities. Those concerning the themes quality assurance, transparency, lifelong guidance (see adjacent article) and a European credit transfer system in VET are already functioning. Information concerning access to them can be found at <http://cedefop.communityzero.com>.

Johan van Rens  
 Director  
 March 2003

## Youth policies should be formulated and implemented with more input from young people. European Youth ministers agreed on three priority areas for 2003 - 2005

Under the aegis of the Council of Europe, ministers from 48 countries responsible for youth held their 6th Conference in Thessaloniki in November 2002. The ministers adopted a declaration in which they recognised the fundamental role of young people in the development of democratic societies and social cohesion. The declaration identified general trends:

- young people stay longer in full-time education and training;
- youth unemployment rates are often higher than general unemployment rates, young people are over-

represented in marginal and precarious employment;

- there is still considerable inequality as regards educational opportunity.

However,

- young people support democracy, even though they criticise the way democratic institutions work;
- the majority are positive about cultural, ethnic and social diversity in Europe.

Governments should provide the opportunities for young people and

their organisations to contribute to the elaboration and implementation of youth policies. A number of governments had included youth representatives in their national delegations to demonstrate their commitment to this approach.

Youth mobility and non-formal education/learning, as well as recognition of experiences and skills acquired within the framework of youth associations and other forms of voluntary work should be supported. Governments should be encouraged to continue their support for the youth sector within the Stability Pact for south-eastern Europe. Closer links between the activities of the Council of Europe and the

European Union could remedy divergences between the youth policies of different countries.

To ensure that the views of youth organisations were presented to the Ministers, a "Youth Event" was organised prior to the Ministers' conference. Its main aims were

- to promote closer cooperation between young people and youth organisations in South East Europe and those from other European countries;
- to raise awareness about the importance of youth organisations.

Further information:  
<http://www.coe.int/YouthThessaloniki>  
<http://www.youthforum-arg.ae.psiweb.com/>  
[http://www.youthforum-arg.ae.psiweb.com/publications/youth\\_opinion.html](http://www.youthforum-arg.ae.psiweb.com/publications/youth_opinion.html)  
 Sources: Council of Europe/European Youth Forum/Cedefop/EWS



### you@ETV

Following the launch of the you@ETV site for the European Youth Ministers' Conference in Thessaloniki in November 2002, Cedefop will continue to reach out to young people. As a first step Cedefop created a platform to present information targeted at young people on vocational education and training issues. Now Cedefop is planning a more participatory approach. The intention is to invite young researchers to help create new ways of thinking about and doing VET research.

In the electronic version of this issue of Cedefop Info, we report on a visit by students from Thessaloniki high schools to Cedefop (see also page 20).

Source: Cedefop/EWS

# Lifelong guidance to play a key role - newly established expert group starts its work

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a basis for concrete action in the field of lifelong guidance. In preparation for this a detailed work programme has been drawn up and includes:

- an impact study on EU funded projects in the guidance field;
- the development of a proposal for the convergence of existing European networks and structures in the field of information, guidance and counselling;
- the identification of policy lessons arising from the career guid-

ance review survey carried out by the OECD, Cedefop and the ETF;

- the preparation of a handbook for policy makers covering the provision of quality lifelong guidance including the development of indicators and benchmarks;
- the development of guidelines and quality criteria for the provision of guidance services and products from a citizen's perspective;
- issuing opinions on guidance aspects of future EU programmes and initiatives;
- in spring 2004 the holding of a European symposium on lifelong

guidance, bringing together key policy makers from the education/training and labour market sectors.

To facilitate the work of the group and to promote an exchange of views and experience with stakeholders drawn from the broader guidance community, Cedefop has created an electronic platform on lifelong guidance. In addition to all the papers relating to meetings of the group and EU policy papers on guidance, this will contain the results of the OECD, Cedefop and ETF research covering 31 countries. This

research constitutes the most extensive harmonised international survey ever carried out on guidance policy and practice.

The electronic platform can be accessed at [http://cedefop.communityzero.com/lifelong\\_guidance](http://cedefop.communityzero.com/lifelong_guidance)

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Source: Cedefop/JWA



## Enrique Retuerto de la Torre

It was with great sadness that Cedefop learnt in January that Mr Enrique Retuerto de la Torre, Deputy Director of Cedefop from 1987 to 1995, passed away a few weeks after his 65<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Having obtained a diploma in political sciences, Enrique Retuerto entered the Spanish public service and held a variety of posts in international relations. He worked in several countries in Latin America (Uruguay, Guatemala, Mexico) and Europe before being appointed Deputy Director of Cedefop in Berlin.

Enrique Retuerto assisted in the move of the Centre from Berlin to

Thessaloniki from where he left soon afterwards to work again in South America for some years. At the end of his somewhat nomadic international career, he was cultural attaché at the Spanish embassy in Canada.

Those, who had the good fortune to know him, have fond memories of Enrique's friendly, open, sociable and empathic way of working, his interest in cultural affairs and his com-

mitment that training and culture belong together.

The Centre offers its condolences to his family and remembers with thanks his contribution to Cedefop's success.

# Medium-term priorities are the main focus of the Centre's work in 2003

Cedefop's work programme 2003 paves the way towards electronic knowledge management and EU enlargement

One objective guides Cedefop's medium-term priorities for 2003 to 2006: promoting a European area of lifelong learning in an enlarged European Union. This encompasses the following strategic objectives: mobility and social integration, enabling and valuing learning and supporting networks and partnerships. These three strategic objectives are also the main priorities of Cedefop's work programme for the year 2003 and provide the basis for all the Centre's projects and activities.

Globalisation, new technologies and changes in workplace organisation are generating new skill requirement profiles. To face this challenge, citizens must not only be prepared to engage in lifelong learning, but also require a more highly developed and demand-oriented counselling network. The ability to draw on all possible information channels and instruments will be a key skill of the future. At the same time, the expected increases in transnational mobility call for transferable skills in initial vocational training and an easily accessible continuing training system. This will foster the effective promotion of social integration and the combating of inequality and exclusion. Cedefop is therefore examining, among others, the question of how individuals can be motivated to work on a Europe-wide guidance and counselling approach. Examining open and flexible pathways, in particular those linking formal and informal learning, access to general and vocational education and training, especially for the low-skilled, and identifying the skill needs of the future are further priorities of the Centre's current work.

Although learning always generates results, regardless of the learning environment, only certain forms of learning gain formal recognition. Valuing learning is a precondition for a learning culture for all. The basis for the transparency of qualifications and therefore the facilitation of mobility is confidence in the quality of the vocational training of the other Member States. Cedefop is therefore promoting the development of a common basic corpus of quality criteria and is working on a European system on the recognition of educational and training attainments (credit transfer).

To support networks and partnerships in an enlarged European Union, Cedefop is specifically promoting the social dialogue in the field of VET. Moreover, in cooperation with its partner organisations at European and national level, the Centre is now launching the development of a comprehensive, thematic web-based knowledge management system (KMS). All areas of the work programme 2003 contribute to the establishment of this new web-based system.

As far as research is concerned, Cedefop's research arena, Cedra, and the European Research Overview, ERO are to be fully integrated into the new knowledge management system in the course of this year. At the same time the Centre's experts are working on the finalisation of the third VET research report on the *Evaluation and impact of education and training*, due for publication in 2004. Moreover, three Agora conferences are planned on the themes of education, training and economic per-

formance, skill mismatches and a European research agenda for VET with a view to enhanced cooperation between researchers and politicians.

In its reporting in the field of KMS, Cedefop is to provide users with first blocks of interconnected information on 'lifelong learning', 'information and communication technologies (ICT) and learning' and 'VET funding arrangements' at the end of 2003. Short descriptions of the Greek and Italian VET systems and the publication of the second Cedefop policy report entitled *Learning for Employment* are also on the agenda. Similarly, a number of workshops are planned in preparation for the conference on lifelong learning which Cedefop is organising.

A Eurobarometer analysis on lifelong learning and the definition of ICT skills profiles in cooperation with the Career Space consortium also feature in the work programme. Cedefop is to initiate the establishment of databases containing good examples of practice in the VET domain and work on developing a database on e-learning resources. In activities towards opening up a European area of VET, the Centre is to set up an inventory of practices and a methodology for recognition of non-formal learning and to publish a review of career information, guidance and counselling policies in Europe.

In the area of exchange and supporting partners, Cedefop once again plans, within the framework of the

Leonardo da Vinci programme, a comprehensive study visits programme. This year visits for over 700 participants are to be organised on the issues of VET systems and their change, training needs in SMEs, the effects of social dialogue and the role of universities in vocational training. The Centre is also integrating candidate countries into its activities and expanding their presence in the European Training Village, the interactive platform for the exchange of knowledge and experience.

The Medium-term priorities 2003-2006 (ISBN 92-896-0193-0, publication no 4022) and the 2003 work programme (ISBN 92-896-0176-0, publication no 4021) are available from Cedefop (English, French and German) free of charge. They are also available in these languages on the Cedefop website, [www.cedefop.eu.int](http://www.cedefop.eu.int).

Source: Cedefop/SK

## Tracking the skills of the future

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date countries. The focus was on the presentation of country initiatives and regional, sectoral and target group-specific activities on early skill identification. The approaches ranged from 'traditional' quantitative projections and the establishment of national observation units to more qualitative scenarios and case studies.

The conference also addressed the setting up of a European network for early identification to promote an exchange of knowledge in this field. Emphasising the overriding importance of translating the results of research into political action, the experts stressed the need to involve politicians, the social partners and

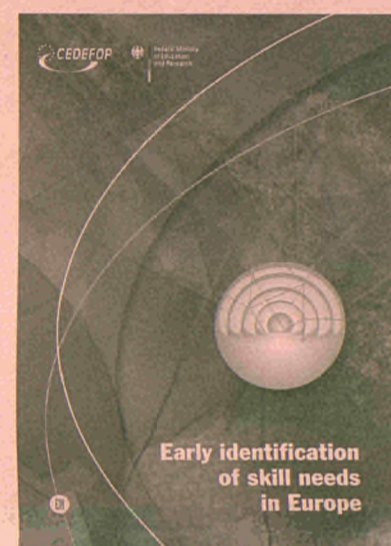
practitioners in this initiative as soon as possible. The first step in achieving this, is an international conference on the early identification of skill needs to be organised in the course of the Greek EU presidency in May 2003 at Cedefop in Thessaloniki.

The 2002 conference proceedings have been published in English by Cedefop and by the BMBF in German:

S.L. Schmidt, K. Schömann, M. Tessaring, eds. *Early identification of skill needs in Europe*. Cedefop Reference series, Luxembourg: EUR-OP, 2003, no of publication: 3029, catalogue no: TI-49-02-353-EN-C, price: EUR 25; *Früherkennung von Qualifikationserfordernissen in Europa. Qualifikationen erkennen - Berufe gestalten*. H.J. Bullinger, ed., Bielefeld: Bertelsmann, 2003.

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Source: Cedefop



Eurydice

## Key data 2002 publication demonstrates similar and distinctive features in educational systems

The fifth edition of *Key Data on Education in Europe*<sup>(1)</sup> provides a wide-ranging overview of the functioning of education systems and the participation of young people at all levels of education in 30 European countries (the 15 Member States of the European Union, the three EFTA/EEA countries and 12 candidate countries).

The publication contains 145 indicators combining statistical data and information on the management and operational methods of education systems. These are set out in five chapters structured by level of education and three chapters devoted to issues such as the teaching of foreign languages, teaching staff and the financing of education.

### Education systems in candidate countries

Shortly before enlargement, the candidate countries share many common features with those of the EU, but also have certain specific characteristics:

□ Their unit expenditure for all educational levels combined, and the salaries of their teachers are not as high as in the EU countries.

□ Overall, their schools are more autonomous as regards the recruitment and remuneration of staff. In this respect, they are quite similar to

those of the Nordic countries and the United Kingdom.

□ The difference between unemployment rates for men and women is less clear-cut irrespective of the level of qualification concerned.

□ In nearly all these countries, children of foreign mother tongue are integrated immediately into mainstream education with no linguistic support.

□ A higher proportion of young people and women have satisfactorily completed upper secondary education.

**Belated labour market integration of young people**  
Young people aged under 24 experience difficulty in entering the labour market: 19 % of them are unemployed compared to 7 % of adults aged between 25 and 64. In all 30 countries, the chances of securing employment increase with the level

of study. Unemployment rates are 4% among graduates (tertiary education), rising to 7 % for those who have received upper secondary education and 11 % for those who have done no more than complete compulsory education.

Yet possession of a tertiary level qualification guarantees neither job security (10.6 % of young graduates are employed on temporary contracts), nor employment consistent with the level of qualification. Indeed, only 50 % of young graduates in the European Union are senior executives or working in an intellectual profession, whereas 63 % of their elders come into this category.

### Popularity of vocational education

It is possible to move into a vocational branch of education at the end of primary school or after one or two years of secondary schooling in only a few European Union countries (Belgium, Luxembourg and the Netherlands). Similarly, in the candidate countries, technical and vocational courses may be accessed at the age of 14 solely in Bulgaria, Lithuania and Hungary.

By contrast, the majority of pupils in Europe are enrolled in a branch of vocational education at upper secondary level. However, in Ireland (in which the vocational branch is not on offer to young people before the age of 17), Italy, Portugal, Cyprus, Hungary and Malta, over 70 % students in upper secondary education are still enrolled in its general branch.

Boys are more strongly represented than girls. This trend is particularly marked in Belgium, the Netherlands, Austria, the United Kingdom, Liechtenstein, the Czech Republic, Slovenia and Slovakia.

### Expenditure on staff accounts for over 70 % of the education budget

Compared to other resources, deciding on expenditure in this category remains fairly centralised. Data on minimum and maximum teacher salaries clearly indicate that, in the majority of European countries, the salaries of teachers at the start of their careers are less than per capita GDP (85 % of per capita GDP on average). Length of service remains overall the main factor governing salary increases. When teachers in



Europe are about to retire, they receive on average a salary equivalent to just over one-and-a-half times the per capita GDP for their country.

<sup>(1)</sup> *Key Data on Education in Europe 2002* is published by the European Commission Directorate-General for Education and Culture, and jointly produced by Eurostat and Eurydice. It is available on the Eurydice website at the following address: [http://www.eurydice.org/Doc\\_intermediaires/indicators/en/frameset\\_key\\_data.html](http://www.eurydice.org/Doc_intermediaires/indicators/en/frameset_key_data.html) and marketed (price: EUR 18) by the Office for Official Publications of the European Communities in Luxembourg or at its national sales points.

Source: Eurydice

## European Training Foundation

# Mapping Turkey's employment situation



With projections indicating that 70% of the population will be of working age by 2020, Turkey has a demographic composition that offers good scope for economic development and increased social security. To fully exploit this situation, however, adequate investment in training is needed now and participation of women in the labour market must be encouraged.

These are the conclusions that dominated the draft Employment Background Report presented in Ankara on 27 February. Preparation of the report was funded by the ETF and co-ordinated by the Turkish National Observatory. The report will be a key source for target setting in the first Turkish Joint Assessment Paper, a draft of which is due to be prepared by the end of this year.

Participation in the seminar at which the report was tabled for discussion confirmed the strong commitment of both the Turkish authorities and the country's social partners to the process of EU accession preparations. The seminar was attended by 250 people, among whom were the Turkish Minister of Labour, the head of the EC representation in Ankara and representatives from DG Employment and Social Affairs.

"Both the number of participants and the quality of their input is very encouraging indeed," said ETF country manager for Turkey, Ms Milena

Corradini. "As an example, one of the issues pointed out by participants at the seminar was the lack of focus on the role of disabled people in the labour market. In Turkey they make up as much as ten per cent of the population and targeted steps need to be taken to increase their involvement in the labour market. The experts who prepared the draft report will take such issues back with them for inclusion in the final report which is due towards the end of May."

Promising as the demographic developments may be, the challenges they present to education and training in Turkey are quite formidable. The duration of compulsory education was extended to eight years in 1997 but the average Turkish man still has only 6.8 years of education while for women this figure is 5.3. The *Report on the Vocational Education and Training System in Turkey* (1) as prepared by the National Observatory in 2002 (and available from the ETF), revealed that the infrastructure

of vocational and technical education in Turkey is considered to be very good and that the development of tripartite structures had progressed well since legislation governing this was adopted in 1986. It also showed, however, that education is still largely a supply led affair and that the sheer number of those in need of training is imposing tremendous strain on the quality of the education provided.

Increasing the number of women active in the labour market is also an issue that needs to be addressed. Female participation currently stands at 28%. By comparison, this figure averages 68% in OECD countries.

(1) <http://www.etf.eu.int/website.nsf/Publications?ReadForm&Key=Future+Member+States+~Turkey> (only available in EN)

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Source: ETF

EU programmes

# Leonardo da Vinci, Socrates and Youth to include Turkey from 2004

The decisions establishing the Socrates, Leonardo da Vinci and Youth programmes for the period 2000-06 provide for the inclusion of Turkey.

In preparation for Turkey's participation in the Community's programmes from 2004 onwards, the European Commission and the Turkish government have signed three funding agreements as well as an agreement on the implementation of Socrates pilot actions. The overall budget amounts to a total of EUR 6 million, 78 % of which is provided by the Commission. The precise arrangements for participation in the programmes are to be set out in an agreement with Turkey.

The preparatory measures introduced at the beginning of 2003 for Turkey are part of the pre-accession strategy. The package of measures envisages the establishment of a

national agency as well as comprehensive information campaigns in Turkey. Existing networks and cooperation with the national agencies of the participating states offer an opportunity to develop contacts with a view to future partnerships.

Viviane Reding, Member of the European Commission responsible for education, culture and youth, has therefore called upon universities, training centres and youth organisations in the Member States to develop links with their Turkish counterparts.

Source: European Commission, Directorate-General for Education /Cedefop/EWS  
[http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/index\\_en.html](http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/index_en.html)

## The European Year of People with Disabilities

### "Beating the odds"

Vocational integration for people with disabilities - new paths, opportunities and perspectives  
Workshop slogan and a key theme for the planned conference on lifelong learning in June 2003

People with disabilities debate their vocational future 'Nothing about us without us', one of the slogans used by the European Commission in its activities tied in with the European Year of People with Disabilities, was put into practice at the Cedefop 'Beating the odds' workshop on 28 February 2003.

Lifelong learning as a 'driving force' of integration  
Both the Memorandum on Lifelong Learning and the European Commission Communication 'Making a European area of Lifelong Learning a Reality' expressly state that all European citizens should have access to lifelong learning; integration into education and training and motivation for active citizenship being of equal importance in this context.

#### A paradigm shift in society

The debate in the workshop emphasised the need for a paradigm shift in society to improve the vocational integration of people with disabilities. Social stigma - negative valuation by the social environment - often represents a greater barrier to integration than the actual effects of the disability itself.

Many of the present barriers to sustainable integration would be removed if society were to principally judge people with disabilities on the basis of their strengths.

Comprehensive information campaigns involving cooperation between all the major stakeholders (disabled associations and other NGOs, public authorities, social partners, firms, training organisations, etc.) could support this aim, whereby winning over media as partners was identified as being of central importance. Employers should be sensitised by means of targeted information. Precise knowledge of legislative provisions, possible means of support and cooperation opportunities for specific training measures would facilitate the intake of people with disabilities by firms.

The results of the 'Beating the odds' workshop, attended, among others, by representatives of the ILO (1), the European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education (2) and the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (3), will serve as a basis for a thematic input to

the Cedefop conference on lifelong learning in June 2003, to be held with the participation of the Greek Presidency.

#### ETUC-EDF Conference at Cedefop

Following the workshop, a conference was organised by the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) and the European Disability Forum (EDF) with the participation of the Greek Presidency from 1 to 3 March 2003. The conference discussed activities of European trade unions and the member organisations of the EDF in the field of initial and continuing training and vocational integration.

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(1) ILO International Labour Organisation, [www.ilo.org](http://www.ilo.org);  
(2) [www.european-agency.org](http://www.european-agency.org), see also Cedefop Info 3/2002  
(3) [www.eurofound.eu.int](http://www.eurofound.eu.int)

Source: Cedefop/RLO

### Europe's 'invisible citizens'

In officially opening the European Year of People with Disabilities in January in Athens, Anna Diamantopoulou, European Commissioner for Employment and Social Affairs, specified that the aim of the Year is to achieve equal rights for people with disabilities, not only on paper, but also in practice.

Society currently fails to provide an environment in which the disabled can live and work on an equal footing with the non-disabled. This makes 37 million European citizens 'invisible', a figure equivalent to almost four times the population of Belgium. 'The European Year must therefore mark the start of a lasting change', said the Commissioner.

Council Directive 2000/78/EC (1), to be implemented by the end of 2003, outlaws all forms of discrimination against disabled people at the workplace. The European Commission also intends to participate in the development of a planned new UN instrument on the protection and the promotion of the rights and dignity of people with disabilities.

(1) Directive establishing a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation, 27 November 2000, OJ L 303, 2.12.2000, p. 16.

Source: European Commission, Directorate-General for Employment and Social Affairs/Cedefop/EWS

Further information:

[http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment\\_social/index\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/index_en.htm)  
[http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment\\_social/fundamental\\_rights/index\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/fundamental_rights/index_en.htm)  
[http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment\\_social/disability/index\\_en.html](http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/disability/index_en.html)

European Year of People with Disabilities:  
<http://www.eypd2003.org/> fully accessible for the visually impaired

European Disability Forum:  
<http://www.edf-feph.org/>  
The European Disability Forum is a European umbrella organisation representing the interests of disabled people in the European Union.

Disability Intergroup in the European Parliament:  
<http://www.edf-feph.org/apdg/index-en.htm>  
An informal cross-party group within the EP for the support of the rights of disabled people. Along with the European Disability Forum, this group has developed proposals for far-reaching rules at European level on equal treatment for disabled people, presented at a press conference in March.



### The European Year of People with Disabilities

The next issue of Cedefop Info will include a dossier section related to the European Year of People with Disabilities. Readers' attention is also drawn to an article concerning an interesting social partner initiative in Ireland to address the high levels of unemployment among people with disabilities, in the electronic version of this issue of Cedefop Info (see page 20).

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## Training in agriculture - a social partner agreement ... and a Cedefop publication

**An agreement, negotiated and adopted within the European social dialogue committee for agriculture, aims to raise the skills levels of farm employees and encourage free movement within the EU.**

In the agreement, the social partners request that, in all Member States, agricultural workers should have the opportunity to have skills assessments drawn up. Their acquired qualifications should be validated by a competent authority with a view to obtaining a diploma. In order to facilitate occupational mobility and the free movement of workers, the agreement stresses the importance of the transparency of diplomas and advocates the introduction of a worker's booklet of vocational qualifications and skills.

The agreement was negotiated between the Employers' Group of the Committee of Agricultural Organisations in the European Union (*Groupe Employeurs des Organisations Professionnelles Agricoles, GEOPA-COPA*) for the farm employers and EFFAT, the European Federation of trade unions in Food, Agriculture, Tourism and allied branches representing agricultural workers. It was signed in the presence of Anna Diamantopoulou, European Commissioner for Employment and Social Affairs.

Both GEOPA-COPA and EFFAT see the agreement as an important step in implementing the Lisbon strategy for a more competitive, job-rich Europe and the social policy agenda. They accept the challenge of improving em-

ployment and raising the level of vocational qualifications for agricultural workers. They advocate a joint approach to validation and recognition of formal and non-formal education throughout the EU. The agreement proposes a number of initiatives to national organisations representing agricultural employers and employees, Member State authorities and the Commission. These include involving social partners in the organisation of vocational training and in particular:

- ❑ establishing opportunities for workers to have their skills assessed;
- ❑ recognition of non-formal training and the validation of skills acquired on the job;
- ❑ making the current systems of diplomas and certificates more transparent and easier to understand and
- ❑ issuing to each agricultural worker, who applies for it, an agricultural worker's booklet of vocational qualifications and skills.

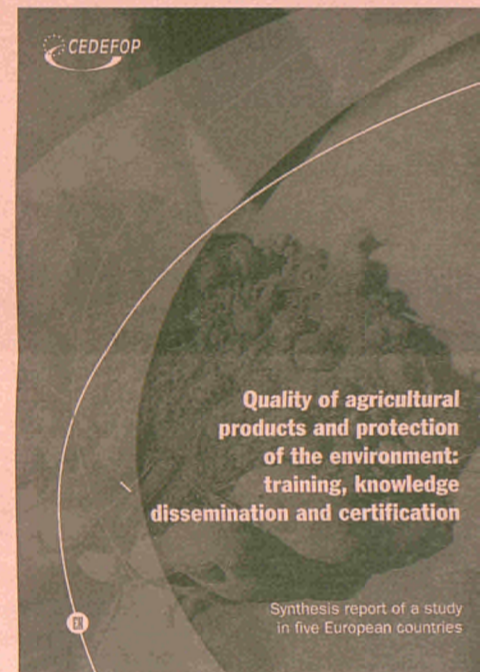
The member organisations of GEOPA and EFFAT are now called upon to negotiate at national level on the practical implementation of the policy as defined in the European agreement, by example through the establishment of national reference centres, where any official certificate relating to initial or continuing vocational training in agriculture, issued in a Member state, can be registered.

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**Cedefop has just published a study<sup>(1)</sup> on training and the quality of agricultural products and protection of the environment.**

The main objective of the study, which covers five countries (Germany, Spain, Greece, the Netherlands and Portugal), was to examine existing environmental education and agricultural practices friendly to the environment. In addition, it aimed to define new knowledge qualifications related to environmental issues and to producing alternative agricultural products without agrochemicals (organic farming). It suggests how these qualifications can best be acquired. To meet these objectives, specific questionnaires were designed for each category of people involved in the chain – organic farmers, certification institutes, inspectors, consultants, teachers, retailers and consumers. The main finding of the study is that education, training, innovation transfer and information on producing and distributing certified organic products are important for all the bodies involved in the chain, regardless of educational level.

Source: Cedefop/JMA



<sup>(1)</sup> Quality of agricultural products and protection of the environment: training, knowledge dissemination and certification  
Synthesis report of a study in five European countries  
Papadaki-Klavdianou A., Menkisoglou-Spirodi O., Tsakiridou  
Price (excluding VAT) EUR 25  
no of publication: 3027, ISBN 92-896-0174-4;  
catalogue no: TI-49-02-361-EN-C

## Motivation as a key to success..



... is one of the key statements of the OECD study 'Beyond Rhetoric: Adult Learning Policies and Practices'. The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) advises a comprehensive strategy.

What motivates adults to use further and continuing training opportunities? First and foremost pertinent up-to-date information and sound advice and guidance suited to the individual needs. Adults do not want to waste their time relearning what they already know. Skills acquired in work, home or community settings should be assessed, recognised and validated. Learning opportunities should be adapted to the circumstances, schedule and learning pace of adults. Content and methodology should be learner-centred and

contextualised to make it relevant to adults' experiences.

Measures to stimulate employment-related training in enterprises for workers and for the unemployed require better planning. Older workers or victims of restructuring measures should be assured access to skills assessment and the possibility of skills development. Training programmes in the context of labour market policies should take account of the individual needs of the learners. Flexible admission and certifica-

tion are of advantage. Financial incentives both for the individual and for enterprises are a further essential factor of a comprehensive strategy. The OECD study quotes concrete relevant examples from the nine participating countries<sup>(1)</sup>.

Quality assurance and evaluation should be an integral part of policy design. There is still a great deal of work to be done in this context. Most evaluation of adult learning policies has so far been limited to the measurement of quantitative

data. The OECD therefore recommends developing broader evaluation tools to measure effectiveness of policies. More sharing of best practices at a national as well as an international level could greatly contribute to improving the quality of policies and programmes.

The OECD recommends the following 'key ingredients':  
❑ coordination between all activities and partners;  
❑ a balanced interaction between a top-down approach, in which governments define structures and financing procedures, and a bottom-up approach that enables the development of integrated assessment concepts.

The individual and the enterprise should be at the centre of an integrated approach encompassing formal and informal learning, initial education, training and in-company further and continuing training and at the same time balancing goals of economic development with social and personal development.

<sup>(1)</sup> Canada, Denmark, Finland, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom

Overview *Beyond Rhetoric: Adult Learning Policies and Practices* is available free of charge in EN, FR, DE, ES, JP from OECD Publications: [www.oecd.org/bookshop](http://www.oecd.org/bookshop). The Overview contains highlights from *Beyond Rhetoric: Adult Learning Policies and Practices* © 2003, OECD, which can be purchased from the OECD Paris Centre: 2, rue André-Pascal, F-75775 Paris Cedex 16, or at [www.oecd.org/bookshop](http://www.oecd.org/bookshop).

Source: OECD/Cedefop/E

# PLOTEUS – the European portal on learning opportunities

PLOTEUS ([www.ploteus.net](http://www.ploteus.net)), the Portal on Learning Opportunities Throughout the European Space, was launched in March by Viviane Reding, the European Commissioner in charge of Education and Training.

The portal, whose name recalls the ancient Greek for "navigator", aims to support people who want to go and study in another European country, by helping them to find the relevant information about courses, the structure of education and training systems, opportunities for financial support, accommodation and social insurance etc. Until now, no comparable information system existed in Europe.

PLOTEUS covers thirty European countries and its interface is available in all EU languages and in some candidate countries languages (for the moment, Lithuanian, Latvian and Estonian). It has been created in the framework of a life-long learning perspective, providing information on learning opportunities at all levels of general education and vocational training, from primary school and initial education and training through to higher and adult education.

The principle which lies behind PLOTEUS is that the responsibility for providing and updating the information in it should stay as close as possible to the source, i.e. at institutional, regional or national level. The role of the European Commission is to link the information resources and databases existing at national level by providing a portal, which facilitates user-friendly navigation among them. This makes the system much more sustainable than a centralised database. Keeping in mind the objective of sustainability and of decentralised responsibility for the information, it was decided that the links contained in the portal should be identified at the national level rather than by a centralised service. The task of selection and classification of the content is therefore carried out by a network of

National Resource Centres for Vocational Guidance (the Euroguidance network), which is funded under the Leonardo da Vinci programme ([http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/leonardo/leonardo2/euroguid\\_en.html](http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/leonardo/leonardo2/euroguid_en.html)).

For the moment, the portal gives access to existing national and regional databases and websites. PLOTEUS does not provide direct information about single courses, but it directs users towards websites or databases which they must then open and learn how to use. In the longer term, in order to provide citizens with more effective and direct access to information, national databases should become interoperable, making it possible to interrogate them directly through the European interface. This requires agreement between the national authorities on a common protocol for metadata and for the classification of information. The Commission has already started to work with national authorities in order to achieve a higher degree of interoperability between national databases. An expert group is currently analysing the possible options for a common protocol, in order to develop some precise guidelines to be followed by national authorities when building databases of learning opportunities.

The creation of Ploteus should be seen within the context of other EU actions to improve vocational guidance and encourage mobility, for example the European curriculum vitae (<http://www.cedefop.gr/transparency>), the drawing up of a common certificate supplement and the creation of EURES, the database of employment opportunities (<http://europa.eu.int/eures/index.jsp>).

Source: European Commission (Directorate General for Education and Culture)/Cedefop

## elearningeuropa

Education Commissioner Viviane Reding unveils new eLearning web portal  
<http://www.elearningeuropa.info/>

Pointing out that 'the use of communication technologies for educational purposes is an important component in giving the European Union a leading role in the knowledge-based economy', Education Commissioner Viviane Reding unveiled the new eLearning portal at the opening of 'Learntec 2003' (1). In the words of the Commissioner, the new portal is to be 'above all a forum for dialogue to encourage the authorities, business and civil society to devote greater resources to eLearning and to work together more'.

The new portal provides information on the proposal for a multi-annual European Commission programme on eLearning (2) as well as national public and private-sector initiatives in this field. It includes examples on the use of

new communication technologies in education and features information on projects under way, with the objective of facilitating an exchange of ideas and experience between the people responsible for the projects.

The portal can also be used to access national policies to promote eLearning and retrieve information on the main events in Europe in the field of eLearning. In addition, it features a glossary of terms used in this area as well as contributions by relevant experts.

(1) see also article below  
(2) Proposal for a decision of the European Parliament and the Council, COM(2002) 751; [http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/elearning/doc\\_en.html](http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/elearning/doc_en.html)

Source: EC/DG Education and Culture/Cedefop/EWS

## eLearning "steps out of infancy"

Trends from an online survey in January 2003 among users of the European Training Village, [www.trainingvillage.gr](http://www.trainingvillage.gr)

Cedefop Director Johan van Rens presented the results of the online survey at Learntec 2003 in Karlsruhe in February. Cedefop featured as a partner for the first time at this international trade fair for education and information technologies.

The initial results of the survey reveal that information technologies in the European Union and beyond its borders are increasingly becoming an integral component of learning provision: 68 % of respondents indicated that at least one out of every ten training hours took the form of computer-based learning, while more than 30 % are convinced that half

of their initial/continuing training time will be in the form of eLearning in twelve months time. This appraisal is confirmed by trainers and training organisations.

As in the past, practitioners and policy makers still have a considerable demand for information on the possible use of relevant technologies in education and training.

The full text of the online survey is available (following ETV registration) online: [http://www.trainingvillage.gr/etv/Projects\\_Networks/ELearning/survey/List.asp](http://www.trainingvillage.gr/etv/Projects_Networks/ELearning/survey/List.asp)

Further information on the survey from:  
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Source: Cedefop/IVO/NW/EWS

# Internationalisation of vocational training

The Netherlands

## Raising quality and quantity in Europass

In July 2001, a report on a national evaluation (1) organised among Dutch users of the Europass (for information on Europass see Cedefop Info 2/2002) was published.

Themes of the evaluation included

- the level of support from the management of educational institutions,
- the implementation process in the various units of the institution,
- the form and content of the Europass itself,
- the effect of the Europass on all actors and on mobility and
- the validation of the document by society.

The results of the evaluation gave insights into the way in which Europass has been adopted in the field of secondary vocational education. In the first year, around 275 Europasses were distributed by 18 educational institutions. Some schools were very positive and used its award to the students as a promotion event. Others were more sceptical about the form, content and civil status of the document. One overall comment was that the Europass should also be available in electronic format.

In 2002, the national Europass co-ordination group (consisting of three organisations representing the regional training centres, the national bodies for vocational education and the private educational institutions) chose another approach. The objective was to raise quality and quantity. The number of Europass documents distributed multiplied by three in the second year of implementation and the number of institutions joining in the initiative increased substantially. The website was up-

dated and free cards were distributed aimed at making the Europass better known amongst students and teachers. A national conference to promote good practice was held with representatives from the Ministry of Education and Science, social partners, educational institutions and national bodies.

To raise quality, an expert meeting was organised on the themes of

- registration,

- the involvement of companies in the implementation of the Europass and
- the relation of the Europass with other existing (European) vocational passports, certificates or diplomas.

The development of a more accurate registration method, as well as the involvement of companies, will be a focal point for the coming year. Also, closer cooperation will be sought with Europass offices in other European coun-

tries to exchange experiences and views. The website will be further updated and partly opened up to English readers.

(1) André Herbrink. *Rapportage nationale evaluatie van de implementatie van de Europass in Nederland* (Report of the national evaluation of the implementation of Europass in the Netherlands, in Dutch only. CINOP. July 2001. Further information: [mmaes@cinop.nl](mailto:mmaes@cinop.nl) (Electronically available free of charge, no ISBN number).

Further information: National Europass coordinator, Manfred Polzin, [mpolzin@bveraad.nl](mailto:mpolzin@bveraad.nl)

Source: National Europass coordination group (BVE-raad/Colo/Paepon)/CINOP

Austria

## Portal improves transparency

Chance Europa portal: instruments for successful skills marketing

Under the slogan 'Successful skills marketing', the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, in conjunction with the Austrian national reference point for vocational qualifications, has launched a new Internet portal as a contribution towards greater transparency. *Chance Europa* provides detailed information on transparency instruments developed at European level, e.g. initiatives, documents and forms giving employers in other Member States an insight into applicants' qualifications and skills. This initiative therefore brings the vision of a 'European area of lifelong learning', in which people can move freely between institutions,

systems, sectors and countries and acquire qualifications recognised across Europe, a step closer to reality.

Under [www.chance-europa.at](http://www.chance-europa.at), users can find the European CV, which, alongside the usual particulars, details additional social skills and competences acquired outside the scope of formal training schemes. The certificate supplement gives a detailed description of the content of the different final examination certificates as a means of promoting portability of qualifications beyond the context of the national job market. The diploma supplement follows the

same objective as far as academic degrees are concerned. The Internet portal also provides information on Europass Training, an attestation of training pathways followed in other EU Member States; visitors to the site can in fact complete an application form for a Europass online. The portal's range of information is rounded off by details on and links to the European language portfolio (recording language learning and cultural experience) and the European Computer Driving Licence (demonstrating basic IT skills), and, last but not least, to the Austrian national reference point which handles queries on initial vocational training in Austria and other European countries.

Source: bmbwk/Cedefop/SK

# Language learning - irrelevant to vocational training?

Foreign language learning is often neglected in vocational education and training (VET) practice. A seminar in the context of the Cedefop study visits programme addressed the issue of integrating vocational practices and language learning.

## Linguistic competences as a new basic skill

Learning languages develops understanding for people from other linguistic groups and at the same time increases awareness of one's own mother tongue. Learning a foreign language requires learning strategies. These make learning easier later on in life.

Foreign language skills are the key to training courses and work placements abroad and open up a wider range of career opportunities. Linguistic competences facilitate integration in both the workplace and the social environment abroad. And, last but not least, language skills, in particular communication with business partners in their own mother tongue, are of economic advantage<sup>(1)</sup>.

Despite all these advantages, language learning is frequently neglected in VET practice. What could be the reason for this?

Are the language skills acquired prior to VET regarded as sufficient? Are foreign language competences only presumed to be important for certain occupations or functions? Is it believed that language learning would overload training courses? Are young people in VET considered to be not gifted enough for language learning? Or are there misconceptions about the necessary language skills in vocational practice?

## Language learning in VET

At the end of 2002, Cedefop organised a seminar which brought together participants from eight countries (F, ISL, HU, NL, A, PL, SI and UK) following the study visits on language learning in VET (2001-02).

How can Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) be implemented in the field of VET? What is the interaction between language learning and mobility projects? What are the implications of increasing international cooperation in VET for language learning?

These questions were explored with Patrizia Baralli (European Commission), Polly Perkins (CINOP, NL), David Marsh (University of Jyväskylä, FI) and Søren Kristensen

(previously with Cedefop). The outcomes are to be fed into Cedefop's input to the European Commission's consultation process on language learning<sup>(1)</sup>.

## Work-related skills through language learning

CLIL can motivate young people in VET to learn languages, boost learners' self-esteem and promote both real and virtual mobility. Language portfolios can make learning progress visible. It is not a question of using a foreign language as the medium of instruction; the aim is to teach work-related skills through another language. This method calls for interactive forms of learning. The foreign language does not necessarily have to be taught throughout the entire training programme. Teacher/facilitator training/development and support/coaching is essential. But language development is only one issue and particular attention should be given to methodology/didactic tools. Although language and VET teachers can work in a team, the project is often implemented without language teachers.

## Work-related skills through mobility and languages

Work placements abroad can and should promote the combination of work-related and linguistic competences. This means that mobility measures must be well embedded into the course programme. The choice of partner, the time and duration of the placement, clarification of legal frameworks and participant selection provide the basis for successful mobility measures. Adequate technical, linguistic and personal preparation, support and accompaniment during the placement, as well as follow-up activities and recognition and utilisation of the acquired competences are essential for success. Teachers, workplace supervisors and trainees need to know what to expect, not only as far as the initial competences of the trainees are concerned, but also in terms of the occupational profile of the firm and the work-related, linguistic and pedagogical aims of the work placement. Language audits can help define linguistic competences and requirements<sup>(2)</sup>. Preparation needs to strike an even balance between work-related and social

communication skills. Awareness-raising among all the relevant players will help avoid linguistic and cultural problems.

Teaching through the medium of a foreign language and learning and working abroad should be embedded as an objective of vocational training programmes. This multidimensional concept should be promoted in the framework of international cooperation in the field of VET.

<sup>(1)</sup> See the adjacent article 'Improving foreign language skills'

<sup>(2)</sup> See the article below 'Language auditing for business and vocational education'

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A detailed report on the seminar is soon to be available on the homepage of the Cedefop study visits programme for VET specialists:  
<http://www2.trainingvillage.gr/etv/studyvisits/index.asp>  
New address: <http://studyvisits.cedefop.eu.int>

Further useful websites:  
<http://www.cilicompilium.com/cililinks.htm>  
<http://www.euroclit.net/>  
Report on the teaching of a specialist subject through the medium of a foreign language  
<http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/languages/download/downloads.html>

Language portfolio: [http://culture2.coe.int/portfolio/inc.asp?L=E&M=\\$t/208-1-0-1/main\\_pages/welcome.html](http://culture2.coe.int/portfolio/inc.asp?L=E&M=$t/208-1-0-1/main_pages/welcome.html)

Source: Cedefop/EWS

# Improving foreign language skills

...is one of the priorities of the *Work programme on the future objectives of education and training systems* <sup>(1)</sup> of the European Commission and the Member States. An action plan to promote language learning is to be published in the summer of 2003.

A public consultation was held on this issue between December 2002 and the end of February 2003, with the documents 'Language Learning and Linguistic Diversity' and the 'European Union's activities in the field of language teaching and learning' serving as important sources of background information.<sup>(2)</sup> The online questionnaire included the following subject areas on possible European and national initiatives:

- In what ways can the objective of teaching at least two foreign languages from a very early age best be achieved?
- In what ways can the range of languages taught be increased?
- In what ways can teacher training and language learning be improved?
- In what ways can a transparent system of language skill assessment be created?
- In what ways can regional, 'minority', 'migrant' and sign languages best be integrated into European education and training programmes?

In what ways can a more language-friendly environment be created?

The consultation process is to be concluded by a conference in the spring, bringing together representatives of various European organisations and associations.

Moreover, a compilation of 'best practices' in the field of language teaching and learning has been available in the project database of the European Label for innovative projects in language teaching and learning since February: <http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/language/label/index.cfm>.

<sup>(1)</sup> [http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/policy\\_en.html#programme](http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/policy_en.html#programme)  
<sup>(2)</sup> [http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/languages/consult\\_de.html](http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/languages/consult_de.html)

Further information:  
<http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/languages/de/index.html>

Source: European Commission/DG Education and Culture/Language policy/Cedefop/EWS

## The Netherlands

# Language auditing for business and vocational education

In 2001, the Year of Languages, the Dutch Ministry for Economic Affairs asked the Centre for innovation in vocational education and training (CINOP) to develop a language audit for business.

In the continuing globalisation of the business world many Dutch companies were experiencing a lack of foreign language knowledge needed to promote their businesses at home and abroad.

## Use and development of the audit

The CINOP language audit<sup>(1)</sup> is based on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages<sup>(2)</sup>. It can be used by businesses to assess their specific (foreign) language needs and compare these needs with the foreign language knowledge of their personnel. The differences between the needs of the company and the knowledge of the employees form the basis for tailor-made language courses. These can be correlated to other language

courses, which use the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages as a basis. It also enables the company to develop a foreign language training policy and be more specific about the foreign language requirements of the company during job-interviews.

In 2002, the paper version of the audit, was tested in companies, revised and completed. This also included a prototype for a digital model. The language audit instruments, themselves, are presently available in Dutch, French and German<sup>(1)</sup>.

## Language auditing and mobility

Although the language audit has been designed for business and industry, it has also been used in

cross-border projects, such as *Euregio*, to analyse the language needs of business and industry in border areas, in which workers and vocational students are encouraged to be mobile and cross borders to find work. At present vocational schools are also using the audit instruments to assess the language needs of companies which take students for work-experience placements.

<sup>(1)</sup> The language audit is available on [www.trefpunttalen.nl](http://www.trefpunttalen.nl) under TalenAudit.

<sup>(2)</sup> For more information on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (Council of Europe; Strasbourg 2000), see <http://culture.coe.int/portfolio>, <http://www.cambridge.org>

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Source: CINOP

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# A network to promote vocational training



The European Vocational Training Association (EVTA) is a European vocational training network comprising 14 member organisations from 13 European countries<sup>(1)</sup>. Its aim is to mobilise its members to contribute to high quality vocational training in Europe.

EVTA is developing two tools with a view to achieving its objectives:

□ An intranet network (EXEMPLO) linking up its members to facilitate a debate between network members and the transfer of good practices pooled by the staff of member organisations.

□ A project development platform with the participation of experts from its member organisations on six main themes selected by the network organisations:

1. making lifelong learning accessible to all and identifying the methods to motivate future learners to participate;
2. recognising companies offering training sessions and establishing a register of these companies;
3. promoting an open and distance learning approach and common standards among members;
4. contributing to achieving quality in the field of social and vocational guidance;
5. developing a qualification comparison method at international level to improve transparency;

6. encouraging and facilitating recognition and accreditation of prior learning, in particular preparing a training programme for trainers.

EVTA is actively involved in European debates on vocational training and has an open ear for the input and proposals of both European institutions and practitioners in the field.

Resolved to take up the major challenge of EU enlargement, EVTA is mindful of the need to integrate the candidate countries into its activities in the interests of cross-fertilisation.

EVTA is convinced that the only road to a knowledge-based society is by sharing knowledge and maintaining a dialogue; accordingly,

far from being obstacles, cultural and geographical differences are regarded as assets. EVTA wishes to make this idea a reality by means of its EXEMPLO and project development platform tools.

<sup>(1)</sup> Belgium, Cyprus, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden

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Source EVTA/Cedefop



## Lifelong learning

Finland

### Improving the educational level of the adult population

The Finnish government has launched a programme to improve the educational level of the adult population during the years 2003 to 2007. The prime aim of the programme, which has been granted 12 million Euro in 2003, is to raise the educational level of adults with low educational attainments.

The programme was one of the key recommendations made by the parliamentary working group<sup>(1)</sup> on adult education in its February 2002 report. The group consisted of representatives from the Ministries of Education and of Labour, the National Board of Education, the Provincial State Offices, the labour unions and employers' organisations, as well as other interest groups.

#### Growing demand for labour

The retirement of the numerically large post-war generation will cause great changes in the supply of labour and the employment rate in the next few years. In 2003, the number of employees leaving the labour market will exceed the number of those entering it. The reduction will particularly affect employees engaged in manual labour.

On the other hand, candidates for the vacated posts will be confronted by higher skill demands and increasingly be expected to possess versatile vocational, communication and ICT skills. There will be less and less work for those without post-compulsory education and training and they will run a greater risk of unemployment, even in times of labour shortage.

Accordingly, the aim of the programme is to encourage those adults with lower secondary education or less to stay on in working life and to enhance their career prospects. It also aims at raising the activity rate, from 67.7 % in 2001 to 70 %.

#### Increasing motivation to study

The parliamentary working group on adult education defined the target group for the programme as people, particularly those at work, in the 25-54 age group with only basic (lower secondary) education. It is estimated that there are 330 000 such persons.

The aim of the programme is, using existing structures and institutions, to provide participants with an upper secondary education and training and the necessary studying skills, as well as the information and social skills required by working life. Part of the funding will be channelled into information and counselling services, as research results indicate that those with only basic education are less willing to participate in education.

The programme will be realised in two different ways. Firstly, state funded upper secondary vocational education and training, further vocational education and training and apprenticeship training will all be specifically targeted at this group. Secondly, additional study places and other support measures will be funded. Finance will be granted to measures that motivate participation in education and to regional projects providing different types of study support.

In 2003 the funding will make it possible to provide training for almost 3 500 persons. After 2003, there should be funding for training 10 000 persons annually, but the final decision on funding for 2004 to 2007 will be left to the parliament elected in March 2003.

<sup>(1)</sup>Report of the parliamentary adult education and training committee (Parlamentaarisen aikuiskoulutustyöryhmän mietintö) Ministry of Education. (including English summary) <http://www.minedu.fi/minedu/index.html>

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Source: NBE

Ireland

### Radical recommendations by lifelong learning taskforce

A strategic framework for lifelong learning in Ireland has been proposed in the report of a taskforce representing social partner, government and education and training interests <sup>(1)</sup>. The establishment of the taskforce derived from commitments made in the national partnership agreement Programme for Prosperity and Fairness (see Cedefop Info 2/2000). The report is written within the context of the European Commission's Memorandum on Lifelong Learning and the subsequent Irish consultation process on its themes.

As in the rest of Europe the emphasis on lifelong learning is partly driven by economic concerns brought on by the projected decline of new entrants into the workforce and the consequent need to upskill existing workers. This report focuses on these adult learners and the issues facing them. Lifelong learning is also driven by social concerns, in particular the view that access to more and better jobs is a fundamental underpinning of an inclusive society.

The taskforce highlights the fundamental issues, which need to be addressed in the move from the traditional view of education and training to that of lifelong learning. It sets out the following essential elements in its proposed framework:

- developing and implementing the National Framework of Qualifications
- ensuring basic skills for all
- providing comprehensive and coherent guidance and information
- addressing delivery, access and funding issues.

The taskforce recommends that consideration be given to the development of a foundation qualification in workplace skills, which would be available to all employees. The proposed skills include information technology, social skills, workplace and personal safety, literacy, numeracy, communication and business literacy. In the light of the 1995 OECD literacy survey which found that 25% of Irish adults scored at the lowest level of literacy, it recommends that Skillnets (see Cedefop Info 1/2002), the training networks programme, should consider new networks aimed at addressing workplace literacy. As regards continuing development of trainers and facilitators, the report says that the work of the Trainers Network under the ADAPT initia-

tive should be built on. It also advocates the establishment by FÁS (Training and Employment Authority) of a register of approved trainers.

Delivery, access and funding issues are seen as the biggest challenges to be faced in the provision of lifelong learning. The report recommends that the Government should commit itself to the introduction of paid statutory learning leave in consultation with the social partners. Learning leave practices in the EU are examined and an overview of member states' practices is appended to the report. The taskforce also calls for an end to the payment of fees by part-time students. If the qualifications of the adult population are to be raised, it is essential, the report states, to get rid of fees for the more than 34 000 part-time students in publicly-funded, certified courses in higher education, distance learning and further education. The drop in the number of 18-year-olds from 74 000 in 1998 to 47 000 by 2012 will have a dramatic effect on the profile of student intake into further and third level education and will lead to a re-focusing of provision towards adult clients.

It is proposed that a single national source of lifelong learning information - the National Learning Line - should be developed, addressing the requirements for information on education and training opportunities, on costs and subsidies available to support learning and on job-related market information. An integrated guidance system when developed would link into the National Learning Line.

<sup>(1)</sup> Report of the Taskforce on Lifelong Learning, October 2002. ISBN 0-7557-1309-5 Available: Government Publications, Postal Trade Section, 51 St. Stephen's Green, IRL-Dublin 2. Tel. (353-1) 647 6834 Fax (353-1) 647 6843 Price: EUR 3. Download address: <http://www.entemp.ie/lfd/lifelong.pdf>

Source: FÁS



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## Education policy

The Netherlands

### Five policy priorities for 2003 to 2006

The Minister and Secretary of State responsible for education have formulated five policy priorities for the 2003 to 2006 period. They opt for a new relationship between government and society and propose more responsibility for education institutions. Although other ministries are facing cuts in their budgets in this period, an extra 354 million Euro is reserved for education, culture and science.

The five priorities focusing specifically on the VET sector are:

**1. Autonomy and accountability - fewer rules, more education**

In secondary and higher vocational education the administrative load will be reduced. In secondary vocational education the number of approved qualifications will be radically reduced.

A pre-condition in the process to more autonomy is the quality of the outcomes (quality assurance) and accountability.

**2. An attractive teaching profession**

The biggest point of concern at the moment is the shortage of teachers.

The social partners, schools, institutions and the government will have to tackle this problem (see for example separate article on page 18 of this issue). Function differentiation, better career perspectives for teachers and the attraction of people from other sectors are some of the issues. In December 2002, the Minister sent a 'Labour market and personnel policy' action plan to the Second Chamber. It proposed measures to handle the shortage of teachers at regional level.

**3. An improved policy for vertical streaming**

The transfer from pre-vocational to secondary vocational and higher

professional education is necessary to respond to the demands of the knowledge society. A new pedagogical-didactical approach for all sectors in vocational education should be developed to create a smooth transfer (<sup>1</sup>).

The career of the student is at the centre of this policy and a better cooperation of all government departments concerned should guarantee a lower drop out rate. The pre-vocational education sector needs extra emphasis and support to improve its quality and image. The government also wishes to cooperate with other EU-countries to increase transparency in international vocational education.

**4. Modern facilities**

New teaching methods, the new functions and requirements of education and training and the need for small scale environments all demand modern, flexible facilities. A vision on the further integration of ICT in education will be elaborated.

**5. The learner at the centre**

For every learner, an adequate transfer should be guaranteed from pre-school to primary school, from primary to secondary education, from the various forms of vocational education to higher education and from learning at school to learning on the job. Learners leaving the education system should have attained a basic qualification to enter the labour

market. A better cooperation between education and trade and industry is essential to make this possible.

In 2003 three themes will be at the centre of developments- the qualification structure for vocational education based on competences, practical training and the examination process.

(<sup>1</sup>) Elly de Bruijn, in cooperation with José van den Berg, Fleur Dinjens, Jan Geurts and Ties Pauwels. *De pedagogisch-didactische benadering in de beroepsopleiding. Bouwstenen voor een herontwerp* (The pedagogical-didactical approach in vertical streaming in vocational education and training. Building blocks for a redesign) publication in Dutch only. CINOP, January 2003. (ISBN: 90-5003-388-1, EUR 14,20 excl. porto) More information: verkoop@cinop.nl

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 Source: Ministry of Education, Culture and Science/ CINOP

Denmark

### Implementing "Better education"

The Danish government, formed in November 2001, issued, in June 2002, an action plan "Better Education" (<sup>1</sup>). This outlines the major trends of educational policy, including a number of changes for the VET-system, for example the reform of commercial vocational education and training (see Cedefop Info 3/2002).

The objective of the action plan is to strengthen the proficiency and competence level in upper secondary and higher education, in adult and further education and in continuing training. Initiatives in these areas must be seen in close connection with the aims of the primary and lower secondary schools (*Folkeskole*) and with the government's other initiatives, such as its growth strat-

egy. From 2003, onwards, the government will launch a number of major reforms, in particular in general upper secondary education and at university level.

In adult and further education and continuing training, there will, among other things, be a development in training provision and its connection with the vocational edu-

cation and training area is to be strengthened. New vocationally oriented adult education programmes are to be launched, as are major transversal initiatives.

One of these transversal initiatives is the use of information technologies (IT). Here the focus shifts from hardware and the development of e-networks to educational content,

knowledge sharing and the development of IT competences. The focus is to be on how teaching, learning and IT can be combined in a fruitful way that exploits the vast opportunities offered by IT. The intention is to move the focus from learning *about* IT to learning *with* IT. IT is to be integrated in daily education and training and used to create new forms of examination.

Other examples of transversal initiatives include improved educational and vocational guidance, and strengthening the teaching of natu-

ral sciences through the entire education system. Finally, the international dimension is to be strengthened in all education programmes.

(<sup>1</sup>) Better Education Action Plan, 2002, ISBN 87-603-2240-3, [pub.uvm.dk/2002/better1](http://pub.uvm.dk/2002/better1), published by the Danish Ministry of Education as an online publication; Better Education - a brief introduction - is available online and can be downloaded from: [pub.uvm.dk/2002/better2](http://pub.uvm.dk/2002/better2). It can also be ordered in a printed edition - as long as stocks are available - from Danish Ministry of Education  
 E-mail: [forlag@uvm.dk](mailto:forlag@uvm.dk)  
 Fax (45-3392) 5219  
 Order no UVM 0113; Ordering fee: Dkr 40  
<http://pub.uvm.dk/2002/better1/>

Further information: <http://www.uvm.dk> and then choose preferred language.

Denmark

## Panel set up to strengthen innovation

The Minister of Education has set up a "visionary" panel for innovation and entrepreneurship in Danish education. The panel is a forum for dialogue between the Minister, the world of work and the educational sector on how education can promote creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship.

The basic reason for establishing the panel is to ensure Danish competitiveness in the global market. Education can play a crucial role in creating a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship. This requires that the energy and active minds of pupils and students be stimulated as early as possible. The labour market of the future requires innovative skills among both self-employed persons and salaried staff. This is a challenge for the educational system as a whole, but in particular for initial education.

16 people from business life and the educational sector have been appointed to the panel with a view to their contributing constructively to creating a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship in Danish educational programmes. The panel is part of the government's action plan for entrepreneurship and its establishment for a period of two years should be seen in the context of the overall action plan "Better education" (see separate article on page 9), in which innovation and entrepreneurship are targeted for special action.

During the next two years, the panel will discuss the following items:

- How can an innovative environment in the educational sector be created and supported?
- How can education contribute to creating a culture, which enhances entrepreneurship and self-employment?
- How can education develop the skills and competencies among pupils and students that are prerequisites for innovative work later in life, for instance as self-employed persons?
- What is the role and function of teachers? What teaching aids and materials do they need? What further (in-service) training is necessary for them in order to cope with the above challenges?

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Source: Cirius

Germany

## Spelling and arithmetic deficiencies

Long-term BASF study points to creeping deficits among lower and intermediate secondary school leavers

A long-term study conducted by BASF AG reveals a creeping decline in the spelling and elementary arithmetic skills of young training place applicants. Applicant trainees were set the task of checking the spelling of 30 words, solving a number of basic arithmetic problems and calculating a series of percentages. The company has been using the same aptitude tests for almost 25 years as the skills they test still have elementary importance for everyday life, training and work.

The long-term consideration of the annual average scores of a minimum of 300 young tested persons with a classical lower or intermediate secondary school certificate points to a continuous downward trend. The tested lower secondary school (*Hauptschule*) leavers show catastrophic deficiencies in spelling: only one third of the young people were able to correctly solve the spelling test in 2002, compared to one half in 1975. Although the results in basic arithmetic are better, the pass rate nevertheless fell from 72 % in 1975 to 53 % in 2002. Among intermediate secondary school (*Realschule*) leavers, the pass rate in the spelling test was only 56 % in 2002 compared to

75 % in 1975. In the basic arithmetic test, the pass rate fell from 76 % to 58 %.

The BASF study sees pocket calculators as the root of the problem in basic arithmetic: the study's assumption is that by using a calculator young people sooner or later forget the rules of arithmetic due to a lack of practice. This problem also seems to be related to the capacity to transfer the abstract numbers to concrete application in daily life. The study sees the decline of speech and reading activities as the reasons for the observed spelling deficiencies.

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Source: BASF/Cedefop/SK



# Vocational education and training

Finland

## Teachers worried about the status of vocational training

A study of teachers' views on the status of education shows that generally speaking they think that education is sufficiently valued in Finland. However the status of basic education and vocational education and training is considered to be too low.

A study of teachers' opinions on the educational system was carried out for the Economic Information Office (TAT). The mail questionnaire was sent out to teachers in primary and secondary education institutions. The reply rate was a satisfactory 43 %.

The aim was to find out what teachers think of the education system, how appropriate they find the priorities in education and whether, in their own institution's point of view, the pupils get the necessary skills. Teachers were also asked for their views regarding some topics in the development of the educational system.

### Vocational education and training is not appreciated enough

The results show that while teachers think that education in general is well appreciated, there are differences in opinions. Primary and vocational education and training are, in their view, insufficiently valued.

Teachers tend to regard the status of their own school as lower than that of other institutions. This especially applies to teachers in vocational education. 58 % of them state that voca-

tional education is appreciated poorly and many think that general upper secondary schools are overrated.

### General upper secondary school is regarded highly

Teachers think that the standard of the education system in Finland is high compared to other countries in Western Europe. The quality of teaching in general upper secondary schools is especially good in their opinion. As many as 47 % think that the Finnish system is very good at providing equal opportunities to both sexes. They consider that the ability of the system to provide skills for working life and the opportunities for citizens to get information about education is at least reasonable.

### Areas of priority in balance

The research also mapped the teachers' views on 26 listed priority areas in education. Over half (14) of the listed priorities are adequately catered for according to most answers. These include the teaching of general studies, theory, civics and ICT. Co-operation between schools and homes and the available choice of

languages are considered highly by teachers. Teachers do not share the worries of business life about the number of professionals in the fields of mathematics and science or about the basic skills of students in these fields. Indeed, 64 % of teachers

were satisfied with the place of these subjects in the education system. However, teachers consider that the education system does not sufficiently encourage entrepreneurship. Only on this did they mark the system lower than seven (6.88) on an

assessment scale, which runs from 4 to 10.

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Source: NBE

Belgium

## Training centres merge

The 22 VIZO training centres for independent trades administered by 15 non-profit making organisations and subsidised by the Flemish government are now merged into five regional centres. The merger and the introduction of performance-driven funding are designed to boost their effectiveness.

### Merger to boost effectiveness

The principal task of the public-sector agency VIZO (the Flemish Institute for Independent Entrepreneurship, is, as its name suggests, to deliver training programmes for the self-employed and SMEs and to organise linked work and training apprenticeship programmes for young people aged 16+. The training programmes are implemented in 22 centres operated by 15 recognised and subsidised non-profit making organisations. A recent recognition and funding decree has put an end to this situation.

Following the results of a study showing that despite the smooth operation of the centres, the match

between training provision and the requirements of the self-employed and SMEs could be further improved, it was decided to merge existing centres and review funding arrangements. The 15 non-profit making organisations running the 22 centres have accordingly been merged into five regional non-profit making organisations.

As the new decree stipulates that in order to gain recognition and subsidies, a centre must organise a minimum of 100 000 course hours, the 22 centres, which formerly competed with one another, are now forced to collaborate as this figure could never be reached by an individual centre on its own. Inter-centre collaboration

is intended to generate a more rational use of human and material resources.

Moreover funding of the centres is now to become more performance-driven. Each centre is to be assessed on a triennial basis, a positive report being rewarded by a bonus. The centres are to be publicised by the introduction of a new name and a new logo: Syntra, the amalgamation of the words 'synthesis' and 'synergy', the underlying ideas behind the amalgamation. An intensive media campaign in the course of the coming months is to familiarise stakeholders with the new name. Further details at: <http://www.vdab.be>

Source: VDAB Gestion média et bibliothèque / Icodoc

France

## Upgrading the vocational route and training for crafts and trades

On 13 November 2002, Luc Ferry, Minister for Youth, National Education and Research, presented a communication to the cabinet on upgrading the vocational route and the training in crafts and trades.

Vocational training does not always enjoy the reputation it deserves. All too often it is regarded as the last resort in the wake of failure in general education. A genuine diversification of training routes should offer all students a chance to succeed. Every year, 150 000 young people leave the school system without a certificate, 60 000 of whom have no formal qualification at all. It is therefore necessary to improve conditions of entry into vocational training courses, clarify training itineraries and opportunities for the continuation of education/training, and reinforce and upgrade vocational training courses in the wider sense, taking account of the complementarities between vocational and technological routes.

Seven main courses of action have been envisaged in this context:

❑ **Striking a better balance between the different types of education:** from the very beginning of secondary school, the education delivered to students must make room for technological and vocational activities and modes of education.

❑ **Better preparation for entry into the vocational route:** by agreement between enterprises and the appropriate sectoral upper secondary vocational schools, lower

secondary schools must be in a position to offer alternative programmes, combining general education, vocational education, taster programmes in industry and the trades and crafts performed in the workplace, thereby offering an alternative mode of training to lower secondary school students.

❑ **Improving information and guidance:** establishing closer links between upper secondary vocational schools and lower secondary schools to provide information for teachers, parents and students on the occupations to which the vocational training courses lead.

❑ **Promoting the *lycée des métiers*(<sup>1</sup>):** a new circular is to specify how all those upper secondary schools delivering vocational training courses may adopt a 'quality approach' and thereby be awarded the *lycée des métiers* label.

❑ **Clarifying training pathways** between the upper secondary CAP and BEP vocational education certificates, notably by continuation of the experiments on the three-year vocational baccalaureate.

❑ **Better adapting the training provision and content** of upper secondary vocational schools which must constantly evolve to create a

better match with real requirements and to guarantee students optimal vocational integration opportunities.

❑ **Organising continuation programmes** so that students opting for vocational and technological routes can go on to higher level technological training courses – *Sections de Techniciens Supérieurs* (STS) or *Instituts Universitaires de Technologie* (IUT). Vocational degrees are also to be developed.

To tie in with the implementation of these measures, the Minister is to conduct a tour of French upper secondary vocational schools to meet with head teachers and educational staff.

(<sup>1</sup>) See the article on the launch of the *lycée des métiers* in Cedefop Info 1/2002: <http://www2.trainingvillage.gr/download/Cinfo/Cinfo12002/C12K6FR.html>

More information on vocational education in France can be found on the website of the Ministry of Youth, National Education and Research under: *Enseignement professionnel*. <http://www.education.gouv.fr/enspro/default.htm>

Source: Centre INFFO, Stéphane Héroult, based on the press kit of 13 November 2002 available on the Ministry of Education website <http://www.education.gouv.fr/presse/2002/ensprod.htm>

Germany

## Modules leading to apprenticeship

The new vocational training induction programme is to offer young people the prospect of a regular training place

The vocational training induction programme has been introduced to give a second chance to young people who do not manage to find a place on a regular training programme first time around. Following a relevant amendment to the Vocational Training Law, this new form of vocational training may be introduced by firms from the beginning of the coming training year in September.

Training modules will lead young people step by step towards the target of apprenticeship, offsetting their weaknesses and building on their strengths under way. The partial qualifications based on the training regulations of recognised training occupations will require attestation by trainers according to a standardised format. This is designed to increase the transparency and portability of the acquired qualifica-

tions and therefore enhance applicants' prospects of finding a training place when they leave the programme.

The induction programme - which has also been given the green light by the trade unions - lasts from six to a maximum of twelve months and can in principle be implemented in the form of full-time education or industrial placements. Firms may conclude training contracts with the participants on the imparting of industrial knowledge and skills, subject to compliance with a number of quality requirements with reference to personnel, equipment and the conceptual design of the induction programme.

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Source: BMBF/BIBB/Cedefop/SK

Italy

## Apprenticeship: first national survey on external training

Continued from page 1

With a view to consolidating the set-up of the new training route, a series of legislative instruments have successively allocated resources to the regions which, in combination with support from the European Social Fund, have provided the basis for the growth of the apprenticeship training system. A number of regions have taken action to define standards for the design of apprenticeship programmes, some even specifying the content, targets and models of training provision. Training implemented by the various providers (trainers, classroom and industrial tutors) has also been upgraded; in particular the role of the tutor is gaining increasing importance. At the level of the accreditation of the results of training actions, the regions have adopted attestation models on an annual basis and are in the course of defining models and procedures for final accreditation. In 2001, a total of 60 000 apprentices engaged in external training programmes in the framework of initiatives implemented by the regions with the involvement of the social partners.

The recent survey (conducted in October/November 2002) reveals that, despite reservations on what

they view as the excessive duration of apprenticeship programmes, in particular large-scale firms regard apprenticeship as largely positive. External training is considered as useful, but firms nevertheless express concern about the time the training effort represents in terms of absence from the workplace. Only one half of the entrepreneurs express satisfaction with the spin-off of the training course, whereas managers and industrial tutors have a very positive approach to training. The course is considered more useful for apprentices and attributed a high level of importance in terms of job motivation, followed by knowledge of safety standards and working processes.

The impact of external training action was evaluated to the extent to which it had effectively brought about a positive change in working behaviour: course participation allows apprentices to acquire knowledge and skills which have to be put into use and re-interpreted in the workplace. The success of external training is largely due to the rapport between the firm and the training centre: the results of the survey point to the establishment of important contacts between the two

stakeholders. The firms in fact envisage the possibility of repeating the experience with the same training centres which were responsible for the organisation or management of the training course. A surprising finding of the survey is that a substantial number of companies would be prepared to envisage extending the number of hours set aside for external training, provided that more specific work-related content is provided and that training hours can be reimbursed.

In conclusion, the survey points to the fact that recourse to external training represents a novelty for at least one half of the surveyed firms, which had not implemented any continuing training activities in the course of the previous two years. Apprenticeship programmes could therefore serve to motivate above all SMEs towards a new attitude to the training of their workforce and at the same time have a positive impact on the field of continuing training.

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Source: Isfol

Portugal

## Creation of a vocational training working group

The programme of the 15th constitutional government of Portugal specifies as strategic options:

❑ linking educational and training policies in order to equip all those persons completing their primary education, who do not wish to remain at school, with adequate vocational and other skills. It is recognised that in the context of lifelong learning primary education plays a fundamental role in delivering the basic skills needed in the knowledge society and in developing attitudes favouring a continuing learning process;

❑ acquisition of an initial vocational qualification in the course of education helps to ease the transition to working life. Consequently, a further measure included in the government's programme is that of promoting technological and occupational instruction in collaboration with training centres in order to equip all those wishing to enter the labour market with the appropriate skills.

In pursuit of these objectives a working group has been created by joint order of the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Social Security and Labour.<sup>(1)</sup> It is charged with clarifying and defining areas for action in the field of initial training falling under the scope of these two ministries and identifying the supporting structures for these areas.

The working group's terms of reference are as follows:

**by 31 December 2003**

❑ to identify concepts and contents relating to vocational training methods and target groups;

❑ to identify existing structures (bodies, services, public institutes, institutions, schools, training centres) responsible for different types, forms and methods of training;

**by 30 September 2003**

❑ to state those organic structures that exist and those needing to be created in order to take responsibility for the vocational training referred to in the two previous paragraphs from 2004;

**by 30 July 2003**

❑ to present and define systematically standard concepts and contents to be adopted from 2004 for the various types, forms and methods of vocational training provided by the public sector;

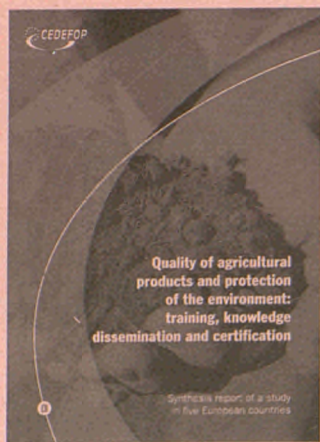
❑ to conceptually determine the types, forms and methods of vocational training that should be entrusted to the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Social Security and Labour.

(<sup>1</sup>) Ministerial Order No 29/2003, *Diário da República* (2nd series) No 12, 15 January 2003

Further information: Fatima.hora@depp.msst.gov.pt Claudia.arriegas@depp.msst.gov.pt

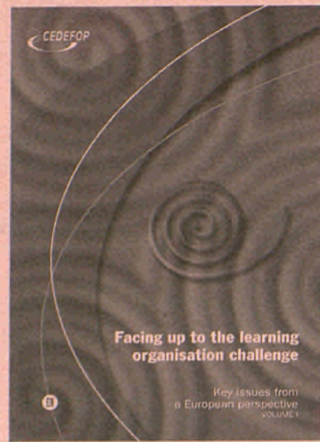
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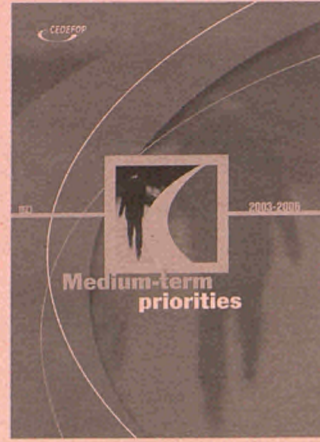
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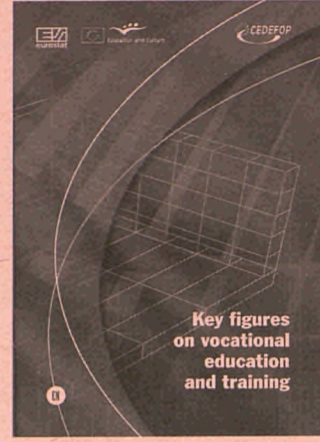
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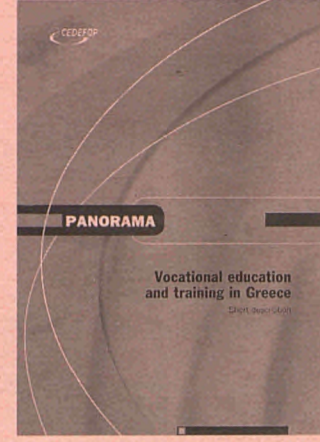
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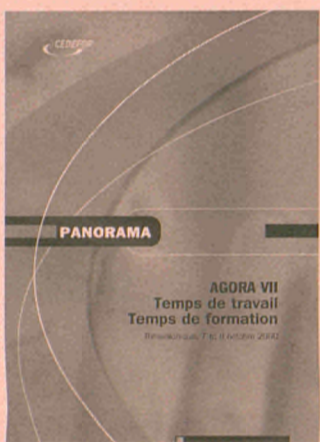
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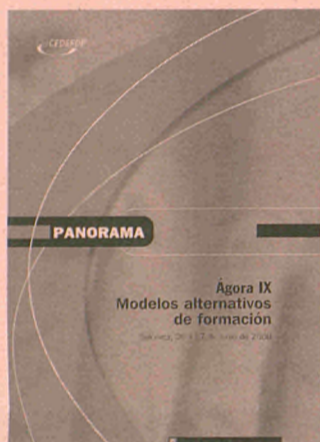
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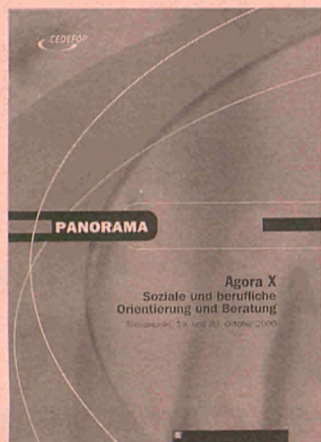
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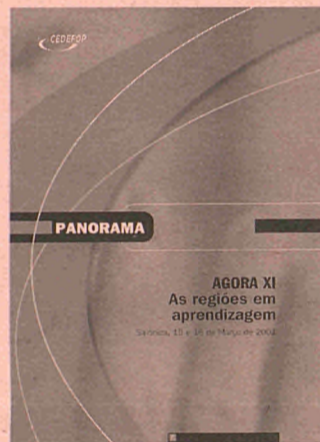
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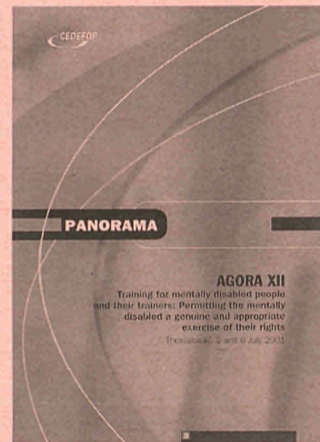
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## In brief

### Germany Reform laws shore up competition

The first and second laws on modern services in the job market came into effect on 1 January 2003. The legislation is designed to create better conditions for swift and sustainable job placement. The specified measures include an improvement in the quality of continuing training. A higher degree of competition between training providers and a wider freedom of choice and self-responsibility among providers' clients is to put the continuing training market on a new footing. The jobless and those threatened by unemployment, the lowly skilled and part-time work-

ers seeking full-time employment are to receive training vouchers with which they themselves can seek a suitable continuing training programme among recognised programmes and providers. At the same time, the reform sets a greater focus on the actual integration success of continuing vocational training provision.

Further information at:  
 Federal Employment Service (BfA)  
 Regensburger Str. 106; D-90478 Nuremberg  
 Tel. (49-911) 179-0  
<http://www.bundesregierung.de/-/418/Gesetze.htm>

Source: BIBB/Cedefop/SK

### Germany Continuing training providers unsure about the right approach to quality assurance

Continuing vocational training (CVT) providers are evidently unsure about the right approach to quality assurance. This is the key finding of a survey<sup>(1)</sup> conducted by the Federal Institute for Vocational Training (BIBB) among 1 500 CVT providers. The BIBB survey showed that most of the respondent organisations applied several different concepts, with 76 % giving priority to self-assessment, 29 % using ISO 9000, 24 % opting for a quality seal or seal

of approval, 22 % relying on competitions and 15 % applying the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) model. Although over three-quarters of the respondents indicate self-assessment as a means of quality assurance, only every second respondent regards this as a viable method for the future, believing that ISO 9000 quality assurance concepts and quality seals/seals of approval are gaining ground.

Further information from the BIBB:  
 Dr Krekel, Tel. (49-228) 107-1109,  
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 Dr Balli, Tel. (49-228) 107-1506,  
 E-mail: [balli@bibb.de](mailto:balli@bibb.de)  
 Study publication date: November 2002

<sup>(1)</sup> Christl Balli, Elisabeth M. Krekel, Edgar Sauter (ed.): *Qualitätsentwicklung in der Weiterbildung. Zum Stand der Anwendung von Qualitätssicherungs- und Qualitätsmanagementverfahren bei Weiterbildungsanbietern*. Available in German, free of charge from Bundesinstitut für Berufsbildung, Friedrich-Ebert-Alle 38, 53113 Bonn, tel. (49-228) 107-1716 or 1717, fax (49-228) 107-2967, E-mail: [vertrieb@bibb.de](mailto:vertrieb@bibb.de)

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## Continuing education and training

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 DK: New professional bachelor programmes



# Continuing education and training

France

## Towards a coherent reform of vocational training defined by the state and the social partners

**Catherine Barbaroux, General Commissioner for Employment and Vocational Training<sup>(1)</sup>, calls for a coherent reform of the training system to be jointly defined by the state and the social partners.**

We have entered the phase of implementation of the concept of lifelong learning at European level. This concept is a 'basic statement of fact' for Catherine Barbaroux, who opened the second vocational training days organised by the financial daily *Les Echos* and PriceWaterhouse Coopers on 9 December 2002. 'In view of the opening up of European borders, we cannot envisage occupational mobility without reference to the enterprises'. 'It is time to move into action; we must stop our "intellectual flirt" with the concepts of the individual right to training and co-investment'.

The General Commissioner thus pointed out that despite the suspension of the negotiations on continuing vocational training (CVT) in October 2001, the social partners had 'built a platform as a basis to start off again'. This platform comprises 'two main pillars':

- the 'concerted development plan' (*plan de développement concerté - PDC*), on the joint initiative of enterprise and the employee, and
- the training savings account (*compte épargne formation - CEF*), allowing employees to accumulate paid time to engage in training courses decided jointly with the enterprise or by themselves.

Catherine Barbaroux expressed her optimism looking ahead to the resumption of the negotiations envisaged for January 2003<sup>(2)</sup>.

'The time has come to move forward on what could be a coherent reform [determined] by the state and the social partners', she said. This coherent reform consists of the introduction of a 'personal training account', dovetailing with the accreditation of informal learning (AIL), and employment insurance. The introduction of the personal training account, designed to facilitate occupational mobility, 'raises questions which call for answers relating to employability, the link between working and training time, funding and geographic location'.

In Catherine Barbaroux's opinion, the answers to these questions are of both a structural and a cyclical nature. Structural actions concern 'employees in the second part of their careers, early school leavers or those working for very small firms'. The cyclical actions concern 'threats to short-term employment or restructuring measures requiring re-training'. It is possible that the state and the social partners will endorse these answers 'if they define them together in advance'. 'It is possible

to imagine structural actions being handled in the context of negotiations on CVT and cyclical actions being tackled in the context of specific negotiations, dovetailed with the former, interceding in the extension of the bill on collective bargaining and redundancy procedures which envisages the suspension of certain articles of the Law on Social Modernisation'.<sup>(3)</sup>

However, the personal training account cannot in itself institute 'an equitable right of access to training and a correction of inequalities for the most lowly skilled employees and the workforce of small undertakings'. In this respect, it is a question of rethinking the organisation of financial resources and 'moving away from the juxtaposition of mechanisms of co-investment while at the same time simplifying the system of mutual insurance'.

On the subject of employment insurance, the General Commissioner pointed out that 'what the role of the social partners and the state is to be [in this field] has not yet been defined'. She emphasised that 'the state feels jointly responsible for the groups at greatest risk'. Therefore, 'beyond wage-earners, the concept of employment insurance should naturally also concern jobseekers so that they can benefit from the same guarantees which can be mobilised in periods of forced inactivity'. 'Its

linkage with unemployment insurance is a matter for the social partners, by differentiating between normal short-term training courses and those which imply more weighty re-skilling, which will be based on lifelong learning mechanisms.'

Catherine Barbaroux moreover pointed out that 'François Fillon, Minister for Social Affairs, is a committed observer of the [changing] system and a committed employment insurance player'. The ways and means of establishing a territorial social dialogue must be found in order to 'provide a joint response to the concerns of regionalisation, proximity and transversality'. Moreover, the funding capacities of joint industrial mechanisms, the regional councils, the state and individuals themselves must be 'clarified and reinforced'.

Several aspects of this vast undertaking will be tackled by the Ministry of Social Affairs in 2003:

- continuing training for employees;
- training of jobseekers hit by restructuring programmes;
- integration of young people in industry;
- support for entrepreneurship and continuing training for the self-employed;
- professionalisation of community services and non-commercial jobs;

- combating illiteracy and the 'digital divide'.

Ms Barbaroux wishes to envisage 'all of these aspects from a more global approach and with a better link-up between the state, the social partners, local authorities and employers of all kinds'.

Finally, initiatives are to be taken with a view to the realisation of the European area of lifelong learning. The social partners have already reached a framework agreement on the lifelong development of skills and qualifications. 'I see no reason', concluded Catherine Barbaroux, 'why the perspectives of convergence should not be met in France'.

<sup>(1)</sup> The General Commission for employment and vocational training (*Délégation générale à l'Emploi et à la Formation professionnelle - DGEFP*) is responsible to the Ministry of Social Affairs, Employment and Solidarity.

<sup>(2)</sup> Bilateral meetings were held between the employers' confederation (Medef) and the trade unions in late November/early December 2002 to prepare the negotiations on the training reform which commenced on 22 January 2003 (cf. INFFO Flash, No 603, 1-15 December 2003, p. 24).

<sup>(3)</sup> On 19 December 2002, parliament adopted the text on 'collective bargaining on restructuring measures impacting on employment', amending the Law on Social Modernisation (cf. Cedefop Info 1/2002). Seven articles on economic redundancies were suspended for a period of 18 months. Firms will notably no longer be under an obligation to negotiate a 35-hour week prior to the introduction of a social plan. Cf. Prime Minister's website: <http://www.premier-minister.gouv.fr/fr/p.cfm?ref=37512>

Source: INFFO Flash, No 604, 15-31 December 2002, article by Philippe Grandin

## New skills for unemployed active workers

**There has been growing recourse to the public employment services in Portugal by unemployed members of the active workforce with middle- or higher-level qualifications particularly in social science, teaching and the arts.**

This is obliging the Portuguese government to respond with ways and means of enhancing the employability and adaptability of such persons through training designed to develop their personal and vocational skills.

At the same time, one of the conclusions coming out of the Lisbon European Council was the strategic need

for Portuguese training and employment policy to develop individuals' skills in such areas as information and communications technologies and computer skills in order to facilitate employee mobility.

As a consequence, and with a view to implementing a coherent global strategy of lifelong learning aimed not merely at mobilising training

providers, but also those involved in the social services, industry and the economy, in order to make good the lack of skills required for the new economy, the government decided to put into effect an action plan for training unemployed skilled persons and to formulate specific criteria for conducting such training courses<sup>(1)</sup>.

The training courses referred to are aimed at improving trainees' existing basic training and skills through the acquisition of new skills in such fields as information and communications technology or business man-

agement. Courses must be between 380 and 450 hours in length, have a flexible, modular curricula structure and constitute a training route in their own right.

The training courses are targeted at members of the active workforce possessing higher-level qualifications who are unemployed and registered as such with employment centres; and unemployed persons with as yet no higher-level qualifications registered with employment centres as basic pre-school, primary, and secondary school teachers.

The training bodies will conclude a training contract with trainees and issue certificates of training at the end of courses provided. Government or approved private bodies wishing to offer training courses may apply for financial assistance under the terms laid down for bodies using finance from the European Social Fund.

<sup>(1)</sup>Ministerial Order No 2s 248/2002, Diário da República (2nd series) No 239, 16 October 2002

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Fatima.hora@depp.msst.gov.pt  
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Source: Cides

## Luxembourg

### Social partners establish association for continuing training of health professionals

On 6 November 2002, the social partners, represented by the Independent Trade Union Confederation of Luxembourg (OGB-L) and the Luxembourg Confederation of Christian Trade Unions (LCGB), on the one hand, and the Luxembourg Hospital Association, on the other, met to set up an association for the promotion of the continuing vocational training (CVT) of health professionals. The initiative was welcomed by both the Ministry of National Education, Vocational Training and Sport and the Ministry of Health.

In Luxembourg, approx. 6 000 people are currently directly employed by the health sector, whereas many others have a job directly linked to this sector. The establishment of the new CVT centre is designed to ensure quality assurance and offer health professionals an opportunity to broaden their skills and competences.

The trade unions have emphasised the need to promote the quality of work in hospitals, as well as to improve career prospects in this

sector. The role of CVT as a driving force in achieving these objectives has also been underlined.

The new association will promote and coordinate CVT actions for employees of hospitals affiliated to the Luxembourg Hospital Association.

It also intends to establish a database on training and skilling programmes in the Saar-Lorraine-Luxembourg cross-border region to

promote information on, and help interested parties find, continuing and initial training provision. It will also provide counselling and logistic assistance in the establishment of training plans and analysis of the training needs of the health sector.

Source: Études et Formation

## Spain

### Funding of continuing training in the public administration in 2003

**The National Institute for Public Administration (INAP) has announced funding for continuing training plans in the Spanish public administration in 2003.**

The funding was announced in the context of the third four-year continuing training agreement signed on 11 January 2002 between the public administrations and the trade unions.

The public administrations and the social agents jointly stressed the importance of human resources as the key asset of public-sector agencies. The need to continue and indeed expand investment in human capital is recognised. Training clearly contributes to potential economic growth and welfare and generates optimal use of new production equipment and the application of new organisational methods, facilitating the transition of the public administrations towards a new knowledge-based economic and social model, as highlighted by the European Council of Lisbon.

The financial resources will serve to fund continuing training plans or-

ganised by the general state administration, local authorities, federations of municipalities and provinces and trade unions throughout 2003. A total of EUR 65 million has been allocated for these activities from the vocational training levy.

Alongside the usual collective types of training plans eligible for funding (unit, group or inter-administration plans), these resources may also be earmarked for individual training programmes whose application and adaptation are to be set by the General Commission for Continuing Training.

Further details from:  
Instituto Nacional de Administración Pública (INAP)  
C/. Atocha 106;  
E-28012 Madrid  
Tel. (34-91) 349 32 41,  
Fax (34-91) 349 32 70  
<http://www.inap.map.es>

Source: INEM, Official State Gazette  
26 November 2002

## Italy

### Agreement on the development and employment of workers in local firms

**The Province of Milan recently signed an agreement on the promotion of the development of local firms and the employability of workers<sup>(1)</sup>.**

The draft sets out three objectives: training of workers, support for enterprises and development of the provincial fabric. This innovative model delivers counselling services to sharpen workers' awareness of their own personal abilities and skills and the upgrading of their competences in the framework of innovative continuing vocational training courses.

With this action and EUR 640 000 earmarked from a special fund set up to finance labour policy measures, the Province of Milan intends to re-skill 500 workers from local firms and at the same time support a substantial number of SMEs in finding new sources and opportunities of funding. This project in fact aims at warding off unemployment in the firms in the wake of the critical situation of the area, providing upgrading skilling for all workers by the introduction of innovative continuing vocational training courses and

supporting efforts to develop and restructure SMEs by, for example, facilitating access to loans. In particular, the funding provided by the Province will serve to fund projects designed to facilitate phases of transition faced by clients in working life: labour market entry, precarious employment, unemployment and subsequent labour market reintegration.

The Milanese initiative is innovative in that this is the first time a 'welfare-to-work' approach to human resources re-skilling has been tried out in Italy which, starting out from contingent needs, impacts directly at the level of individual adaptation, which is becoming increasingly necessary in the course of working life.

The initialled agreement is part of the Province's innovative effort to adapt to the new situation in the wake of devolution of responsibility for employment services from the

national to local level. The agreement is to provide an experimental and voluntary instrument to give workers a greater awareness of their own competences and their own position in the labour market, thereby stimulating active behaviour in the labour market. This instrument will therefore contribute to improving the functioning of the job market, preventing and combating forms of unemployment triggered by socio-economic change.

<sup>(1)</sup> On 12 February 2003 an important agreement to promote development and employability was signed between the Province of Milan, Assolombarda (Association of industrial and tertiary firms in the Milan region), the Union for Commerce, Tourism and Services of the Province of Milan, API Milan (Association of small firms), CNA Milan (national confederation of crafts and SMEs), APA-Confartigianato (crafts and small firms), the Union of Artisans and the trade union organisations, CGIL, CISL and UIL of Milan.

Further information from:  
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Web site: <http://www.assolombarda.it>  
e-mail: [scopro@provincia.milano.it](mailto:scopro@provincia.milano.it)

Source: Isfol



Germany

## New initiative to secure training

The federal government and the social partners agree on the 2003 training offensive

In the face of the threatening decline of company-based training places, the federal government, the business community and the trade unions have agreed on the '2003 training offensive'. The Federal Minister for Education and Training, Edelgard Bulmahn, who expects a demographically-induced 1.5 % (i.e. 9 000) increase in applicants to a grand total of 603 000, declared that the swelling numbers of training place applicants called for urgent joint action and underlined that guaranteeing an adequate supply of training places had absolute priority for all the stakeholders.

Ingrid Sehrbrock, executive committee member of the German Federation of Trade Unions (*Deutscher Gewerkschaftsbund - DGB*), warned of a 'dramatic situation'. Last year the number of training places fell by 43 000 or 7 %. In November 2002, 15 % fewer training places were registered year-on-year. Quoting surveys conducted by of the Federal Institute for Vocational Training (*Bundesinstitut für Berufsbildung - BIBB*) and the Federal Employment Service (*Bundesanstalt für Arbeit - BfA*), the DGB recalled that less than one half of applicants had found a training place in 2002; more and more young people were opting for vocational induction programme schemes, reappearing in the following training year's statistics.

The Association of German Chambers of Industry and Commerce (*Deutscher Industrie- und Handelskammertag - DIHT*) also described the 7 % decline in training contracts as an 'unexpected order of magnitude'. The DIHT nevertheless drew attention to the fact that the demand for training places had contracted to

almost the same extent, which explained the only slight increase in the number of unplaced applicants at the beginning of the last training year. The 2003 Vocational Training Report explained the fall in demand by the decline in the number of school leavers, the fact that more young people are going into higher education and that many young people are switching to induction programmes or vocational school courses. This raises the question of the possible consequences these phenomena may have for the future and the stability of the dual system of vocational training, in which 1.7 million young people are currently engaged in training.

The federal government and the social partners agree that the proposals of the Hartz commission on vocational training should be implemented without delay. The proposed measures include creating new training networks, initiating training foundations and bringing public training place support measures closer to the requirements of industry. The federal government and the social partners also agree on the need to reform the Vocational Training Act, in order, among other things, to facilitate the transparency and equivalence of vocational training and to open up vocational training to the wider European context. Quality assurance of continuing vocational training and an accelerated effort to modernise training occupations are further objectives in this context.

Further information: <http://www.bmbf.de>  
<http://www.dgb.de>  
<http://www.diht.de>

Source: BMBF/DGB/DIHT/Cedefop/SK

Ireland

## Use work permits to counteract skill shortages

Despite a rise in unemployment in 2002, the prospects for employment growth in the medium term are positive according to a recent review of the Irish labour market (\*). The first in a new annual series of labour market reviews has been published by FÁS-Training and Employment Authority to provide information and analysis about the Irish labour market.

The report notes that while unemployment has risen in 2002 for the first time since 1993, immigration and earnings growth has continued to be strong. The prospects for employment growth in the medium term, however, are far more positive and the review forecasts a rise of 180 000 in the numbers at work in the 2002-2007 period. More than half this increase will be in the managerial, professional and personal services sectors.

The number of work permits issued to workers from outside the European Economic Area more than doubled to 36 500 in 2001 and, despite the economic slowdown, the number of permits issued for 2002 is similar. FÁS has called for radical changes in the procedures for issuing work permits and has advocated a new system tied directly to actual skills shortages rather than employer vacancies. In the current system, permits are issued to fill specific vacancies, but the review says many work permit applications have been based on factors other than skill availability. Despite the availability of people for most of the lower-skilled jobs, there has been a tendency for many employers to use work permits to employ cheaper labour from outside Ireland. The Australian points system for work permits is one model that could be used when revising the criteria for

issuing work permits. Under it, would-be immigrants apply for general work permits and are allocated points on their capacity to meet skill, education and language requirements.

The review also presents a number of recommendations to improve the quality of labour supply through education and training measures. While calling for extra resources for schools in disadvantaged areas, the review says that the school system in general should give greater attention to developing basic and soft skills in all pupils. Programmes to allow early school leavers rooted in low-skilled jobs to receive further education and training on a part-time basis while at work should be developed. Adult employees with no recognised vocational qualifications, who left school before their Leaving Certificate (final upper secondary examination), should be encouraged to avail of education and training to acquire a qualification. The review says there is a strong case for such training to be provided free of charge.

(\*) FÁS-Training and Employment Authority: Annual Labour Market Review 2002. Available, free of charge: Planning and Research, FÁS, 27-33 Upper Bagin Street, IRL-Dublin 4. Tel. (353-1) 607 0526 Fax (353-1) 607 0634 E-mail: roger.fox@fas.ie

Source: FÁS

United Kingdom

## Skills and employment initiatives in Wales

Lack of skills is a key cause of unemployment, economic inactivity and poverty. Too many young people in Wales still leave the education system with insufficient skills. In addition, there is a large pool of adults with low skills.

In 2001, 20% of adults of working age had no qualifications, while around 25% of the population of working age were neither in employment nor looking for work. Research by Future Skills Wales has shown that 30% of employers are unable to recruit people with sufficient skills and about the same number also suffer from skills gaps in their existing workforce (<http://www.futureskillswales.com>).

Wales has a devolved administration known as the Welsh Assembly. The Assembly responded to these challenges by drawing up the *Skills and Employment Action Plan 2002*

(<http://www.learning.wales.gov.uk>), which sets out over 50 positive actions to:

- improve the mechanisms for raising the skills of the workforce;
- provide new entrants to the labour market with the skills needed for employment;
- work with employers and employees to raise the skills of the existing workforce;
- help more people into sustained employment.

One of the key priorities is to develop better mechanisms to ensure

that people are trained to meet the needs that employers have. At present many people take a bit of a chance, hoping that if they train in a certain field then good jobs will be available for them. These issues are being tackled by setting-up, across the UK, new Sector Skills Councils (See Cedefop Info 2/2002 page 14) that will be active in identifying employer needs and arranging training provision to meet them. In Wales the new public body, Education and Learning Wales (ELWa) (<http://www.ELWa.ac.uk>), which is now responsible for funding all post-16 learning, will ensure that a far more co-ordinated and responsive supply of learning is available.

The Modern Skills Diploma for Adults brings the benefits of apprenticeship training to the over 25s and the

*Skills and Employment Action Plan* goes further by setting out action to establish an all age skills programme. Accordingly all age limits on apprenticeship programmes have been abolished. In addition, ways of overcoming the financial barriers to training by piloting the provision of free learning for all those in employment are being tested. A progress report on the implementation of the action plan is due to be published in the summer and a revised version of the plan will be published next year.

Other initiatives, to make Wales a truly learning country, include:

- a new credit and qualification framework which will enable people to learn in small, bite-sized chunks;
- an expansion of the Wales Union Learning Fund ([\[learn.org.uk\]\(http://www.learn.org.uk\)\) which has proved to be effective in reaching non-traditional learners.](http://www.wtc-</a></li></ul></div><div data-bbox=)

□ the National Basic Skills Strategy for Wales (<http://www.basic-skills-wales.org>). This all-age strategy is putting in place the infrastructure to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to acquire these vital skills in their local area or their place of work.

More information from:  
National Council - ELWa  
Linden Court  
The Orchards  
Ilex Close  
Llanishen  
Cardiff CF14 5DZ

Phone (44-2068) 2201  
E-mail: [helpdesk@elwa.ac.uk](mailto:helpdesk@elwa.ac.uk)  
Website: <http://www.ELWA.ac.uk>

Source: QCA

Austria

## Basic skilling against the 'risk factor' age

International project introduces a seminar designed to improve the job market reintegration opportunities of older jobseekers

The participants of a recently concluded Leonardo da Vinci project coordinated by the continuing training provider *ibis/acam* Vienna/Burgenland have developed a seminar specifically designed to reduce or even eliminate the risk of unemployment among older members of the workforce. The seminar delivers basic ICT training for older job seekers and also imparts social and personal skills to help cli-

ents regain a foothold in the knowledge society and the job market.

The innovative approach which can be transposed Europe-wide, was developed by the project with participants from Austria, Germany, Croatia, Spain, Finland and the United Kingdom. It includes not only the reinforcement of basic skills but also the situational

application of these skills. Clients learn to use new information and communication technologies in their daily lives to their own advantage and are helped overcome their inhibitions towards new technical developments. Four targets are set for the end of a basic skilling module: personality stabilisation, discovering new job opportunities, command of basic PC skills and self-presentation skills. The project

partners, who include educational and training policy decision-makers, hope that these measures will stimulate motivation and thereby improve job market reintegration opportunities for older jobseekers.

For further information on the project, visit the project homepage at: [www.job-active.at](http://www.job-active.at) or contact Beate Dobler, *ibis/acam* GmbH Austria, Reiserstrasse 4, A-1030 Vienna, Tel. (43-1) 718 86 86, Fax (43-1) 718 86 86-50, E-mail: [beate.dobler@ibisacam.at](mailto:beate.dobler@ibisacam.at).

Source: *ibis/acam*/Cedefop/SK

# New organisations and programmes

France

## Mainstreaming the accreditation of non-formal learning

Jointly established by the National Conservatory of Industrial Arts and Crafts (*Conservatoire national des arts et métiers - CNAM*) and the University of Marne-la-Vallée, the Institute for skills management and the accreditation of non-formal learning (*Institut de Management des Compétences et de la Validation des Acquis - MCVA*) is a forum for reflection and exchange between researchers and practitioners on skills management and the validation of non-formal learning.

The creation of the MCVA, headed by Vincent Merle, who holds the CNAM chair for 'Labour, employment, occupational acquisitions', was based on the realisation that the development of skills management in undertakings and the introduction of a mechanism for the accreditation of prior or non-formal learning (APL) represent major changes in occupational relations, the modes of knowledge transmission and the management of vocational pathways. A forum for discussion and exchanges of experience, the MCVA seeks to cater for the needs expressed by the numerous players involved in these changes. It will help enterprises and occupational sectors integrate APL as one of the preferred tools for workforce upskilling and training. Other players involved in the work of the institute are local government, counselling, skills profiling and guidance agencies and organisations with the task of developing and awarding certificates.

APL and its concomitant innovations pose not only problems of methodology, but also a whole raft of questions relating to the future of occupational relations and the youth and adult training system which touch upon various fields of research. This is clearly demonstrated by the diversity of disciplines represented by the researchers who have agreed to collaborate with the institute: occupational psychology, occupational sociology, labour law and training system analysis, cognitive psychology, vocational didactics, etc. 'It is essential for these different fields of knowledge to come together around questions raised by skills management and APL to pinpoint methodological responses and follow trends in practice', believes Vincent Merle. 'It also represents an opportunity for progress in analysing the economic and social issues surrounding

the transformation of working activities and vocational training'.

Seminars are to be organised to provide these researchers with an opportunity to compare their experience with that of practitioners (enterprises, the social partners, national vocational accreditation boards, certificate-awarding public agencies, ministries and bodies, local government) and jointly develop analyses and methods. These seminars are to be concluded by an annual colloquium to evaluate methodological and theoretical progress. The institute is moreover establishing partnerships with agencies active in complementary fields, e.g. the Centre for Research on Education, Training and Employment (*Centre d'Études et de Recherches sur les Qualifications - CEREQ*), Cedefop, etc. In the framework of its intervention and advisory activities, it is establishing a partnership with the Standing Assembly of the Chambers of Craft Trades (*Assemblée Permanente des Chambres de Métiers - APCM*) with a view to preparing professionals in the sector to provide information on, and set up procedures to back up, APL and assist them in adapting training standards to APL.

The MCVA Institute is integrated into the GIP Polytechnicum, a structure linking up the University of Marne-la-Vallée, the CNAM and all the scientific and technical agencies established in the technological hub of Marne-la-Vallée. Members of staff have been seconded from public agencies and administrations for the start-up phase.

Institut MCVA – GIP-MIS, Le Descartes 1  
29, Promenade Michel Simon, F-93166 Noisy-le-Grand cedex  
Tel. (33 1) 48 15 57 80, E-mail: secretariat@gip-mis.fr

Source: INFFO Flash, No 600, 15-31 October 2002,  
article by Knock Billy

Belgium

## Towards a single training placement information system

Work placements are an integral part of quality of education. If industry wants employees who have followed quality training programmes, they can make an contribution by offering work placements to students of secondary education. Although Flanders has a single information system on training places (SIS), there is often a gap between industry and the SIS.

Some years ago, the chambers of commerce and industry of Antwerp-Waasland and Limbourg launched an information system on training placements (SIS) designed to provide an intelligent match between supply and demand. At the beginning of 2002, the Flemish Ministry of Education adopted the SIS which has since spread throughout Flanders. The training placements in question are work placements for students of full-time technical and secondary vocational education, as well as students in the human sciences streams of general secondary education; they are unrelated to the placements for students in part-time education, organised at a different level. The Flemish chambers of trade and industry ensure proximity to the local community, as well as contact with industry. Proximity to the local community is fundamental for the firms to publicise placements in the short term.

The Flemish database on training places has 696 affiliated enterprises and 322 schools of technical education and vocational secondary education, as well as schools in the human sciences streams of general secondary education. This year, the number of participants showed a marked increase with an even spread between large-scale enterprises and SMEs. On the other hand, the increase is very uneven between provinces. A further increase in the demand for industrial work placements is expected. However firms taking on trainees do not always have access to the SIS and

schools are advised to maintain existing contacts with the enterprises.

### The SIS offers a wider choice to both schools and industry

Schools, on the one hand, now have a better choice of work placement. Whereas previously they often contented themselves with placing their students in firms with which they had special links, the SIS has opened up the market.

On the other hand, the SIS also offers firms a better choice. In fact, whereas firms previously tended to wait for incoming applications and only tried to match a trainee of interest with an in-company work placement downstream, the SIS now acts as an incentive for them to consider which placements they wish to offer upstream.

### Work placements improve the quality of education

A work placement offers value added to the theoretical knowledge acquired by students. It represents an integral part of education. The enterprises realise that the training placements upgrade the training of workers entering occupational life and in fact a work placement often goes hand in hand with the prospect of recruitment.

Further information at: <http://www.vdab.be>

Source: Gestion Média et bibliothèque VDAB



Belgium

## The new Flemish centre of knowledge

The new Flemish centre of knowledge has a triple objective: to promote cooperation projects between the public and private sectors, to compile and disseminate information on this cooperation and to train public and private sector managers for this cooperation.

The Flemish centre of knowledge, a public-private partnership initiative, is to commence operations in February 2003, providing integrated training courses on public and private sector partnership. The training courses are to be delivered by private-sector organisations with year-long experience in the field of public-private partnership (PPP) and recognised as training providers.

The Flemish centre of knowledge was established in April 2002 by the Flemish government with a triple objective. The centre develops cooperation projects between the public and the private sector, compiles and disseminates information on PPP, and supervises and evaluates the processes initiated. Delivering integrated training courses on the techniques, approach and methodologies of PPP dovetails

perfectly with this objective. The target group of the training courses is comprised of employees of central and local authorities, Flemish public agencies, the hospital sector and education, as far as the public sector is concerned, and above all project leaders and other employees in real estate, infrastructure, town and country planning, urban regeneration, the environment, technology, IT, housing, welfare, tourism, education and culture, in the private sector. The courses are also addressed to ancillary service providers, e.g. management/business management, financial and legal consultants.

Further information at: <http://www.vdab.be> and from [diana.vanhoebroek@vlaanderen.be](mailto:diana.vanhoebroek@vlaanderen.be)

Source: Gestion Média et bibliothèque VDAB

Denmark

## New professional bachelor programmes

From August 2003, three new professional bachelor programmes will be available. These three-year courses, developed in co-operation with the world of work, respond directly to the government's action plan on "Better Education" (see separate article on page 9).

The three programmes are in the fields of character animation, process economics and value chain management, and engineering and interactive design. Access is through an upper secondary (general or vocational) education certificate and the courses will include on-the-job training.

The professional BA in character animation provides students with professional skills in character animation and will benefit both Danish and international companies that work with the various processes of animation techniques, film publishing, television or computer-based media such as computer games. The programme has previously been offered by a private education provider, but as a result of discussions in a working group consisting of representatives from the Danish film and television sector, it is now available free of

charge and thereby part of the general provision on offer to students.

The professional BA in process economics and value chain management provides students with technical and commercial skills in logistics and supply chain management. The programme was developed in a close dialogue with companies and the social partners, and is an addition to existing business economics and technical higher education courses.

The BA in engineering and interactive design educates engineers to develop products and media on the basis of customer and user needs. The programme seeks to meet the demands of high-tech development and production companies. Its main subject is electronics and it is expected to boost the number of students in the engineering field.

Source: Ciriuz



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**Certification systems**

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B: Training attracts training – in Flanders too; L: Survey gives pointers on continuing training;

**Vocational guidance**

E: Vocational guidance for employment and assistance for self-employment; Selected bibliography; What's missing?



## Certification systems

United Kingdom

### Developing a credit and qualifications framework in Scotland

**The Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) aims to achieve the inclusion of qualifications across both academic and vocational sectors into a single credit-based framework. Its development is currently one of the key national priorities in Scottish education and training and is at the forefront of international developments.**

The most important benefits of the SCQF are that it will:

- enable employers, learners, and the public in general to understand the full range of Scottish qualifications, how they relate to each other, and how different types of qualifications can contribute to improving the skills of the workforce;
- help people of all ages and circumstances to access appropriate education and training over their lifetime to fulfil their personal, social and economic potential.

The SCQF will make the relationships between qualifications clearer. It will clarify entry and exit points and

routes for progression within and across education and training sectors. It will also maximise the opportunities for credit transfer. In these ways, it will assist learners to plan their progress and learning.

Qualifications and programmes within the SCQF will be described in terms of their level and number of credit points (known as SCOTCAT points). The positioning of two or more qualifications or programmes of learning at the same level indicates that, while they might have quite different purposes, content and outcomes, they are broadly comparable in terms of the general level of complexity of skills, knowledge and/or competence. Qualifications at the

same level are therefore broadly comparable, but not interchangeable.

As part of the development of the SCQF, the Scottish Qualifications authority organised a two-day conference in Glasgow in December 2002. The conference was designed to focus on plans to implement the SCQF by 2004/05, and in particular on the National Implementation Plan, published to coincide with the conference.

An important feature of the conference was a series of workshops designed to provide policy-makers, managers and practitioners across all areas of education and training in Scotland with an opportunity to

consider together the implementation of the SCQF. The aim of the workshops was to ensure that particular attention was paid to ways in which the framework can help support new developments and initiatives in meeting learning needs. Placing the SCQF in relation to similar developments taking place internationally was another important theme.

Amongst the workshop topics were:

- The SCQF in schools colleges and Community Learning and Development;
- Meeting the needs of employers through the context of the SCQF;
- Realising the potential of the SCQF in Higher Education and through Further/Higher Education links;
- Recognising prior learning;
- Commonwealth and international perspectives on qualifications frameworks and

- SCQF and the Bologna Declaration: Scottish learning within a European Framework.

Immediate feedback indicates that the conference was very successful in achieving its objectives and in raising awareness of the SCQF internationally. A full Conference Report will be published along with an update on implementation in Spring 2003.

Information on the outcomes of the conference and on the SCQF more generally is available at: <http://www.scqf.org.uk/> and Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA), Hannover House, 24 Douglas Street, Glasgow G2 7NQ phone (44-141)242 22 14 fax (44-141) 242 22 44 e-mail [helpdesk@sqa.org.uk](mailto:helpdesk@sqa.org.uk) Website: [www.sqa.org.uk](http://www.sqa.org.uk).

Source: SQA/QCA

Norway

### New agency for quality in education

**On 2 January, the Ministry of Education and Research issued new regulations for the accreditation and evaluation of higher education and training institutions in Norway. These are an integrated part of an overall quality reform policy. The National Agency for Equality in Education (Nasjonalt organ for kvalitet i utdanningen - NOKUT), which has been functioning since the beginning of January, has responsibility for implementing the new regulation. It is organised as a state-funded institution, but is independent of the ministry.**

**Objectives and underlying principles**

The agency's mandate is to accredit each institution and the programmes offered, as well as to evaluate the system for quality assurance through an audit-evaluation. Each institution will apply to the agency for accreditation of all new programmes and will no longer have to apply to the Ministry in order to establish certain programmes.

If the agency finds that an institution's system for quality assurance is

unsatisfactory, the institution will not lose its accreditation for programmes already offered, but it will lose the right to establish new programmes. The right to establish new programmes presupposes that the institutions have satisfactory systems for quality assurance. The agency will not evaluate all programmes at an institution; the emphasis being put on the institution's systems for quality assurance.

The agency will have a mandate to accredit private institutions. Accred-

ited private institutions will have the same rights as state-owned ones when it comes to establishing new programmes. A precondition for accreditation for state-owned institutions is that they have satisfactory systems for quality assurance.

**Evaluation of institutions**

The responsibility for quality assurance is placed on the institutions themselves. The system for evaluation of quality in each institution should comprise all processes relevant to the quality of the education

offered, for example, information to the students, the courses, the final exam, etc.

Reviews of an institution might result in its losing its right to offer studies that it has formerly been accredited to offer. Before that happens, an institution will be given a warning and get the opportunity to improve the quality of the programme in question. If accreditation is withdrawn from an institution, the ministry will make sure that arrangements are made for the students to complete their studies at another college or university.

**Organisation of NOKUT**

NOKUT has a staff of 30 working in four sections, general administration, accreditation, quality and ac-

creditation of foreign education and training. Its board is comprised of five members, plus three deputy members, appointed by the government for a period of four years (two years for the student representative). The Ministry of Education and Research appoints the Director of the Board.

More information from: NOKUT Postboks 1708 Vika 0121 Oslo Norway <http://www.nokut.no> Email: [postmottak@nokut.no](mailto:postmottak@nokut.no) Tel. (47) 21021800 Fax (47)21021801

Ministry for Education and Research <http://www.dep.no/udf/>

Source: Technological Institute, Norway, E-mail: [aagot.van.elslande@teknologisk.no](mailto:aagot.van.elslande@teknologisk.no)

## Partners offer new IT certificates for Linux

Cooperation guarantees new training standards for 'open source' software at Austrian schools

The Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, IBM Austria and the information technology (IT) training provider *Finanzakademie Austria* have joined forces to develop a certificate for 'open source' work forms in IT. With this initiative, the vocational training experts of this public-private partnership wish to guarantee new training standards for Linux 'open source' software at Austrian schools. Scholars, students and teachers can now have their

autodidactic Linux skills certified by the Austrian Open Source Certificate, Level 1 (AOSC-1)

'Open source', the free use of propriety software, is a new work form widespread in IT and already part and parcel of youth culture in many industrialised countries. In seeking problem solutions, users work on a project basis with open source software and data stocks, accessing information available worldwide and

visiting expert chat rooms in the Internet. Linux has become a synonym for worldwide communication. It offers the opportunity to copy and modify software without having to pay high licensing fees.

A package of teacher training sessions, scholar installation parties and recommendations for 'open source' products are designed to promote the use of operating systems, office software and gratuitous learning platforms. The contents of the training courses are based on international models of good practice, have

been coordinated with the IT industry and can be disseminated in the short term. The new IT Linux certificate is envisaged as the initial module of a system which can be extended to include further products and applications, along the same lines as the European Computer Driving Licence. AOSC Levels 2 and 3 are to follow.

Further information at: <http://www.bmbwk.gv.at/start.asp?islink=1&bereich=3&l1=&l2=&l3=&OID=8241#>, Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, Federal Minister's office, Tel. (43 1) 53120 - 5003 or Dr Christian Dorninger, Christian.Dorninger@bmbwk.gv.at

Source: bmbwk/Cedefop/SK

# Financing of vocational training

Germany

## Training pays

A BIBB study shows that earnings generated by the work of apprentices covers a substantial share of their training costs

The total sum of almost EUR 28 billion invested by industry in the training of 1.7 million trainees in 2000 is money well spent. As demonstrated by a survey conducted by the Federal Institute for Vocational Training (*Bundesinstitut für Berufsbildung - BIBB*) among some 2 500 training firms, apprentices' work generates almost half of this amount in earnings during the training phase.

The three-year training of an apprentice costs a training company approx. EUR 50 000. Almost one half of this sum is swallowed up by apprentices' wages and social security contributions, whereas a good third goes into the personnel costs of the trainers. However most apprentices help to pay a considerable amount of their

costs by the earnings generated by their work, ranging from EUR 5 400 in the first to almost EUR 11 000 in the third training year. Overall trainee-generated earnings totalled some EUR 13 billion in 2000.

This trend is particularly positive in industry and trade where in 2000, following deduction of average trainee-generated earnings of EUR 7 730 per apprentice per annum, net training costs totalled EUR 8 705, 5 % down on 1991. According to the BIBB study, this is not least due to the fact that firms nowadays tend to integrate training more into their own labour process rather than to have recourse to the services of a training workshop – which was customary practice in large-scale industrial firms until only recently.

The training of juniors pays off for the firms involved in the training effort: one result of the BIBB study shows that a training firm can save up to EUR 5 765 for every skilled worker trained and subsequently taken on – a sum which would otherwise have to be invested in employee recruitment, job familiarisation and continuing training. Moreover, training companies incur a lesser risk of recruiting the wrong person, show a lower rate of staff fluctuation and enjoy a better public image.

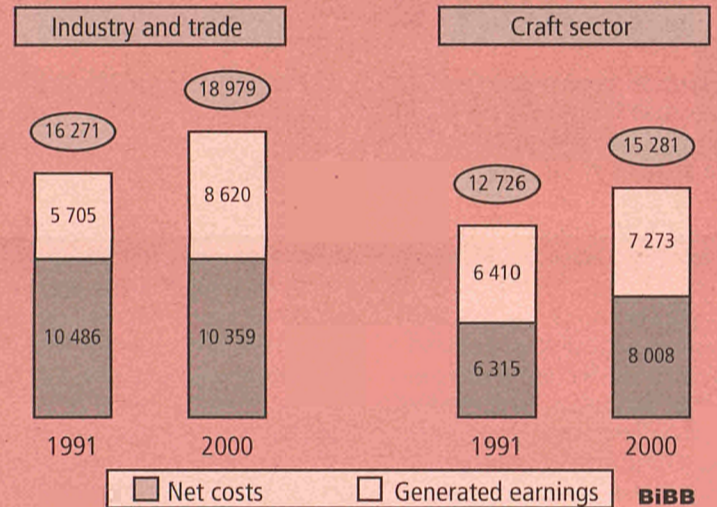
Further results of the study are published in No 6/2002 of the journal "*Berufsbildung in Wissenschaft und Praxis*", available from Bertelsmann Verlag Postfach 10 06 33, D-33506 Bielefeld, Tel. (49-521) 911 01-11, Fax (49-521) 911 01-19, E-Mail: [service@wbv](mailto:service@wbv)

Further information on the study may be obtained directly from the BIBB. Please contact Günter Walden ([walden@bibb.de](mailto:walden@bibb.de)), Ursula Beicht ([beicht@bibb.de](mailto:beicht@bibb.de)) or Hermann Herget ([herget@bibb.de](mailto:herget@bibb.de)).

Source: BIBB/Cedefop/SK

### Gross costs, generated earnings and net costs (total costs) of in-company vocational training in industry and trade and in the craft sector in west Germany 1991 and 2000

- Average amounts per trainee per year (EUR) -



The Netherlands

## Social partners keep their promises and invest in training

In 2001, the government, social partners and educational sector agreed on an extra public investment of 135 million Euro yearly between 2002 and 2006 in the vocational education and training of employees and job seekers, on the condition that social partners themselves also invest additional funds in the coming years. In October 2002, the *Stichting van de Arbeid* (Labour Foundation) published an inventory (1) of the investments by the social partners.

In collective agreements the paragraph on training takes an increasingly broad perspective including not only functional training, but also training aimed at employability, using instruments like accreditation of prior learning (APL), company and personal development plans and budgets. Around 40% of the sectoral training and development funds (contributed by employers) are used to fund these broad training courses. Around 90% of all companies now provide training for their own employees. Parallel to this development, the financial resources for education and training activities have grown substantially. Employers invest an average of 5% of their labour costs in education and training. This implies a substantial increase compared to a couple of

years ago. In comparison to other European countries, the Netherlands, Denmark and Norway are the countries with the highest average training investment per employee.

### Social partners active in open debate

Companies and schools represent two sides of a mirror. They are dependent on each other, but they live in two essentially different worlds. The challenge lies in conducting a continuous open debate. The two examples below, taken from different sectors of the labour market, illustrate the active role social partners take in this debate.

1. In April 2002, the social partners in the educational sector, united in the *Sectorbestuur Onderwijsar-*

*beidsmarkt* – SBO (Sectoral Board for the labour market in the educational sector), have started a process to reduce shortages of skilled personnel and to revitalise the sector so as to be able to reach the ambitious (European) aims. The shortage of unfulfilled vacancies in secondary education in 2006 will reach 6 000, if there are no policy changes. In *Agenda 2006 – involvement of social partners in the educational sector* (2), the sectoral employers' and employees' organisations have formulated an agenda with eight main points:

- focus on the professionalism and central role of trainers and teachers,
- professional management,
- the entrepreneurial school,
- strengthening of human resource management policy,
- training of teachers and other personnel in education,
- competitive conditions of employment,
- attractive working environment and

- developing links with other sectors to attract teachers.

2. In October 2002, *MKB-Nederland* (the representative employers' organisation in the SME sector) published a report *Young talent for the SME sector – vocational education as foundation of society* (3) to enhance cooperation in this sector. An important obstacle indicated by employers is that the shortage of well-trained personnel pushes back growth in this sector. The problems of early school leavers without basic qualification (they can be up to 50% of the cohort in the bigger cities) and the difficult transfer to higher levels of vocational education are obstacles to the supply of trained personnel.

Relationships between vocational education and the SME sector can be improved via cooperation between sectoral and regional platforms or between branches and individual regional training centres. Furthermore, employers argue that the regional monopoly of the regional

training centres does not stimulate the development of new initiatives or competition in order to supply tailor-made educational courses. To cope with the shortage of teachers and trainers, it is proposed to give eager, entrepreneurial teachers the possibility to work independently, so that individual schools can hire them for new initiatives in vocational education. This might also have the advantage that people employed outside the educational sector would, following this principle, provide their services as teachers/trainers.

(1) *Stichting van de Arbeid* (The Labour Foundation), *Inventarisatie naar de aard en omvang van scholingsinspanningen van sociale partners* (Inventory of the education efforts of social partners). Den Haag, October 2002. Further information: [www.stichtingvandeArbeid.nl](http://www.stichtingvandeArbeid.nl)

(2) *Agenda 2006 – inzet sociale partners onderwijs* (Agenda 2006 – involving social partners in the educational sector), in Dutch only. Sectorbestuur Onderwijsarbeidsmarkt. Den Haag, April 2002.

(3) *Jong talent voor het MKB. Beroepsopleiding fundament van de samenleving* (Young talent for the SME sector – vocational education as foundation of society). MKB-Nederland. Delft, October 2002. Further information for VET sector: [hoogendijk@mkb.nl](mailto:hoogendijk@mkb.nl)

Source: Stichting van de Arbeid/SBO/MKB-Nederland/CINOP

## 2001 social audit

**In a gloomy economic climate, Belgian enterprises cut their training budgets from a total of 1.4 % of personnel costs in 2000 to 1.35 % in 2001. This is in any case the conclusion of a social audit analysis conducted by the National Bank of Belgium.**

According to an agreement between both sides of industry, training expenditure is to rise to 1.9 % of personnel costs by the year 2004.

Social auditing was introduced in 1996 as a means of compiling data on human resources policy. The social audit comprises data on employee status, employment, educational standards and training. Bel-

gian firms have an obligation to attach the social audit to their annual accounts filed with the National Bank, which then presents the results in its annual economic review.

The National Bank observes that 'compared to the previous financial year, all the indicators relating to training point to a downward trend'. Training-related costs fell 9 % while

the number of training hours, expressed as a percentage of the total number of hours worked, dropped 6.2 %. In a gloomy economic climate, Belgian firms have sought to reduce their expenditure to a minimum and training has evidently not been regarded as a priority. 41 % of employees engaged in a training course in 2001. The average duration of training was 31 hours, at a cost of

almost EUR 1 400. In 2001, the total number of workers was on average 2.6 % higher than in 2000, and the number of hours rose by 1.5 %.

However, in view of the downturn in economic activity, only a very slight increase in employment was registered between December 2000 and December 2001: 0.6 %. The growth in employment is essentially registered in the services sector, which accounts for some 80 % of recently hired workers. The industrial sector has been the hardest hit by the downturn in economic activity with 6 000 jobs cut, including a high

number of redundancies in the automotive industry. The effects of the economic downturn have essentially hit the low-skilled. Belgian firms have applied a flexible personnel policy in this gloomy economic climate. In an attempt to avoid an excessive number of redundancies, they have made less use of temporary workers and fixed-term contracts and taken on more part-time workers.

More information at: <http://www.vdab.be>

Source: Gestion Média et bibliothèque VDAB

# Vocational training statistics

## Training attracts training – in Flanders too

**Only those with a certain level of educational attainment have the opportunity to learn more. In 2001, the knowledge gap widened even further in Flanders: only 2.6 % of the less educated engaged in a training course, compared to a total of 14.5 % among qualified persons.**

This means that nearly six times as many training courses are followed by qualified persons than by the less educated. Between 2000 and 2001, the training opportunities of the lowly educated rose by only 0.1 %, compared to 0.9 % among the qualified. The gap is therefore widening continually. These are the results of the latest European statistics examined by the Flemish social welfare organisation *Welzijnszorg* and the Confederation of Christian Trade Unions (*Confédération des Syndicats Chrétiens - CSC*), both involved in a campaign designed to narrow the knowledge gap and to increase the provision of re-training opportunities for the less educated.

These statistics reveal that in 2001 Flanders failed to catch up with the rest of Europe as far as lifelong learning and adult training are concerned. Whereas 8.3 % of all Europeans aged 25 to 64 benefited from a training opportunity last year, the correspond-

ing rate was only 7.4 % in Flanders. Other indicators on lifelong learning put the figures registered in Flanders and Belgium in an even more mediocre light.

*Welzijnszorg* and the CSC deplore the fact that only qualified persons

benefit from training opportunities in Belgium, pointing to the persisting inequality between qualified persons and the less educated in this respect. Just as money attracts money, training seems to attract training, with a redistribution effect in the wrong direction.

The Pact of Vilvoorde, concluded last year between the Flemish government and the Flemish social partners, pledged a substantial increase in adult training opportunities - in

fact even more opportunities were to be created for the less educated than the highly skilled. This very short-term promise has therefore not yet borne fruit.

This situation is even more significant since, as indicated by the *Poverty and social exclusion yearbook* of the University of Antwerp, this inequality in the field of education appears to be correlated to other even more shocking inequalities such as life expectancy. Persons

staying on longer at school accordingly tend to live longer. In Belgium, the life expectancy of a man aged 25 with no formal qualification is 5.5 years lower than that of a graduate of higher education. As far as quality of life is concerned, i.e. the number of years during which a person enjoys good health, the differences between qualified and lowly educated persons are even more striking.

Further information at: <http://www.welzijnszorg.be>  
Source: Gestion Média et bibliothèque VDAB: <http://www.vdab.be>

## Survey gives pointers on continuing training

**The socio-economic panel survey 'Living in Luxembourg' (*Panel Socio-Économique - Liewen zu Lëtzebuerg - PSELL*) is an exceptional instrument which identifies trends in the living conditions of individuals and households in the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg.**

Every year the panel survey collects a mine of information on the principal aspects of life of the country's population: housing conditions and consumer durables, principal items of expenditure, precariousness, debt, children's educational status, adults' socio-occupational status, initial

training, continuing vocational training, income, housing, etc.

PSELL 1 was launched in 1985 in the form of interviews among a sample of 6 110 persons spread throughout 2 012 households. A series of questions on continuing

vocational training was subsequently added in 1997. Combined with questions on initial training, these questions provide a comprehensive picture of the education levels and skill standards of the population living in Luxembourg.

The survey shows that access to continuing training is undoubtedly facilitated by a sound level of initial education. The non-working population and the unemployed have only

limited access to continuing vocational training. This implies that the lowest skilled run the risk of remaining so throughout their entire lives.

More information on the socio-economic panel survey *Liewen zu Lëtzebuerg* from: Pierre Hausman, Scientific Director  
Tel. (352) 58 58 55- 519 (Secretariat); Fax (352) 58 55 88  
E-mail: [pierre.hausman@ceps.lu](mailto:pierre.hausman@ceps.lu)  
<http://www.ceps.lu>

Source: Études et Formation

# Vocational guidance

## Vocational guidance for employment and assistance for self-employment

**The Spanish national action plan for employment envisages training, employment or personalised guidance for young people and adults who have been seeking employment for a period of six or twelve months.**

To fulfil this commitment, the National Institute of Employment (*Instituto Nacional de Empleo - INEM*), backed by co-funding from the European Social Fund, is to subsidise its non-profit-making collaborating agencies for the duration of the relevant programmes, and allocate an additional 25% for the technical preparation of the actions. The expenses for technical material such as guides, participant documentation and psycho-technical material are also to be subsidised. In the area covered by INEM (i.e. excluding those Autonomous Communities to

which responsibility has been devolved) a total of 203 405 clients are expected.

Two principal types of action are to be implemented in this context:

- vocational guidance to stimulate employment on the one hand and
- self-employment assistance programmes, on the other.

The following measures are envisaged as far as **guidance** to stimulate employment is concerned:

1. Personalised tutoring: customised vocational guidance, in which the technical expert and the client plan the steps required for optimal development of the vocational integration route.

2. Development of personal skills for employment: collective action to develop personal skills and thereby facilitate the initiation and continuation of activities within a process of vocational integration.

3. Jobseekers' club: collective action designed to impart or develop

techniques and skills facilitating the active search for employment.

4. Interview workshop: collective action designed to enhance basic theoretical and practical knowledge and the personal resources of jobseekers so that they can tackle job interviews with a better prospect of success.

As far as **self-employment assistance** is concerned, the following measures are envisaged:

1. Information on and motivation for self-employment: collective action designed to encourage a spirit of enterprise among jobseekers by providing the necessary information to develop a business project.

2. Business project counselling: individual action designed to give entrepreneurs a concrete business idea; support in the development and implementation of the business plan.

All the above actions are also to be adapted to the specific needs of special groups such as the hearing and visually impaired.

Further information from INEM (Sub-directorate-General for the Promotion of Employment)  
Calle Condesa de Venadito, 9  
E-28027 Madrid  
<http://www.inem.es>

Source: INEM, Official State Gazette  
17 December 2002

# Selected bibliography

Some recent publications in the field of vocational education and training have been selected below by Cedefop's Library and Documentation Service (Anne Waniart – E-mail: [anw@cedefop.eu.int](mailto:anw@cedefop.eu.int)).

## European Institutions



You are free to browse or download on line EU publications. Alternatively, you can obtain hard copies of these publications by contacting the local sales agent for the Office for Official Publications of the European Communities. [http://publications.eu.int/general/en/sales\\_agents\\_de.htm](http://publications.eu.int/general/en/sales_agents_de.htm)

## European Union

### Report from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council: Report on the implementation of the Decision 1999/51/EC of the Council of 21 December 1998 on the promotion of European pathways in work-linked training, including apprenticeship.

Luxembourg: EUR-OP, 2002, p. 20.

(Documents COM, (2002) 214)

ISSN 0254-1475

[http://libserver.cedefop.eu.int/vetelib/eu/leg/com/com\\_2002\\_0214\\_en.pdf](http://libserver.cedefop.eu.int/vetelib/eu/leg/com/com_2002_0214_en.pdf)

### European Commission Interim Report on the Start of the Operational Implementation of the Second Phase of the Leonardo da Vinci Programme (2000-06): Report from the Commission.

Luxembourg: EUR-OP, 2002, p.24.

(Documents COM, (2002) 315)

ISSN 0254-1475

[http://libserver.cedefop.eu.int/vetelib/eu/leg/com/com\\_2002\\_0315\\_en.pdf](http://libserver.cedefop.eu.int/vetelib/eu/leg/com/com_2002_0315_en.pdf)

### Investing efficiently in education and training: an imperative for Europe: Communication from the Commission / Commission of the European Communities.

Luxembourg: EUR-OP, 2002. p. 32 (Documents COM; (2002) 779)

ISSN 0254-1475

[http://libserver.cedefop.eu.int/vetelib/eu/leg/com/com\\_2002\\_0779\\_en.pdf](http://libserver.cedefop.eu.int/vetelib/eu/leg/com/com_2002_0779_en.pdf)

### Council Decision of 27 June 2002 amending Decision 1999/311/EC adopting the third phase of the trans-European cooperation scheme for higher education (Tempus III) (2000 to 2006).

In: Official Journal of the European Communities, L 195, 24.7.2002, p. 34-37

Luxembourg: EUR-OP, 2002

ISSN 0378-6986

[http://libserver.cedefop.eu.int/vetelib/eu/leg/dec/2002\\_0195\\_en.pdf](http://libserver.cedefop.eu.int/vetelib/eu/leg/dec/2002_0195_en.pdf)

## European Commission Directorate-General Employment and Social Affairs

### The future of the European employment strategy:

EES / European Commission.

Brussels: European Commission- Directorate-General Employment and Social Affairs, 2003, p. 23

[http://libserver.cedefop.eu.int/vetelib/eu/pub/commission/dgesa/2003\\_0001\\_en.pdf](http://libserver.cedefop.eu.int/vetelib/eu/pub/commission/dgesa/2003_0001_en.pdf)

### Multiannual work programme of the social partners: 2003-2005 / European Commission.

Brussels: European Commission- Directorate-General Employment and Social Affairs, 2003, p.2

[http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment\\_social/news/2002/dec/prog\\_de\\_travail\\_comm\\_en.pdf](http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/news/2002/dec/prog_de_travail_comm_en.pdf)

## Eurydice



## EURYDICE

### Key competencies: a developing concept in general compulsory education / Information Network on Education in Europe - EURYDICE.

Luxembourg: EUR-OP, 2002, p. 224

ISBN 2-87116-346-4

<http://www.eurydice.org/Documents/survey5/en/FrameSet.htm>

## OTHER ORGANISATIONS

### European Information Technology Observatory

European Information Technology Observatory 2003

European Information Technology Observatory - EITO

Frankfurt: EITO, 2003 Phys. Desc. p. 400. + CD-ROM

<http://www.eito.com>

## ILO



### Learning and training for work in the knowledge society: the constituents' views: report IV.

Geneva: ILO, 2003 - (International Labour Conference; 91st Session 2003, Report IV)

Also published in Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Russian and Spanish.

ISBN 92-2-112877-6

ISSN 0074-6681

<http://www.ilo.org/public/english/standards/relm/ilc/ilc91/pdf/rep-iv-2.pdf>

## OECD



### Beyond rhetoric: adult learning policies and practices.-

Paris: OECD, 2003, p. 276

Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development - OECD

ISBN 9264199438

<http://www.oecd.org/bookshop>

## UNICE

### Lisbon strategy: time is running out, action needed now / Union of Industrial and Employers' Confederations of Europe - UNICE.

Brussels: UNICE, 2003, p. 20

<http://www.unice.org>

## Others institutions

### European trends in the development of occupations and qualifications / Burkart Sellin.

In: Political perspectives of vocational and occupational education and training, p. 137-149

Bielefeld: W. Bertelsmann Verlag, 2003 (Milestones of vocational education and training, 3)

ISBN 3-7639-3017-5

### Scenarios and strategies for vocational education and training / Johan van Rens.

In: Political perspectives of vocational and occupational education and training, p. 149-163

Bielefeld: W. Bertelsmann Verlag, 2003 (Milestones of vocational education and training, 3)

ISBN 3-7639-3017-5

### Erweitertes lebenslanges Lernen im internationalen Vergleich / Günter Dohmen. [Enhanced lifelong learning: an international comparison]

Chemnitz: Bildungsforum Südwestsachsen, 2003, p. 21

<http://www.tu-chemnitz.de/phil/ebbw/bf/files/dohmen.pdf>

# What's missing?

In this issue of Cedefop Info, we report on a large number of recent European Union and Cedefop activities. Because of this, we have no space for two of our customary items. For information on forthcoming conferences and exhibitions, please go to [http://www.trainingvillage.gr/etv/ETVNEWS/Show\\_today\\_fevents.asp](http://www.trainingvillage.gr/etv/ETVNEWS/Show_today_fevents.asp)

The text for many of the articles in Cedefop Info is provided by members of Cedefop's network for Reference and Expertise. Their names and addresses can be found at [www.cedefop.eu.int/directory.asp?refernet](http://www.cedefop.eu.int/directory.asp?refernet). For space reasons, we could not include all the high quality items received in this hard copy version. Those omitted are however available in the electronic version, which can be found at [www2.trainingvillage.gr/etv/publications.asp?section=24](http://www2.trainingvillage.gr/etv/publications.asp?section=24). As indicated on pages 2 and 4, these include information on a visit to Cedefop of Greek students preparing for the European Youth Parliament and an item from Ireland on social partner action for disabled people. Others concern

- the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of ARION the first European action programme in the field of educational co-operation and
- the launching of the Luxembourg School of Finance in October 2002

Source: Cedefop (JMA)