

Letter from the Director

2001 has already witnessed a great deal of activity. The new emphasis on education and training issues following the March 2000 Lisbon summit continues to have a major impact on our work. Accordingly we are contributing to the Commission's follow up work on the memorandum on lifelong learning, by establishing a reporting system on lifelong learning. I invite you to visit this site in the Electronic Training Village (www.trainingvillage.gr).



The President of the European Commission, Mr Romano Prodi, during his speech in Cedefop's Europa Conference Room end of March with the title "Training for life in the global village". (see "Romano Prodi underlines the significance of Cedefop" - <http://trainingnews-online.cedefop.eu.int/>)

The agreement by the Ministers of Education at a Council meeting in February on a report on *The concrete future objectives of education and training systems* to be presented to the European Council in Stockholm in March is an event of major importance. Further information on this report is contained in an article on pages 1 and 3.

In February in London, Cedefop was pleased to present the initial results of a survey on eLearning. Details of these are contained in an article on page 2. As I underlined in my opening address at that conference, Cedefop has become increasingly involved in the many issues surrounding the impact of new information and communication technologies on the provision of training.

Human resource development has ever-growing eLearning components. Although eLearning is still largely in its infancy in Europe, there is clear evidence that its impact, like that of the Internet, is already having, and will continue to have, major implications for what we learn, where we learn, when we learn and, perhaps most importantly, HOW we learn. It will shake the pillars of how today we conceive the education and learning process.

The implications within the European Union are enormous. We have at the same time a deficit in ICT skills and much too high unemployment.

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Focus on competences

Cedefop produces second report on European vocational training research

'Competences' are the leitmotif of the second report on vocational training research in Europe, which Cedefop has now published. The report focuses on the acquisition of competences and their significance for occupational practice and the labour market, as well as addressing many other topical aspects of European vocational training research. It provides information on its theoretical and methodological bases, important findings, and the implications for policy and practice. The report also informs on research projects funded by the European Commission through the Leonardo da Vinci Programme and the TSER programme (Targeted Socio-economic Research programme).

The new publication consists of a background report, a synthesis report, and an executive summary. The authors, Pascaline Descy and Manfred Tessaring, have drawn up the synthesis report on the basis of contributions to the background report and supplementary research. Please see the box for full details.

Owing to the fact that initial training and continuing training are closely interwoven with work, the economy and society, the players involved in competences acquisition have an increasing variety of coordination and steering tasks. Teachers and trainers, for example, constantly assume new roles in the development and management of a company's human resources, as they become intermediaries between enterprise and training management. This

topic is only an example of those treated in the first part of the report which concentrates on balancing the interests beyond the market and the State and other aspects of steering. It also analyses of various European financing models for training, considers reforms aimed at putting vocational and general education on an equal footing in Europe, and highlights certification systems and ways of assessing formal and non-formal learning in various countries.

The second part of the report discusses the concept of lifelong learning and the associated challenges for policy and research. Different elements of this concept and obstacles associated to its implementation are reviewed and supplemented by research into didactic innovations and learning processes for new job

profiles. The main issue here is that of how basic/generic skills and key/core competences can be translated

into curricula. The report also shows how European countries are tackling the flexibility, individualisation and

Tools/approaches for individualising and distinguishing vocational training and development paths

Countries	GB	NL	F	D	DK
Modules	++	++	-	-	+
Dual qualifications	-	-	-	+	+
Supplementary qualifications/interweaving of initial and continuing training	-	-	+	++	+
Interchangeability with courses of general education	+	++	+	+	-

Source: Dehnpostel & Dybowski 2000 Graph: R.J.Schmitt 2001

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Focus on competences

differentiation necessary in order to improve training quality and discusses concepts and methods associated with in-company learning.

Part 3 of the report looks at training and employment from the enterprise perspective. The authors consider the contradictory aspects of globalisation, new skill requirements and changing relationships between internal, external and occupational labour markets. Here, the emphasis is on the part played by small and medium-sized enterprises in training and employment. In particular, the authors focus on the question of what factors are crucial to the success of an enterprise and how small enterprises differ from large ones in terms of learning and training. This part of the report also addresses issues of entrepreneurship and training for self-employment, which play an important part in national and European employment strategy. Part 3 ends with a discussion of the development of human resources, reporting on human capital, and the importance of enterprise surveys in order to identify skills and training requirements.

Part 4 discusses the importance of education and training for the economy and the labour market. The dynamic of labour markets and training systems, along with differing time scales for generating and utilising competences,

Letter of the Director

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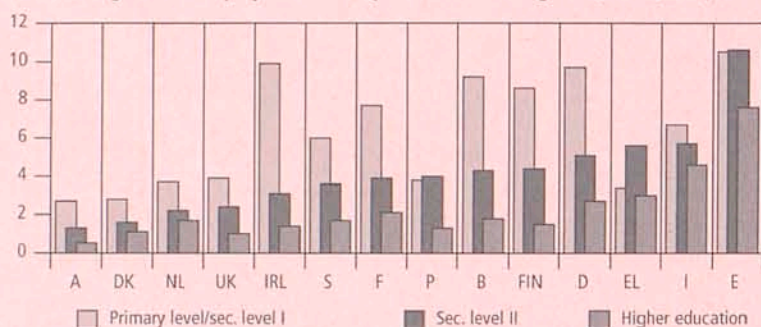
ment in some parts of the labour market, particularly of low or unskilled workers. The need to upgrade their skills is now urgent. However, the time and facilities needed to up-skill large numbers, as well as the lack of flexibility in the educational systems, make traditional methods of training provision inadequate. The realistic approach is a drastic extension of eLearning. For this we need skilled instructors for developing and providing eLearning content. Through its training of trainers network, Cedefop will be able to contribute to this.

In recent years the European Union through its programmes such as Leonardo da Vinci, ADAPT, Employment and the 4th and 5th Framework Research Programmes, has been the major funder of research and development in the eLearning field in Europe. However, in spite of such efforts we are not successful in getting the results of such work into mainstream developments. The transfer of best practice nationally and internationally is weak.

One of Cedefop's roles is to ensure the transfer of the results of VET research. In this context, we have now published our second VET research report. You will find further information on this major publication in an article on pages 1 and 2 of Cedefop Info.

Johan van Rens
 Director
 March 2001

Long-term unemployment rates by education/training level, EU-15, 1997, %^{a)}



a) Long-term unemployed (unemployed for 1 year or more) in % of working population with same level of education/training, grouped by secondary level II
 Source: Bollens, 2000 (based on Eurostat: Community Labour Force Survey 1997).

make it difficult to coordinate the two systems. There is also the question of which is 'traded' on the labour market – formal qualifications or competences? The authors discuss in detail imbalances on labour markets as regards qualifications: persisting unemployment and its causes, manifestations and effects of 'over-qualification', and the shortage of workers in certain occupational and skill fields. This part ends with a review of European activities in the field of forecasting of demand for workers and skills at national, regional and enterprise level, and a comparison of the arguments for and against forecasts.

Part 5 of the report deals with the value of education and training for the individual and the problems involved in appropriate measurement processes. It

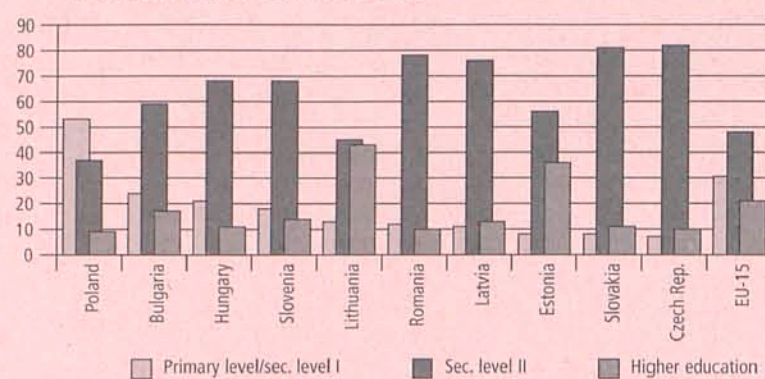
The influence of educational level, literacy and labour market experience on income (%)

Country	Literacy	Ed. level	Labour market experience	Total ¹⁾
Belgium (Flanders)	13.1	48.4	35.2	100
Canada	19.7	35.6	24.2	100
Germany	18.9	24.4	11.6	100
Ireland	30.9	27.4	23.2	100
Netherlands	19.5	27.2	35.0	100
Poland	0.3	34.7	17.6	100
Sweden	10.3	17.9	26.5	100
Switzerland	17.8	30.4	26.3	100
UK	23.1	24.3	8.9	100
USA	29.6	30.2	14.5	100

1) incl. not stated.
 Source: OECD 1998, p. 60 (based on the International Adult Literacy Survey 1994/95)

also provides details of research, its findings and suggested approaches for policy and practice, which may make it easier for young people to enter working life, will, in particular, help to prevent social exclusion, and are capable of integrating the low-qualified.

Educational/training level of 25-29-year-olds in the EU and the Central and Eastern European Countries 1997 (%)



Sources: CCEE: ETF, National Observatories; EU 15

The report ends with a survey of the organisation, structure and main topics of VET research in selected countries outside the European Union. The authors describe the situation in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe and explain their current problems in defining VET research and giving it a firm basis in society (figure: 'Education/training level...'). This is supplemented by an overview on the most important VET research institutions and topics in the USA, Canada, Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay, Australia, Japan, China, Russia and Switzerland, as well as international associations and organisations involved in VET research, such as the World Bank, Unesco/Unevoc, ILO and OECD.

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Source: Cedefop/MT+SK

The second report on vocational training research consists of a background report (in EN, 3 volumes), with more than 30 contributions from well-known experts, a synthesis report (in EN, FR, DE, ES; approx. 400 pages), summarising the research results and the implications for policy and practice, and an executive summary (in all 11 EU languages; approx. 45 pages).

Cedefop reports on VET research in Europe

First research report:

Background report: Cedefop (ed.): Vocational education and training – the European research field, 2 volumes, Luxembourg: EUR-OP, 1998; EUR 19 excluding VAT for Volume I + Volume II
Synthesis report: Manfred Tessaring: Training for a changing society, Luxembourg: EUR-OP, 1999; EUR 19 excluding VAT (also available in DE, FR and ES)

Second research report

Background report: Pascaline Descy, Manfred Tessaring (eds.): Training in Europe, 3 volumes, Luxembourg: EUR-OP, 2000; EUR 21 excluding VAT for all three volumes

Synthesis report: Pascaline Descy, Manfred Tessaring: Training and learning for competence. Luxembourg 2000, approx. 400 pages; EUR 19 excluding VAT (EN in preparation, also available in DE, FR and ES at the end of 2001)

Executive summary: Pascaline Descy, Manfred Tessaring: Training and learning for competence. Luxembourg 2000, approx. 45 pages; free (available in all 11 EU languages in the course of 2001)

Price for the background report (3 volumes), the synthesis report and the executive summary in a box (available at the end of 2001): EUR 29.50 excluding VAT

The reports, including the first report, which is still topical, are available through the national EU sales offices or direct from Cedefop.

Contributions to the background report 2000 and the executive summary can be downloaded as PDF files: www.trainingvillage.gr/etv/research/index.asp

eLearning taking off in Europe: survey results provide a fresh perspective

The demand for eLearning in Europe is growing, according to an online survey, 'What is the extent of eLearning in Europe' carried out by Cedefop and Alphametrics a UK based consultancy. Of the 539 initial responses to the survey, 83% were from the EU, with the UK, France, Denmark and Greece being well represented. Responses came from universities and colleges of further/higher education (21%), private training companies/organisations (19%) and public VET organisations (15%).

Last year training suppliers experienced strong growth in revenues from the sale of eLearning materials and even stronger growth is anticipated for 2000/1. As a result eLearning will account for an increasing proportion of materials revenue - jumping from 23% in 1999 to almost 40% in 2001. Expenditure by training users/purchasers on operating costs associated with eLearning will also grow fast, averaging around 25% per annum between 1999 and 2001.

In relation to the delivery and receipt of eTraining/eLearning

□ Training using eLearning methods is most common for ICT, where 43% of users' needs were met by this form of training.

□ On average a third of purchasers training needs were met by eLearning in the following subject areas: *Management, New Product/Service Training.*

□ eLearning tends to be much more widely used/purchased in smaller (those with fewer than 50 employees) organisations - 41%, than in larger ones (22% in those with 50-499 employees; 28% in those with 500+ employees).

Responses are analysed by organisation type, size, location, whether they are eLearning suppliers or customers or both, the subjects eLearning courses are provided in, as well as revenue from, and expenditure on, eLearning activities.

The survey defines eLearning as all learning using information and communication technologies and according to Johan van Rens, Director of Cedefop, it "represents the first major attempt to assess the current extent of eLearning within vocational education and training in Europe". He stressed that these

figures were preliminary and based on responses received over the Internet to the survey posted on the Electronic Training Village (ETV), www.trainingvillage.gr, website since the 1 February 2001. The survey will be supplemented by other data being collected on eLearning over the next couple of months.

The initial survey results were announced at the Learning Online 2001 Europe conference held in London, on 12 to 14 February, jointly organised by Cedefop. The conference also hosted a series of presentations by transnational partnerships which have developed eLearning content with the support of European Union programmes.

Ms Maruja Gutierrez-Diaz, Head of the Multimedia Unit of the European Commission's Directorate General for Education and Culture, welcomed the survey results. She said, "There

is a need for information on eLearning in Europe to inform policy decisions and stimulate debate. The survey is interesting and timely as the Commission is preparing an action plan as part of its eLearning initiative to encourage the effective use of e-Learning, in the context of lifelong learning". The Commission's Information Society and Technology programme is responding to the need for high level research into the development of eLearning, which is seen as key to the knowledge-based society.

The final survey report was expected to be ready in May and will be available in English, French, German and Spanish.

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Source: Cedefop/CMC/SB/JMA

Cedefop presents its work programme for 2001

Trend analysis on eLearning and support for initiatives of the Swedish and Belgian EU presidencies

Cedefop's work programme 2001 contains a total of eleven projects geared towards the operational guidelines for the period 2000-2003.

Five of those projects promote research and the identification of innovation in vocational training. Through the Electronic Training Village Cedefop provides access to the reporting system on lifelong learning and so supports the activities resulting from the European Commission's Memorandum on the subject. The system is intended to provide an overview of the development and implementation of lifelong learning in the Member States.

The project area 'promoting competences for the knowledge society' focuses on the results of Cedefop work on key qualifications and the recognition of non-formal learning. Plans include a publication on the current state of research into key qualifications and support for the exchange of experience in the area of non-formal learning. Cedefop is making current information on e-learning available via an electronic research platform and will summarise the latest findings on information technologies and learning in a report. Cedefop also helped to organise the European contribution to the Online Learning (Europe) conference held in London in February.

In the context of the Training of Trainers network (TTnet), this year Cedefop will be publishing a progress report and a glossary on the subject of 'Training of Trainers and information communication technology'.

A new Cedefop project concerns 'Learning accessible to all in a changing economy'. The project will identify policies and best practices to raise the skill levels of older and/or lower skilled workers. Cedefop's prime aims here are to provide the social partners with information and to promote research on the training aspects of the social economy. It is also planned to set up a database of good examples of integrating socially disadvantaged young people.

The Cedefop project 'Mobility and transparency of vocational qualifications' focuses on mobility as a didactic tool both within and outside the European programmes. Cedefop will be publishing a report on the subject and will support transparency forum in its work to identify additional ways of improving the transparency of qualifications and to identify, assess and recognise non-formal learning.

In the area of the 'Description and renewal of Member States' vocational education and training systems' Cedefop will be publishing descriptions of vocational education and training systems in Belgium, Germany, Greece and Ireland. It will also publish financing portraits on Greece, Portugal and Belgium and a synthesis report on the financing of vocational education and training in the EU. A report on scenarios and strategies for vocational education and training will make a contribution to policy-making.

In collaboration with the European Commission and Eurostat, in 2001 Cedefop will be publishing new comparative material on the transition from the education system to working life. The second research report 'Training for competence' will also be published this year and will

be one of Cedefop's most important publications in 2001 (see also p. 1).

As a partner in the framing and development of policy, this year Cedefop will above all support vocational education and training initiatives of the two EU presidency countries, Sweden and Belgium. When needed, Cedefop will collaborate closely with the European Commission to provide discussion papers and background information. Where requested, Cedefop will also provide input for meetings of the social dialogue in vocational training and other activities of the social partners. Given the prospect of EU enlargement embracing 13 candidate countries, Cedefop is considering how they might be integrated further into Cedefop's activities. The work with the candidate countries will be done in close consultation with the European Training Foundation in Turin.

In 2001 the study visits programme will again play a central role in pro-

viding exchange opportunities for policy-makers, social partners, scientists and practitioners in the field of vocational training. The programme will organise 65 visits in more than 20 countries involving up to 700 participants.

In the seminar series 'Agora Thessaloniki', three Agoras are planned. They will be on the learning region, vocational training for people with disabilities and their trainers, and mobility as a learning tool.

This year Cedefop will also be further developing its research platform Cedra. The development of IT tools aims to facilitate the sharing of information between researchers, support cooperation between them and promote joint knowledge development. In 2001 Cedefop will also be offering researchers a colloquium on the concept of 'knowledge development for social innovation'.

In 2001 the library and documentation service will again provide access to publications, periodicals, reports and thematic dossiers on vocational

education and training as well as glossaries and advice on terminology and acronyms.

The electronic media department, and in particular the Electronic Training Village, provides electronic publications on the results of Cedefop project work. Cedefop also intends to set up a vocational education and training online news service and publish a monthly electronic newsletter.

The publications service is responsible for hard-copy publications on the results of Cedefop project work. Those publications appear in the following series:

- reference (for sale, available in a number of languages)
- panorama and dossiers (free of charge, on request).

The publications service also brings out three issues of the European Journal Vocational Training and Cedefop Info.

Finally, in 2001 Cedefop will raise its profile and reinforce the impact of its work through certain initiatives,

including more extensive press coverage of its activities throughout the EU, development of a promotional concept, and inclusion of Cedefop material on major citation databases.

Source: Cedefop/SK



The work programme 2001 is available in German, English and French free of charge on request. Cat. No: TI-34-00-552-EN-C It can also be found on the Internet at: <http://www.trainingvillage.gr/etv/publication/about.asp>

Education Council approves report on future objectives of education and training systems

Continued from page 1

This was the first time that such a report has been elaborated and is a reflection of the enhanced role given to the Education Ministers in contributing to the European Employment Strategy and, in a wider sense, to the new strategic goal set in Lisbon. The report will now be submitted to the Heads of State and Government meeting at the Spring European Council in Stockholm on 23 and 24 March 2001. The Council also decided to forward the report to the European Parliament for information.

The report is divided into three chapters. It identifies common challenges, lays down concrete objectives and outlines the future role of education in the Lisbon follow-up.

As common challenges, the report identifies the changes in working life implying continuous adaptation of knowledge, the demographic structure of society, equal opportunities and social exclusion, as well as enlargement.

In the light of these challenges the report defines three concrete strategic objectives for the coming ten years:

1. Increase the quality and effectiveness of education and training systems in the European Union:

by providing education and training to teachers and trainers, developing and defining the relevant skills for the knowledge society, ensuring access to information and communication technologies for everyone and increasing the recruitment to scientific and technical studies.

2. Facilitate the access of all to the education and training systems:

by building up education and training systems, which adapt to a world of lifelong learning, are attractive to young people and adults and thus encourage continuous learning.

3. Open up education and training systems to the wider world:

by strengthening links with working life and research, improving foreign language training, increasing mobility and exchanges and strengthening European co-operation, e.g. as far as accredi-

tation systems and recognition of qualifications and diplomas are concerned.

In the third chapter the report lays down broad guidelines for a work programme for the next decade. The work programme will be further examined by the Education Council during 2001, in order to define how to measure achievements, the work to be undertaken at European level and possible areas for peer review and exchange of good practice, where appropriate, using benchmarks and indicators. The outcome of this process will be the subject of a new report to the European Council in spring 2002. In addition, the Education Council intends to report at regular intervals to the European Council on the implementation of the mandate it received in Lisbon.

The Council also held an exchange of views on the theme of developing strategies for **lifelong learning**. The discussion centred on the Memorandum on the same issue produced by the Commission and on the implementation of the Employment Guidelines for 2001, where lifelong learning has become one of the horizontal objectives.

The Commission's Memorandum dated 30 October 2000 has launched a wide-ranging debate at European level and in the Member States on how to develop a coherent overall strategy for lifelong learning in Europe. In the framework of the European strategy for employment, the Member States are currently preparing their National Action Plans for Employment in implementation of the Employment Guidelines for 2001 requesting them to define coherent strategies for lifelong learning.

Delegations generally welcomed the approach chosen by the Commission in its Memorandum and the policy areas defined. The President concluded by thanking delegations for their valuable contributions which would be used in preparing a more substantial reaction to the Memorandum from the Commission for the meeting of the Education Council in May. The Commission stated that it had taken due note of the comments made and will take them into account when preparing the action plan it intends to present at the end of 2001

Commissioner Reding presented the Council with the conclusions of the final evaluation report on the first phase of the Community action programme in the field of vocational training "Leonardo da Vinci", which covered the years 1995-1999. The report, dated 12 January 2001, was provided for in the decision establishing the Leonardo programme. The Commission stated that the programme had proved to be extremely valuable for the promotion of transnational initiatives. Strong points were, in particular, the increased mobility and the possibility for participation by the countries which are candidates for accession to the EU. With a total budget of 602 MEUROs, the programme financed more than 2500 pilot projects in 29 countries. Around 127 000 people have participated in the programme. Problems have, however, been encountered in the implementation of the programme due to the complexity of the centralised management structure and the lack of complementarity with other training-related programmes. Commissioner Reding assured the Council that the Commission has taken the appropriate steps for the second phase of the Leonardo programme, in particular through the adoption of simplified procedures and an increased decentralisation of the management of the programme

The Council was informed by the Commission on the start of the "European Year of Languages 2001". In Germany, Italy, the Netherlands and Spain the "Year of Languages" had already been successfully initiated, while the formal launch was to take place in Lund (Sweden) on 18-20 February. In mid-April, a Guide for learning languages was to be published. It is recalled that the "European Year of Languages" is a joint initiative of the Council of Europe and the European Union. The aim is to testify to the richness of linguistic and cultural diversity and to raise awareness of the benefits of learning languages. The "Year of Languages" will sponsor meetings and events, finance information and promotional campaigns and commission surveys and studies.

Source: Council of the European Union, Press Release (5927/01) (Presse 46) of 12.02.01/Cedefop/JMA

European Training Foundation reviews the EU's Phare vocational education and training programme

Significant progress has been achieved in the process of vocational education and training reform within the countries eligible to participate in the EU's Phare programme during the 1990s. There is a growing recognition in these central and eastern European countries that a well skilled workforce is a key factor in attracting foreign investment and increasing exports, which each of them needs to achieve. This is the overall message to come out of a technical review that has been carried out by the European Training Foundation (ETF) on the EU Phare vocational education and training (VET) reform programmes.

Between 1990 and 1998 the countries eligible to receive assistance under the Programme obtained approximately EUR 80 million for the reform of vocational education and training systems. The review identifies how effective this assistance has been in encouraging and sustaining VET.

Findings

As far as pilot schools were concerned the review detected a noticeable change in the attitude of teachers and students towards both curricula that were more orientated towards the needs of the labour market and active types of learning. It also found a more coherent development of new syllabuses, equipment and materials and improved communication between vocational education and training actors (notably ministries, regional administrations and employers).

The social side of the European summit at Nice

Nicole Fontaine, President of the European Parliament, Romano Prodi, President of the European Commission and Hubert Védrine, French Minister of Foreign Affairs representing the fifteen EU Member States, signed the European Union Charter of Fundamental Rights on 7 December 2000. However the Charter was not "solemnly proclaimed", as originally intended, in view of British and Danish opposition to any constraint the text might impose on Member States.

Nicole Fontaine nevertheless described the Charter as the "European Parliament Act" and called upon European leaders for its incorporation into the Treaty so that it can acquire the binding legal character it lacks so far.

The text of the Charter comprises fifty-four articles listing the various social, political and economic rights and freedoms of EU citizens, in an attempt to codify the common values of the Member States. It is addressed not to Member States but to the institutions and bodies of the EU in strict compliance with the principle of subsidiarity. In fact, it is only applicable to Member States insofar as their implementation of EU law is concerned. In other words, this Charter is not binding on Member States.

An agreement in principle was also reached on the Social Agenda on Friday, 8 December. This document, drafted by the European Commission, presents a series of guiding principles for Community actions in the field of social policy over the next five years.

Under discussion for several months at the level of the European ministers of social affairs in consultation with the social partners and representatives of civil society, this text – which also meets with British and Danish opposition – is no more binding than the Charter of Fundamental Rights. The Council is nevertheless to look at how the Agenda is being implemented every year, starting from March 2001 at Stockholm, on the basis of a regularly updated scoreboard.

In terms of curricular innovation one weakness identified was the continued orientation of many pilot courses towards traditional and declining areas of labour market demand rather than on future labour market opportunities. One example of this was the selection in almost all Phare vocational education and training country programmes of agricultural occupations.

The results of teacher training in the pilot schools were positive according to the review. Teachers are now far more keen to move forward and implement systems of curricular change, including modular programmes, national assessment and quality assurance systems across the board. The training they received from the Phare programme enabled them to make a valuable contribution to the debate on future vocational education and training policy and its implementation.

The upgrading of teaching equipment absorbed between one-third and, in the case of Romania, 72% of the total programme budgets for procurement for pilot schools and new curricula. The review stresses that although up-to-date training equipment was delivered to some Phare pilot schools this created a two-tier system in that Phare country governments were not in a position to extend the pilot school experience country-wide due to budgetary problems.

A very important achievement in the majority of Phare programmes has been the decentralisation of planning and the involve-

The European Council at Nice also formally approved the employment guidelines proposed by the Commission, the action plan for mobility decided by the ministers of education and youth and the European strategy against social exclusion and all forms of discrimination.

In this connection the Council called upon Member States to develop their priorities for attaining these objectives and to present a national plan of action for a period of two years by the end of June 2001. The Council is to propose indicators and ways to ensure follow up so that progress achieved can be assessed.

Finally, the fifteen Member States adopted the draft directive on the participation of workers in the framework of the status of the European company; this measure had been blocked by Spain on account of disagreement on the implementing arrangements for worker involvement in the European company.

The agreement now reached is expected to lead to the adoption of another directive on information, consultation and participation of workers, which had been blocked by Germany until the adoption of the European company directive.

On Monday 11 December, Elisabeth Guigou, Minister for Employment and Solidarity, declared her confidence in the future incorporation of the Charter which she described as "a good text, certainly with room for improvement" which could either be incorporated into positive law or integrated into the treaty, the latter being the line adopted by France.

The minister also welcomed the adoption of the Social Agenda which she qualified as "a genuine European strategy to combat exclusion".

The full texts of the conclusions of the Presidency of the Nice European Council on 7, 8 and 9 December 2000 and the Social Agenda can be found at: <http://ue.eu.int/Newsroom/loadDoc>
Source: Extract from Centre INFO website <http://centre-info.fr>

ment of relevant actors through steering committees at different levels of the system. The review clearly states that, "one of the most important outcomes is that many of the Committee members now serve on permanent advisory bodies for vocational education and training such as national vocational education and training councils, White Paper development groups or tripartite branch committees. There is evidence therefore that the Phare programmes have been influential in instigating working relationships that will endure beyond the period of these programmes."

Conclusions

The ETF's support to the implementation of the Phare VET programmes has ensured a substantial improvement in the quality of programme management and the building of supportive networks that are important for ensuring the sustainability of results. Channelling VET reform expertise has been challenging. The key issue is how to extract examples of reforms that work and apply them successfully to a particular country context. This process has, at times, come up against problems where differ-

ent national solutions were introduced by experts from different donor or consultancy organisations. Beneficiary countries have sometimes been confronted with an array of different, frequently incompatible or even competing concepts, models and approaches to VET.

As well as potentially causing confusion some of the approaches developed by foreign consultants have created problems of sustainability. Many western methods have been developed within well-funded VET systems and depend on high-value curriculum materials and training resources. When funding has been withdrawn beneficiary countries may well have been left with an expensive infrastructure which they cannot afford to maintain or sustain.

Information:

Mr Tristan Macdonald, European Training Foundation:
Fax (39-011) 630 2200; e-mail: info@etf.eu.int; website: www.etf.eu.int.
The European Training Foundation's newsletter ETfacts on-line is now directly accessible in electronic form (<http://www.etf.eu.int/etfweb.nsf/pages/etfactsintro>).
Source: ETF, Turin

Cedefop study visits in the context of the European Year of Languages 2001

Five countries present their policy and practice in the field of 'language learning in the field of VET'

In view of the considerable disparities in language skills throughout Europe, Cedefop has taken the European Year of Languages 2001 as an opportunity to discuss different approaches, methods, concepts and objectives of language learning and to disseminate examples of good practice as widely as possible. The new Cedefop study visits programme for VET experts reflects the theme of the European Year of Languages 2001. This autumn, five countries are to present their policy and practice in 'language learning in the field of VET' to an international public: Austria and Slovenia present a broad spectrum of national and international experience in the language learning and teaching fields. The two countries' joint venture also provides an opportunity to compare the approaches and methods in an EU Member State with those of a candidate for accession.

In Italy, language learning initiatives are the subject of debate within the latest reform of the education system.

The Netherlands explains the application of new technologies for language learning within the context of various methodological and didactic concepts.

With a view to European integration, Poland promotes language learning in the specialised fields of medicine, economics, technology and multimedia.

Those interested in the study visits will find further details at: www.trainingvillage.gr/etv/studyvisits/info.asp or may contact Cedefop project coordinators Marie-Jeanne Maurage, Tel. (30-31) 490 163, E-mail: mjm@cedefop.eu.int Eleonora Schmid, Tel. (30-31) 490 122, E-mail: ews@cedefop.eu.int Fax (30-31) 490 044.

Source: Cedefop/EWS+SK

Germany/Sweden

European Year of Languages 2001 gets under way

Swedish and German ministers of education emphasise knowledge of foreign languages as key skills

The European Year of Languages 2001 has been launched by national conferences in both Sweden and Germany. The European Union and the Council of Europe have declared 2001 as the European Year of Languages and started a Europe-wide campaign to promote motivation for language learning.

Germany's minister of education Edelgard Bulmahn pointed out that since knowledge of foreign languages has become a key skill, it is the task of the education/training system to prepare in particular young people for a multi-lingual culture. Her aim is that future young Europeans should have a command of two languages in addition to their mother tongue. Language learning, she said, should start as early as kindergarten and primary school. As well as English, Bulmahn believes that the languages of Germany's direct neighbours should also be promoted.

In the opinion of Swedish minister of education Thomas Östros, early introduction to foreign languages is decisive for an open attitude towards language learning later on in life; he

went on to emphasise that language learning should not merely be a dull necessity but should also be fun.

A recent survey among 16,000 citizens from the 15 EU Member States shows that there is still considerable room for improvement in this area. The survey reveals that 47.3 percent of the surveyed Europeans are monolingual. Luxembourg, where 98 percent of the population speak at least two languages, is top of the class with the United Kingdom, where only one third of the population speaks another language, at the bottom.

The European Year of Languages is to be celebrated by a whole series of events throughout the Member States, culminating in the European Day of Languages on 26 September. Some EUR 8 million have been earmarked by the Commission for projects in the context of the European Year of Languages.

Full details on the European Year of Languages at: www.eurolang2001.org.

Source: Federal Ministry for Education and Science (bmbf)/ Süddeutsche Zeitung vom 21.02.2001/Cedefop/SK

page 5 Bi- and multilateral co-operation D/F: Franco-German cooperation to combat youth unemployment; D/A: New Call Centre for information about work and training; EU: New CD-ROM: 'Fit for Europe'; **Training policy** F: Lifelong learning: a collective guarantee against exclusion; **page 6** NL: Lifelong learning and VET; NL: A knowledge society needs up-to-date education; **page 7** UK: Lifelong learning and qualifications in Scotland - an update; UK: Learning and Skills Council opens for business; NO: New department for policy analysis and international affairs in the Ministry of Education; **page 8** S: Education for future growth and development - are Sweden and its regions keeping up?; Sources; Impressum.

Bi- and multilateral co-operation/ Training policy

Bi- and multilateral co-operation

Germany/France

Franco-German cooperation to combat youth unemployment

Bi-national group of experts analyses the programmes of both countries

At the 1999 Franco-German summit, the two countries declared the fight against youth unemployment as a key area of their bilateral cooperation in the field of VET. In this context, measures have included the federal government's emergency programme to combat youth unemployment and the programme for the vocational advancement of disadvantaged groups of the Federal Employment Agency, in Germany, and the 'Nouveaux services/Emplois jeunes' (NS/EJ) and 'TRACE' programmes, in France.

In the opinion of the French experts, it is the vocational preparation and assistance offered to trainees in the context of the vocational advancement of disadvantaged groups and local and regional projects to increase the offer of training places aspects of the German programmes that point the way ahead. They also evaluated the Good Practice Centre for the vocational advancement of disadvantaged groups, currently being set up by the BIBB, as a model of good practice (cf. Cedefop Info No. 3/2000, p. 12).

The success of these programmes has been monitored and evaluated by a working party comprising both German and French experts and convened by the Federal Institute for Vocational Training (BIBB). The working party analysed the job and training market for young people in both countries and compared their programmes to combat youth unemployment. This provided the basis for the recognition of particularly successful initiatives, identification of the reasons for their success and the cross-fertilisation of experience.

The German experts, for their part, identified the 18 months of intensive counselling for disadvantaged youngsters within the context of the TRACE programme and in-service skilling within the context of NS/EJ as exemplary components of the French programmes. The French initiative of recruiting young unemployed mentors as counsellors for young people was noted as an approach which could also be adopted in German programmes.

Detailed information from:
BIBB, Hermann-Ehlers-Strasse 10, D-53113 Bonn,
Tel. (49-228) 107-0, Homepage: www.bibb.de,
E-mail: zentrale@bibb.de erhältlich.
Source: BIBB/Cedefop/SK

Germany/Austria

New Call Centre for information about work and training

As of now callers from Germany can obtain up-to-date and comprehensive information about training paths and the labour market in Austria from the Call Centre of the Labour Market Service (*Arbeitsmarktservice* - AMS) of the Austrian Employment Service in Salzburg. Conversely, anyone living in Austria but wanting to study or work in Germany can obtain information

by calling the Europe hotline of the Federal Employment Service (*Bundesanstalt für Arbeit - BA*).

In setting up telephone hotlines the German and Austrian Employment Services have responded to changes in the way their customers seek information and have further developed their collaboration.

Callers in Germany can reach the AMS Call Centre in Salzburg between 7.30 a.m. and 5 p.m. on (43-662) 8883-2037.

The BA Europe hotline number is (49-180) 522 20 23 and it is open between 9 a.m. and 8 p.m., Mondays to Fridays.

Source: BA press release No. 14

Europe

New CD-ROM: 'Fit for Europe'

Seven-language guide is the brainchild of an international project partnership

'Fit for Europe', the new CD-ROM providing information, among other things, on training, life and work in the Member States of the European Union, is the brainchild of a project partnership involving the employment agencies of Portugal (IEFP), Spain (INEM) and Germany (BA), the Austrian Ministry of Education and the national resource centres for vocational guidance in Denmark (RUE) and Finland (CIMO), with the

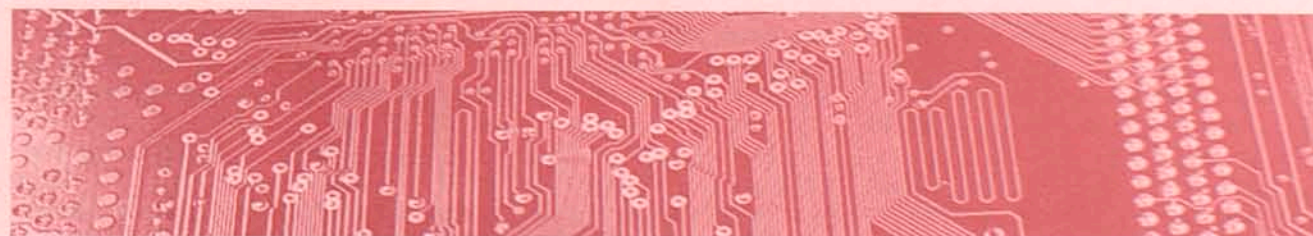
financial support of the EU vocational training programme Leonardo da Vinci.

The 'Fit for Europe' CD-ROM appears in seven languages (German, English, French, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese and Greek) and includes a language test in eleven official EU languages. EU databases and other websites can be directly accessed from the CD-ROM via the Internet.

The main menu, 'Europe', includes overviews of European education and training programmes and vocational guidance provision whereas the country menu provides information on VET and the recognition of qualifications.

In Germany, the CD-ROM can be ordered from the Federal Employment Agency's Europe-Hotline, Tel. (49-180) 522 20 23, at a price of EUR 10.22.

Source: Federal Employment Agency /Cedefop/SK



Training policy

France

Lifelong learning: a collective guarantee against exclusion

On 4 December 2000, Nicole Péry, Secretary of state for Women's Rights and Vocational Training, opened the European seminar on lifelong learning, one of the events of the French EU Presidency.

A major *leitmotif* of this event was the "appropriation by the citizens of their own training as a fundamental

collective guarantee against exclusion from the labour market" and it was with reference to this topic that education and training players were asked to exchange views on the basis of their own concrete experience in this field. Five workshops brought together heads of enterprise, regional and local politicians, representatives from institutions and

the social partners who came to the seminar to share their experience and learn from the practice of others. The themes of the workshops were: access to lifelong learning; recognition of personal and professional achievements; the construction of individual pathways leading to employability and adaptability; development of new training meth-

ods and investment in human resources.

"Today, with returning economic growth and with employment picking up again training must play a major role to meet the needs of the economy", stated the minister, "but it should not be forgotten that it must also be part and parcel of a

legitimate personal and professional pathway". "The quality of human resources has never been as decisive in the process of the creation of value added", she continued, "but never have the workers been as vulnerable to the increasing pace of change in forms of labour organisation and market fluctuations". Both

Continued on page 6

Mme Péry and Jean-Luc Mélenchon, minister responsible for vocational education, her guest at Biarritz, are staunch supporters of the development of the validation of personal and professional achievements (validation des acquis personnels et professionnels - VAP) in training paths. "The time is gone when the type and level of our initial vocational training determined the rest of our lives", remarked Nicole Péry who regards VAP as "a new right on the basis of which workers and individuals in general can become more active in building their own future". The minister nevertheless pointed

out that the general introduction of VAP should not imply a transfer to the individual of the responsibility for his/her own training. She urged "more and more" firms to make this an element of their training policy, recalling that a bill to this effect - the result of close consultation with the various ministries concerned and the social partners - was to be brought before the French Parliament in January 2001. Jean-Luc Mélenchon, for his part, pointed out that his priority objective was for young people to be successfully prepared for vocational life. "This requires a high level of initial vocational training for everyone. But we

must also cater for the need to continually reskill workers in the workplace". Mélenchon advocates the establishment of an "individual right to reskilling in exchange for the obligation to confront technological change". In his view, "adaptability to changes in employment depends not only on the specialised achievements of workers but also on the quality and extent of their basic level of training, regardless of their level of qualification" - which he coins as the "model of sustainable professionalisation". Mélenchon believes that the validation of experience is not only an element of good human resources development,

"a means of encouraging beneficiary workers benefitting from it, to engage in continuing training programmes", but also a "highly effective tool for the detection of new occupational practice". "To be really effective", he emphasised, "the individual right to VAP must provide access to vocational certificates and qualifications recognised by the state and accepted by both overall business sectors and employers".

• The initial version of a European memorandum on life-long learning, drawn up by the European Commission, was presented to the Council of Ministers for Education and Youth on 9 November 2000, and to the Biarritz seminar on 4 and 5 December 2000, where the Director of Cedefop chaired a round table. This document is intended as a response to the

integration of the education and training variable in the objectives set by the European Council at Lisbon in March 2000: the return to full employment and modernisation of the European social model. The education and vocational training systems of the Member States are directly involved in the realisation of these objectives. • A special issue of the INFFO Flash journal on life-long learning was published to tie in with the Biarritz seminar (December 2000, bilingual French/English edition, 32 pages). It features examples of good practice, original vocational training initiatives in the various Member States of the European Union, compiled by the national support structure for European programmes and projects, RACINE, and Centre INFFO for the Development of Information on Continuing Training.

Racine's website: <http://www.racine.asso.fr/racine/index.htm>

Source: Centre INFFO press release 04 December 2000, published on its website: <http://centre-inffo.fr/fact.html>

Netherlands

Lifelong learning and VET

Adult Learners Week

The growing importance of lifelong learning in the Netherlands was one of the reasons for the first 'Adult Learners' Week' which was organised in September 2000. Other (European) countries already have a tradition with this phenomenon. With the Adult Learners' Week, the Dutch Ministry of Education wanted to stress the importance of learning. A large publicity campaign touching about 5 million people was organised. Many regional promotion events, which led to new kinds of co-operation between educational institutes, took place.

The state of the art in 2000

"Lifelong Learning and VET in the Netherlands; the state of the art in 2000"* addresses the central question as to how the idea of lifelong learning is influencing respectively the development of Dutch government policy, the provision offered by educational institutions and the demand among adults for education and training. This publication is based on a report, which was partly funded by Cedefop in its work on reporting on Lifelong learning**. The first part of the report explores in depth the recent developments in Dutch policy towards lifelong learning. The conclusion was reached that the Dutch government is primarily interested in lifelong learning for economic motives. Employability of the population is the key-concept. At government level, not only the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sciences, but also the Ministries of Economic Affairs together with Social Affairs and Employment are involved. Furthermore, the social partners play an important role.

With reference to the educational system, it is clear that the involvement of the government is still primarily concerned with initial education and training where the focus is on equipping young people for a long life of learning. Recent developments, however, indicate growing recognition that both the government and the social partners are also responsible for post-initial education and training. Two lines of development will be of importance in the near future - firstly the broadening of the conceptual and policy understandings of lifelong learning, while secondly, more attention needs to be paid to informal learning and its contribution to a system of lifelong learning.

The second part of the report deals with the degree to which initial vocational education contributes to the development of lifelong learning. One of the points of discussion here is the balance between technical and more general skills. In Dutch vocational education, the accent is increasingly placed on the acquisition of competencies. Although it is quite easy to define this concept, a great deal of experimentation is taking place in translating it into the practice of learning processes.

Relatively little is known about the degree to which the private training sector contributes to the promotion of lifelong learning in the context of company-based learning. From the policy viewpoint, it is important to acquire more understanding of this sector in the future.

The third part presents the results of two recent empirical studies. Almost

half of the Dutch workforce actively participates in courses. This is a clear increase compared to a few years ago. Participation is primarily concerned with improving current performance at work. Broader concerns such as improving personal employability were mentioned less. Employers rather than the individual employee take the initiative leading to participation in training. Lifelong learning for the working population mostly takes place outside of the public domain. Participation is not equally distributed among employees. Older and lower-educated workers participate the least.

About 20% of the population older than sixteen years of age actively participate in courses for personal development. This also indicates an increase in comparison with earlier studies. Hobby-related courses assume an important place followed by ICT-related courses and learning

foreign languages. There is significant support in the population for a policy to promote lifelong learning. About three-quarters of the population agrees with the proposition that every adult must continue to learn throughout life. Despite this positive picture, there is a relatively constant group of 20% of the total population who have absolutely no interest in learning whether for work or personal development. This significant group 'rejecting' lifelong learning requires further investigation so as to avoid the risk of social exclusion.

In conclusion, it is argued that the government and educational providers in The Netherlands have taken a number of steps in the direction of a society in which the learning undertaken by adults assumes a significant place. Current policy, however, is fragmented and comprises a great number of more or less unrelated initiatives. These initiatives are deter-

mined by political agendas in different policy areas. It is vital to pay more attention to the improved articulation of these initiatives with reference to a) the relationships between initial and post-initial education and training; b) vocational and general education; c) formal and informal learning; and, d) learning in the public and private sectors.

* "Lifelong Learning and VET in the Netherlands; The State of the Art in 2000". C. Doets, B. Hake, A. Westerhuis (editors). CINOP, 2000

** Similar studies have been carried out in Finland, Sweden and Italy.

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Source: CINOP

Netherlands

A knowledge society needs up-to-date education

What are equal opportunities in education? How can education offer enough of a challenge in today's society? How can we combine freedom for schools and teachers with guaranteed quality and accessibility? What kind of investments are needed in order to better equip the education system with the ability to innovate? These are important questions for the future of education.

In its policy document 'Education in place: power and creativity for the knowledge society'* the Minister of Education outlined the direction of the changes that are needed in order to allow the education system to respond to the challenges of the 21st century. The Minister emphasised that the policy document was not a 'blue print' and did not advocate any new structural changes. Its publication has been followed by a public debate involving relevant actors in the field.

The policy document covers all of the publicly funded education system. It more or less stresses the same topics which are included in the policy document for vocational education and adult education, "Steering a course for BVE" (see Cedefop Info 3/2000). These are:

- doing justice to individual differences,

- assuring the quality and accessibility of education,
- investing in high quality education from both public and private sources,
- increasing autonomy and responsibility of educational institutions,
- developing powerful and professional management,
- improving the facilities for teachers.

Educational institutions have a clear responsibility in their social environment. To be able to take that responsibility, they should have the opportunity to be creative and take initiatives themselves.

More diversity, variation and decentralised solutions

The Dutch Social and Cultural Planning Office (SCP) has already actively involved itself in the debate. SCP is an influential government

agency undertaking independent scientific research. It covers all areas of government policy as far as social aspects are involved. SCP's publication "Trends, dilemmas and policy; Long-term development essays" includes a chapter on 'Education in the 21st century'**. Here, SCP argues for less uniformity, less centralism and more diversity. Three themes, which have a central place in the current discussion are identified:

- the need for a modern approach to equal opportunities, doing justice to the varied characteristics of students and to the changing demand from society and the labour market;
- the need to clarify the distribution of administrative responsibilities across the various parties and (ever more autonomous) institutions in the educational system, equipping schools with high quality professionals in order to be innovative;

□ the need to debate a realistic ratio of public and private funding of education and training. The discussion about the future of education will not be an easy one, SCP predicts. It is clear that the government has and will continue to have the ultimate responsibility for quality and accessibility of education. Diversity and decentralism must try to flourish within the margins set by the government. Furthermore, diversity brings along the risk of a dichotomy and less coherence between parts of the system. The role of the schools will change dramatically and heavy demands will be made upon them.

*) Policy document "Education in place: power and creativity for the knowledge society", available in English and Dutch, from: Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, Information Department <http://www.minocw.nl/english>

** H.M. Bronneman-Helmerts, 'Onderwijs in de 21e eeuw; ruimte voor diversiteit', in: 'Trends, dilemma's en beleid. Essays over ontwikkelingen op langere termijn' ('Education in the 21st century; give way to diversity', in: 'Trends, dilemmas and policy. Long-term development essays') available in Dutch only, from: Social and Cultural Planning Office, The Hague, The Netherlands, 2000. r.bronneman@scp.nl

Source: CINOP

Lifelong learning and qualifications in Scotland - an update

Devolved government was established in Scotland in 1999 with the opening of the Scottish Parliament. Scottish ministers assumed responsibility for devolved matters including most aspects of vocational education and training which previously had been the responsibility of the Secretary of State for Scotland (a UK government ministry).

Lifelong learning

VET policy developments in Scotland have broadly mirrored those in England and Wales. Lifelong learning and skills issues have been key concerns. *Opportunity Scotland**, published in 1998, set out a 10-point action plan for the LLL agenda, and *Skills for Scotland: A skills strategy for a competitive Scotland****, published in March 1999, set out further plans for improving skills.

Practical initiatives to implement the LLL and skills agenda have also been broadly in parallel with English and Welsh developments. These have included:

- increased budgets to expand the further education sector, with a target of an extra 40,000 college student places by 2002;
- *learnirect scotland*, established to widen participation in learning and encourage demand by improving access to learning opportunities by exploiting ICT (see Cedefop Info 1/2000 for information on the parallel English and Welsh initiative);
- individual Learning Accounts, introduced to provide financial incentives for learners aged 18 and over not already benefiting from publicly funded education or training;
- a Union Learning Fund, established to ensure the involvement of the trade union movement in progressing LLL;
- The Scottish Labour Market Intelligence Unit which will improve access to labour market intelligence in Scotland and support the development of local labour market intelligence (LMI) partnerships to analyse local issues, predicting movements, trends and demand locally.

Qualifications

Changes to the Scottish qualifications system have been introduced. New National Qualifications were introduced in 1999 as a result of the 'Higher Still' reforms. These new National Qualifications will continue to be phased in up to 2003. They bring together academic and vocational qualifications in a single coherent system. Courses are divided into units and students can build up qualifications at a pace to suit themselves and, in the case of students in work, their employers. *Higher Still* courses include five core skills - communications, numeracy, information technology, problem solving, and working with others.

Serious problems arose in the production of last year's examination results. These problems, which may have been linked with the introduction of the new National Qualifications, lead the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA), the public body with overall responsibility for the qualifications system including processing results and issuing certificates, to take immediate corrective measures, while the Scottish Executive Education Department initiated an independent enquiry into issues relating to the SQA. As a result, the

management of the SQA was radically overhauled. In November 2000, the newly appointed Education Minister, Jack McConnell, announced the establishment of a Ministerial review group to monitor progress towards ensuring that adequate systems are in place to deal with results in 2001. In addition, two Parliamentary Committee inquiries are underway.

Further details on these developments are available on the Scottish Parliament website www.scottish.parliament.uk.

New Deal

Employment policy in Scotland is reserved to the UK Government which takes the lead on the funding and delivery of the New Deal welfare-to-work programme (see Cedefop Info 1/1999). In Scotland it does this in partnership with the Scottish Executive and contributing Scottish organisations. Scottish Executive statistics indicate that participation (of employers and unemployed young people) and numbers progressing into jobs has been proportionately higher in Scotland. At the end of September 2000, 12,300 Scottish employers had signed up to the New Deal - 16% of the Great Britain total of 78,900; 60,900 unemployed young people entered -

11.1% of the GB total of 546,469; and 29,200 young people had gone into jobs - 11.5% of the GB total of 254,000. (Overall the Scottish population is approximately 8% of GB population.)

* Opportunity Scotland, 1998
** Skills for Scotland: A skills strategy for a competitive Scotland, 1999
Both are available free of charge from The Stationery Office, P.O. Box 29, UK-Norwich NR3 1GN. Tel. (44-870) 6005522. Fax (44-870) 6005533. Both can be downloaded from www.scotland.gov.uk.
Source: IPD and Eurydice Unit Scotland, Scottish Office Education and Industry Department, International Relations Branch SOEID, Floor 1, Area B, Victoria Quay, UK-Edinburgh EH6 6QQ

Editor's note: Information on the VET System in Scotland is included in Cedefop's "Vocational education and training in the United Kingdom" published in English and French, and in the process of translation into DE.

United Kingdom

Learning and Skills Council opens for business

The UK Government's white paper, 'Learning to Succeed' (see Cedefop Info 1/2000 and 2/2000) sets out the new structure for post 16 education and training in England and Wales. (Scotland arrangements are being reviewed separately - see article above on general VET developments in Scotland). It also sets out the basic framework for the new national VET body, the Learning and Skills Council (LSC), which is fully operational from 1 April 2000.

The Institutions

The national Learning and Skills Council is supported by 47 local Learning and Skills Councils. Private sector employers predominate on the boards of the local councils, although each board also has a trade union and a Regional Development Agency representative. Members also come from local authorities, work-based training providers, voluntary sector organisations and colleges. Members of the national LSC, although predominantly senior business leaders, include a member of the Bank of England's monetary policy committee and the general secretary of the Trades Unions Congress.

Bryan Sanderson (former group managing director of BP Amoco), the chairman of the LSC, reported* that 41.5% of the local LSC seats had been given to business, and said that the LSC would succeed 'if it was demand-led by employers and those who needed training, if it provided a stable framework

over a period of years, and if its tenets were valued and understood'. He hoped that companies would get involved at both the national and local level.

Sanderson said that the national LSC would have six targets with published performance indicators and an emphasis on tracking the skills required in the marketplace in order to fill skills gaps quickly and efficiently. This would be assisted by multinational companies being able to negotiate with the national LSC rather than local councils.

Funding

David Blunkett, Education and Employment Secretary, also announced that the Learning and Skills Council would receive EUR 990 million in extra funding to help support its development. Nevertheless, council members are arguing that this may not be enough to meet government targets for increased education and training participation.

EUR 4.2 billion have been set aside for adults and EUR 4 billion for young people. The key priorities will be adult literacy and numeracy. The target is 500,000 taking tuition by 2002 making use of e-learning with access from the workplace, libraries and other designated online centres.

Implications for colleges

The LSC will attempt to promote partnership and co-operation within local communities. Further

education colleges will be asked to work collaboratively with local partners towards goals set by ministers and local LSCs. Further education colleges will account for at least 75% of the provision. The Association of Colleges (AoC), representing college leaders, while not opposed to the changes, has emphasised the need for the new structure to include close consultation with colleges and equitable funding and inspection regimes.

Meanwhile there are reports that further education colleges could be made to re-pay up to several hundred thousand Euros to the LSC where their student recruitment levels have fallen short of projected figures. This news comes at around the same time as reports that a third of universities and colleges expect to make losses this year. This compares to only 22% reporting operating deficits in 1998-99**. In addition, an announcement was made by Blunkett that there are plans to re-focus the emphasis of Further Education colleges by creating "centres of excellence", or areas of specialism for a particular vocational subject. He hopes this will be achieved for half of all colleges within five years.

* Financial Times, 11 December 2000
** Times Higher Education Supplement, 24 November 2000

More information on the Department for Education and Employment's website: <http://www.dfee.gov.uk>

Source: IPD

Norway

New department for policy analysis and international affairs in the Ministry of Education

Globalisation and rapid technological developments impose major new demands on the Ministry of Education, Research and Church Affairs as an organisation. In the increasingly international climate of knowledge and education it must be prepared to make rapid readjustments, respond to increasing calls for innovation and be ahead of developments.

The new Department for Policy Analysis and International Affairs has two main responsibilities:

- to focus on overall analysis and policy work and co-ordinate this between the specialised departments of the Ministry;

- to co-ordinate work on international education and research policy between the departments.

On the basis of both Norwegian and international research and studies, the department will identify the problems likely to face Norwegian education during the coming years.

The Ministry participates actively in a number of international organisations that are concerned with educational policy issues. The department co-ordinates the work of the Ministry in the Nordic Council of Ministers, the EU and EEA, the Council

of Europe, the OECD, UNESCO and other relevant international organisations.

The department is not divided into sections. Members of staff participate in projects within the department and in projects involving different departments.

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Source: Leonardo da Vinci, Norway

Education for future growth and development - are Sweden and its regions keeping up?

One key structural factor determining the climate for economic growth is the functionality of the educational system and how well it contributes to the supply of competence and knowledge and the competitive strength of industry. *Education for Future Growth and Development** is one part of the Swedish Employer's Confederation (Svenska Arbetsgivarförbundet - SAF)'s Structural Report 2001. The overall purpose of SAF's annual structural reports is to highlight those factors that are of greatest importance for the long-term development of enterprise and the economy.

The educational system, schools and universities, can be studied from many angles. This report highlights the way the education provided by schools and universities contributes to the competitive strength of industry and to economic growth in the future. The analysis looks at Swedish education from an international as well as a regional and national perspective. In the report, a systematic comparison is made between the performance of the system in Sweden and in its most important competitor countries.

Six criteria have been defined for an efficient educational system:

1. A high average level of education

This factor determines how efficiently companies can be managed, and how quickly they can absorb new knowledge and new ways of doing things. It is widely believed that Sweden has a very highly educated population, but the report shows quite clearly that Sweden is in fact little better than second rate. The upper secondary schools face serious structural problems, too few pupils complete their education in the normal time, far too few of them study science or engineering, and what little engineering and practical training in industry there is left, is quickly disappearing.

2. An adequate supply of graduate personnel - a major growth factor in a knowledge-based economy

The report reveals a rather fragmented picture. Many people have a higher education, but few possess cutting-edge competence. Sweden has only half as many people with a

complete university education as other leading countries. For the younger generation the situation is even worse. This bodes ill for competitive strength in the future.

3. A ready supply of graduates in science and engineering

Engineers and scientists are a key group when it comes to generating innovation and disseminating new technology. Sweden has improved in this respect in recent years, but so have other countries and Sweden is therefore still lagging behind. One serious structural problem is that the recruitment base for these fields of education is beginning to shrink.

4. Close and effective contact between schools/universities and industry

The quality and relevance of educational programmes depends largely on the effectiveness of these contacts, and on how well pupils/students are prepared for working life. There have been many improvements in this field in recent years but Sweden still has much to learn, not least from Finland, where the lines of communication between industry and the educational system are very well oiled.

5. Emphasis on entrepreneurship at schools and universities

In the modern economy it is becoming increasingly important for pupils/students to be trained in the art of starting, building and managing companies or other types of business. In this area, Sweden occupies a leading position - mainly as a result of the work of the Young Enterprise project. New enterprise centres for students are also emerging at the universities.

6. Competition in the education system

This fosters both higher quality and innovative thinking and a process of adjustment to the needs of individuals. Even though independent schools still represent only a very small part of the education system, they are beginning to have a significant positive impact as a factor driving the process of improvement in the education provided by primary and secondary schools.

Few graduates in industry

In the counties of Stockholm and Uppsala, graduates are relatively well represented in business, but in most other counties the proportion is only about 5%, which is very low by international standards. These figures reflect both the absorption of competence by the public sector during its build-up phase and the previous focus of higher education programmes on subjects that by tradition fell within the aegis of the public sector.

Another typically Swedish problem is that the wage structure is flatter and the education premium, i.e. the average wages of graduate employees, is far lower in Sweden than in competitor countries. The "carrot", after tax is too small to induce enough people to opt for a demanding and time-consuming higher education. The modest level of the education premium also provides much of the explanation as to why there are fewer graduates among the younger generation, in particular the generation born in the forties, than among the older generation of Swedes.

* *Education for future growth and development - are Sweden and the regions keeping up?*
By Margareta Nygren and Jan Edgren. Interim report for SAF's (Swedish Employer's Confederation - Svenska Arbetsgivarförbundet) Structural Report 2001 - only available in Swedish on website: <http://www.saf.se> and from SAF, S. Blasieholmshamnen 4A, S-10330 Stockholm

Source: The Swedish International Programme Office for Education and Training

Editor's note: We hope that the next issue of Cedefop Info will have an article with the viewpoint of the Swedish trade unions on this subject.

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Initial training policy/Continuing education and training policy/Conferences – Seminars – Exhibitions

Initial training policy

Belgium

Vocational education takes an experimental turn in Flanders

Two modular experiments were launched in the field of vocational secondary education at the beginning of the academic year 2000-2001, giving students the opportunity to acquire partial certificates and opening up access to the labour market on the basis of "mini" subject modules.

Two experiments are being implemented today for this kind of secondary education. The introduction of the modules is an initial step towards a plan of action designed to upgrade vocational and technical secondary education. Although the education system of Flanders stands up to international comparison, there are still too many young people leaving school without a formal qualification. It is against this background that the Flemish minister of education is attempting to restructure the learning system. The first step in this direction is the

introduction of modules within vocational secondary education. The underlying philosophy is that students obtaining good marks in certain subjects and awarded a partial diploma will be motivated to engage in further learning. The experimental modules are currently being introduced in the curricula of 19 schools with a total enrolment of 930 students (according to the provisional figures); the experiment is to last until the year 2006-2007. The modules in question are offered in subjects such as automotive mechanics, construction, commerce, mechanics, electricity and care. Basic vocational skills are divided into mini-units, independent of academic years or educational level. Each module also includes a focus on general training. As of 1 September 2001, the experiment is to be extended to 25 schools and a series of other fields of study.

Further information from: www.vdab.be

Source: Gestion média et bibliothèque VDAB / Icodoc

Sweden

Cooperation between school and working life - the possibilities to learn at the workplace

The report* of a Ministry of Education and Science working group, which involved representatives from the social partners, was recently published. In it, new ways of linking school and working life in order to improve vocational training are presented. A scheme for work-based training within a national training programme is also suggested as a pilot project. An evaluation of the pilot period will be the basis for the design of future permanent activity.

The working group recommends, among other things, that:

- Learning in working life in certain conditions may imply an alternative way to reach the goals specified in a national, or specially designed, upper secondary school programme.
- The committee for upper secondary schools ought to have additional instructions to take into consideration what can be done in developing programmes to diminish discrimination on the basis of sex, social and ethnically biased recruitment and to reduce the frequency of drop outs.
- A national programme ought to be worked out to increase cooperation between the compulsory school and the world of work. It is important that the goals in the national curriculum will in future be better fulfilled than they are today.
- Provision is introduced in the rules for the upper secondary school to ensure local consultation with the social partners is carried out in the vocational programmes.
- A pilot activity with local boards that have equal participation by the schools and the social partners, or a ma-

majority of the latter, ought to be started to stimulate the development of the vocational programmes.

- The municipality ought to take account of the co-operation between school and working life in the annual qualitative report that every school and municipality must make.
- A special national council ought to be set up in the National Agency for Education for co-operation between representatives of schools and the world of work.
- A national system for quality assurance in vocational education and training ought to be designed.
- The investment that has started to up-grade teachers in vocational subjects must continue.
- The government ought to set up a commission with the task of making a proposal for the financing of future cooperation to enable workplace education and learning within the framework of the upper secondary school.
- There is a need for further research about what could be learnt at the workplace and which consequences the development of the working environment has for the possibilities to learn at work.
- A chair for vocational pedagogy should be established at a university.
- The government would give the National Agency for Education instructions to work out common guidelines for work placed education and training.

*) DS 2000:62 Samverkan mellan skola och arbetsliv available from the Ministry of Education (only in Swedish).

Source: The Swedish International Programme Office for Education and Training

Germany

Alliance for employment regards improved training place situation as a success

But public-sector funded training places are still required in the east / DGB calls for a renewed skilling offensive

In the course of the debate on the Vocational Training Report 2000 (cf. Cedefop Info No 2/2000, p. 5), Wolf-Michael Catenhusen, Parliamentary undersecretary, Federal Ministry for Education and Research, noted that 'considerable progress' had been made in confronting Germany's training place problems. The easing of the tension in the training market, he observed, was the result of the constructive cooperation between the federal government and the social partners within the alliance for employment. The improvement in the overall training place situation was above all thanks to the expansion of public-sector funded training programmes.

Catenhusen went on to say that the aim of the parties to the alliance for employment – a marked increase in the number of industrial training places - had been achieved, whereby an essential role had been played by the over 25 000 new training contracts in IT and media occupations in 2000, representing an estimated rise of 45 percent. This meant not only that the target of 40 000 training places defined in the IT offensive had been exceeded by far, but also that the aim of creating 60 000 training places by the year 2003 could be achieved if the present initiatives continued. At the end of 2000, 11 300 young people were still seeking a training place. Catenhusen assured that there were a sufficient number of places in industrial and State programmes to cater for these young people.

The Parliamentary undersecretary also announced the continuation of the State training programmes, in particular in the eastern part of Germany where the situation re-

mains problematic and training place supply only covers some 60 percent of the demand. A new special programme has earmarked EUR 110.4 m for the creation of 16,000 training places this year.

The Confederation of German Trade Unions (DGB) also regards the overall increase in the number of industrial training places as a success of the partners in the framework of the alliance for employment. However DGB executive committee member Ingrid Sehrbrock emphasised that provision of industrial training places in eastern Germany was 'absolutely insufficient'; the assumption that a cut-back in the number of publicly funded training places would be offset by an increase in industrial training places had proved to be wrong. Sehrbrock therefore called for continued efforts to create industrial training places. She also proposed a skilling offensive initiated by the alliance for employment for the further development of initial and continuing vocational training.

The Ministry of education and training has now expanded the personnel capacity of the 'training place developer' programme and extended its duration until 2003; moreover the 'Regional-Skill-Training' project launched last year is to build up regional structures to mobilise industrial training places.

Source: BMBF/DGB/Cedefop/SK

Continuing education and training policy

Belgium

The Flemish Minister of Employment announces the creation of a continuing training grant

The typical Flemish worker tends to have had an extended school career, put in many years of hard, uninterrupted work, only to find him/herself ousted from the labour market at an average age of 50-55. In an attempt to break this pattern, the Flemish Minister of Employment intends to introduce a career break grant for those wishing to engage in training.

This proposal is to be seen as one of the measures to upgrade lifelong learning in Flanders. The region is in fact at the bottom of the class in Europe as far as official continuing

training is concerned. The Flemish minister's proposal reflects and implements one of the 82 recommendations submitted to the Flemish government by lifelong learning experts.

Last month, the Flemish Minister of Employment explained his proposal in a memorandum addressed to the Flemish government, quoting the Scandinavian countries - where the norm is to remain within the labour market until a later age but where it is customary to take a partial or complete career break to engage in further or re-training - as models of good practice in this field. The Minister believes that a worker's decision

to temporarily or partially opt out of the labour market in order to bridge skill gaps or learn a new discipline are initiatives which deserve encouragement. He wishes to provide an incentive for individual workers to opt for further training by introducing a **career break grant**, followed by a **supplementary training grant**.

The Minister pointed out that trade unions and employers may create **supplementary savings regulations** per business sector to further increase the appeal of this system.

Outside Belgium, there are two forms of savings regulations, either

in the form of time credits (overtime compensated by continued salary payment during the training phase), or financial credit, e.g. a fund fed by in-company contributions to pay employees engaged in training. The Flemish Minister wishes the funds from a previous and more or less comparable regime - paid educational leave (hourly credits)- to be transferred to the regional administrations. Although training has been devolved to the regions for 20 years, the federal state continues to block these funds.

In his memorandum on lifelong learning, the Minister also expresses his support for the institution of a

careers guidance service, with independent experts providing individualised guidance on career and training opportunities; this point is also raised in the note of the lifelong learning experts.

The Flemish Minister also confirms the main hypothesis of the lifelong learning experts, namely that this form of learning cannot develop in Flanders without a reform of the traditional education system. He also deplores the fact that more than 10% of youngsters still leave school without a formal qualification.

Further information at: www.vdab.be

Source: Gestion média et bibliothèque VDAB / Icodoc

Belgium

Carrefour formation (CF) in the Walloon and Brussels regions

One-stop adult training!

The Carrefours Formation ("Training Crossroads") are open, multi-agency information centres whose principal objective is to provide a maximum of information to the public on the socio-occupational and training actions developed by all the agencies which are signatories to the Charter on the insertion pathway*.

The CF centres have been effectively operational in all the provinces of the Walloon Region since June 1998. The administration and management of the ten centres are shared by five partners: AWIPH (Walloon agency for the integration of the disabled), the EFTs (Training by Work Enterprises), EPS-Enseignement de promotion sociale (Courses for social advancement), IFPME (Institute for lifelong learning for traders and SMEs), OISPs (Socio-occupational insertion agencies), and FOREM (Community and regional agency for employment and vocational training in Wallonia) on the educational and administrative management side.

Individual services based on four pillars:

1. A multi-agency resource centre.

The CF centres define themselves as a relay for training agencies providing all the information at their disposal on training/insertion actions. The centres relay with agencies in the field and

social players wishing to open up access to the relevant information for specific (including disadvantaged) target groups.

2. An open information and documentation centre for training, careers and qualifications (socio-occupational insertion actions) in the Walloon region.

The CF documentation resources are freely accessible on a self-service basis.

3. Collective information actions.

These actions provide information on occupations and the corresponding training courses and are designed for a target group having already opted for a specific direction.

4. A forum for dialogue.

A team of educational counsellors from the various agencies mentioned above, provides individual guidance for those seeking assistance in their choice of training, with due consideration of the various parameters, age, length of inactivity, basic certificate, etc.

Target group

Job-seekers can find all the necessary information and data to guide their choice of training and improve their employability.

Workers and firms discover opportunities for

further training to help them confront changing trends in their specific occupational sector. It will soon be possible to consult the available documentation on the Internet via the *Formabanque* database.

In practical terms, the CF centres' strategy is developed on the basis of the following three criteria: quality of guidance and information, the autonomy of the client in seeking information and freedom of choice. When clients opt for a specific type of training, their decision is formalised by filling in an application which is then submitted to the relevant agency.

There is also a CF centre in the Brussels region. Established in 1987, it is an integral part of the public vocational training agency, Bruxelles Formation. It basically carries out the same information, counselling and guidance activities as the CF centres in Wallonia with the same target group, objectives and approach. CF Brussels has developed a partnership with the "Local Missions", job/training guidance centres for young people, the Brussels regional employment department 'ORBEM' and the courses for social advancement (EPS) in order to collect and disseminate information via its DORIFOR database (offering information and data on regional training opportunities).

It also contributes to training research in Europe as the representative of the French-speaking part of Belgium within Euroguidance, the network of national research centres for vocational guidance in the context of the Leonardo da Vinci programme.

*In response to an injunction issued by DG Employment and Social Affairs of the European Commission stipulating that the integration pathway was to be included in the conditions of eligibility for projects within the ESF in order to reinforce the integration and coordination of the multiple actions addressed to the unemployed, the Walloon government adopted a declaration of principle defining the integration pathway on 30 January 1997. Six principles were established for the development of policy in this field:

- annual comparison of the supply and demand of sub-regional labour markets and their target groups;
- transparency of provision and dissemination of information to persons and agencies in the field;
- integrated follow-up of different individual pathways;
- sub-regional coordination of agencies and development of bridges;
- external evaluation;
- structured user participation.

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Source: FOREM CIDOC

Germany

New action programme to promote motivation for lifelong learning

Pooling of public sector projects to facilitate wider implementation of innovative concepts

The Federal Ministry of Education and Research has launched a new action programme entitled 'Lifelong learning for all', designed to open up and enhance the appeal of continuing training opportunities to as many people as possible. Germany currently spends EUR 76.7 m on the promotion of continuing training, with a further EUR 25.6 m provided from EU funding.

Minister of Education Edelgard Bulmahn is of the opinion that lifelong learning cannot be forced on people - but they can nevertheless

be specifically motivated in this direction. Bulmahn believes that targeted measures at the level of children, the eradication of discrimination and barriers to access, as well as transparency and clear recognition of the value of training programmes, will enhance learning motivation. She attaches particular importance to the certification of newly acquired knowledge, the use of new media and emphasis of international aspects.

The action programme pools public-sector research, development and

pilot projects promoting lifelong learning with a view to facilitating wider use of innovative concepts and increasing the general transparency of publicly supported activities as a whole. It lays down a series of priorities.

Certification of skills exploitable in the workplace, including those acquired through informal learning, a higher degree of transparency and more information on vocational training provision are given the same priority as support of new learning and teaching cultures. The

action programme also includes measures to encourage people in special life situations to engage in training and the strengthening of international skills.

The Minister described high quality of training and ongoing continuing training of as many people as possible as 'the most important capital for the promotion of employment.'

Source: Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF)/Cedefop/SK

The arrival of the consumer in the field of vocational training

On 28 March 2000, Nicole Péry, Secretary of State for Women's Rights and Vocational Training, hosted a meeting of the various players involved in questions relating to the professionalisation of training provision and the relations between users and training agencies. Three working parties were convened to scrutinise the following aspects: quality of training, public procurement and trends in training modalities, in particular in the wake of new information and communication technologies.

On 12 October 2000, Mme Péry announced the results of the working parties' activities in a report entitled "Report on the professionalisation of training provision and the relations between users and agencies".

With its 45 proposals, this report supplies a wealth of material and action guidelines for the reform of the vocational training system initiated by the government.

All the working parties agree that the law of 1971 must be updated. The report repeatedly notes the fact that the many successive texts obscure the direction of the relevant action. Instead of focusing on funding bodies and agencies as it does today, the training system should now focus on the learner, the training "consumer".

The report also spells out that overall quality control of the training process is the task of players other than the public authorities, especially in industry: "Thirty years on from the negotiations leading to the law of 1971, the public authorities could today launch the necessary initiatives so that the legitimate plural representatives of the social partners (workers' representatives, works' councils) might also contribute to the development of the quality (...) and promotion of training in all areas of its relevance to social and economic development". This is the conclusion of the working party on the quality of training provision, chaired by Bernard Masingue.

It was also decided to give priority to the development of information on training, a technical proposal already discussed in an earlier report by Gérard Lindeperg (cf. Cedefop Info 1/2000, electronic version).

A further key aspect is the need to clarify links between the labour code and the right of the training consumer.

The working group on new training modalities advocates greater clarity of training provision by pooling the services on offer and using new technologies. The means of control would be reinforced not only to guarantee compliance with legal regulations and legitimately monitor "dubious" provision (non-implementation of training programmes, incursions of sectarian viewpoints, etc.), but also to redeploy resources in terms of evaluating practices and results concerning the different forms of training.

The vocational training agreement could be "reviewed"; it must "be harmonised with the code of public procurement for public bodies".

All the working groups point out that training providers must also

become more professional and, in return, those training agencies which have made the effort to establish a "quality" control system (OPQF- Professional Office for the qualification of training agencies, ISO 9001, NF-French standards) should be allowed easy access to public calls to tender.

The working party on public procurement, chaired by André Gauron, recalls exactly what is at stake: approx FF 11.1 billion of state expenditure.

This working party proposes introducing a differentiation of pathways - longer ones for the more problematic target groups, and those leading to qualifications for the more independent target groups, with the involvement of industry in pathways

linking alternance and tutoring. To attain this objective, and allow the more problematic target groups to combine "training and sustainable occupational insertion in employment", the group proposes a "project" or "activity contract", to be concluded between the agency prescribing the service and the beneficiary. Indeed, many job seekers break off training to take on a job, even for the short term, without acquiring any formal and recognised qualification.

The group also advocates the creation of an "observatory to monitor training costs and training quality", which will compare the costs of continuing training services.

The working group on new training arrangements, chaired by René Tijou, observes the emergence of new players among the providers: e.g. publishers, business circles, software producers. The development of a veritable knowledge industry is considered necessary to meet the

new needs of the country. It is also imperative to give open training programmes equal status with programmes delivered as traditional courses. The working party is also in favour of a global contract including the measures upstream and downstream of the training action (in particular training engineering, recognition and validation of achievements). Finally, in the field of new information technologies and training, the creation of a label is recommended, with the state playing a regulating and facilitating role.

Extracts from: INFFO Flash, n° 552, 16-31 October 2000, pp. 1 - 4
 • See also the interview with Mme Nicole Péry, INFFO Flash (same issue).
 • The "Report on the professionalisation of training provision and the relations between users and agencies" may be downloaded (in French) from the Centre INFFO's website:
http://www.centre-inffo.fr/rapport_offre.html
 Source: Centre INFFO

Ireland

Dramatic increase in in-company training, but barriers remain

In-company training is one of the issues that recently attracted the attention of the Expert Group on Skill Needs*. Previous research had shown that an inadequate amount of training was being undertaken in Irish industry particularly in indigenous SMEs in traditional industries. It was not known how companies might be changing their approach to training in response to current labour market shortages. The report, which aims to identify barriers to training, focuses on companies employing under 250 people and on the construction and traditional manufacturing sectors which are currently subject to particular changes that have a bearing on training needs.

The overall finding of the report is that there has been a dramatic increase in the amount of training undertaken by the companies interviewed. It finds also that balancing the needs of the employers with those of the individual and the public good has become an important issue. What is good for the company may not necessarily be of benefit to the employee and the public good, the

report states. And many companies are finding difficulties in recruiting employees with appropriate skills, not just for specific employment, but for the workplace in general. These employees lack the appropriate educational grounding on which to build continuous vocational training and general development. "It is therefore increasingly important to look at whether benefits from particular training/educational initiatives go primarily to the individual or the company and for public policy to ensure that training in the basic skills applicable to a broad range of employment situations receives particular attention".

The findings are detailed as follows:

- Significant numbers of those in the workforce, of all ages, have low literacy and numeracy levels, a problem which has implications for acquiring information technology skills. There is also a perception that older people are less adaptable, particularly in acquiring IT skills.
- The issues of time and cost constrain training, particularly in less profitable companies and in

those which underestimate the value of training. Much of the training that could be useful is found to be either excessively difficult or costly to access, some of it not being available in Ireland. □ Companies, having with difficulty found the training they need, cannot be assured of its quality. There is no comprehensive system of accreditation of trainers. There are gaps in management understanding of training in some companies and in areas which require high skill levels.

The report concludes that there is an awareness among the companies surveyed of the need for public policy intervention to remove the barriers identified and to build organisational structures to match supply and demand more effectively. It details a series of recommendations to give effect to these conclusions.

*) Expert Group on Skill Needs: Report on in-company training, 2000. Available free of charge from Forfas, Wilton Park House, Wilton Place, IRL-Dublin 2. Tel. (353-1) 607 30 00 Fax (353-1) 607 30 30, E-mail: forfas@forfas.ie, <http://www.forfas.ie> Publication download address: <http://www.forfas.ie/publications/in-company/in-comp.pdf>.

Source: FAS

A joint decision of the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Labour and Solidarity concerning the creation of education and training courses for adults with a low level of education

Raising the educational and vocational skill levels of the Portuguese population calls for considerable commitment on the part of society as a whole since firms nowadays take increasing investment in the qualification of adults for granted.

Portugal has in recent years witnessed remarkable progress in the field of education and training, so that children and young people generally are assured of access to education. However shortcomings still exist as regards qualifications and certification, particularly among the adult population; these shortcomings must be tackled.

Education and training courses specifically designed for adults have been created and approved by a joint order of the Ministry of Labour and Solidarity and the Ministry of Education. The regulations governing them provide as follows:

Scope: Adult education and training courses are targeted at people of 18 years or over who either have no qualification at all or one that is not sufficient to enable them to find a job, and who have not completed their basic school education of four, six or nine years. Priority is given to people in employment or those who are registered as unemployed with the Institute of Employment and Vocational Training's employment centres, those in receipt of the minimum guaranteed wage, those undergoing retraining, and the employees of small and medium-sized enterprises.

Organisation of training: The curriculum for each education and training course must be organised having regard to the following parameters: initial training comprises three levels (B1, B2, B3) in the various fields of competence; work-related training covers areas to be decided according to the target group and context and is to be structured in routes leading to qualification by credits for training mod-

ules of varying length that can be accumulated.

Assessment: Assessment of trainees is gradual on the basis of a continuing monitoring of learning progress. It must perform a function of guidance in the training of the adult concerned, by providing information that facilitates self-assessment. It must be quality-related and descriptive so as to provide a useful basis for reaching a decision.

Certification: In order to gain a certificate a trainee must be overall positively assessed as well as successfully completing the components of his training - initial and work-related, including his performance in an actual working context.

Upon conclusion of the training a trainee is awarded a certificate of adult education and training which, depending on the training route, may be:

Basic 1 - equivalent to the first cycle of primary education and level I vocational training;

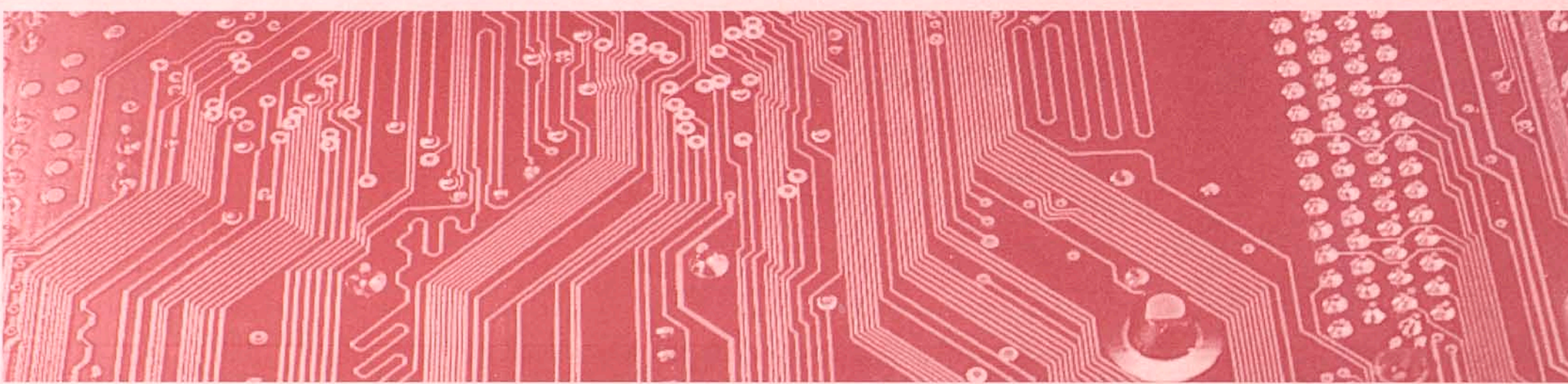
Basic 2 - equivalent to the second cycle of primary education and level I vocational training;

Basic 3 - equivalent to the third cycle of primary education and level II vocational training.

The certificate is issued by the training body on the basis of a model provided by the National Agency for Adult Education and Training.

The results of follow-up and assessment of courses covered by the observatory network must be set out in a report to be drawn up by the national follow-up team on the basis of information furnished periodically by the regional teams.

Source: Diário da República No. 268 from 20.11.2000/CIDES



CONFERENCES - SEMINARS - EXHIBITIONS

Paris/F
16 to 18 May 2001
Organisme de formation:
la réglementation applicable
Centre INFFO - Tour Europe,
Paris-La Défense, France
Contact:
Centre INFFO - Tour Europe,
33, place des Corolles,
F-92049 Paris-La Défense, France
Tel. (33-1) 41 25 22 22
Fax (33-1) 47 73 74 20
Email cinffo1@centre-info.fr
www.centre-info.fr

Prague/CZ
23 to 26 May 2001
3rd International Conference TET
2001 - Telecommunications for edu-
cation and Training
Contact:
National Training Fund and the
Charles University in Prague
http://chaos.pedf.cuni.cz/tet/
index.htm

Rotterdam/NL
27 to 30 May 2001
16th International Port Training
Conference.
Normalizing Training Curricula in the
World Port Industry:
Overdue, futuristic or pointless?
Contact:
W. Chr. H. van Zutphen,
Permanent Secretary,
International Port Training Conference,
Shipping and Transport College,
De Bazelstraat 6,
3067 EA Rotterdam, The Netherlands
Tel. (31-10) 42 04 948
Fax (31-10) 22 00 318

Paris/F
29 to 31 May 2001
Du référentiel emploi au référentiel
formation
Centre INFFO - Tour Europe,
Paris-La Défense, France
Contact:
Centre INFFO - Tour Europe,
33, place des Corolles,
F-92049 Paris-La Défense, France
Tel. (33-1) 41 25 22 22
Fax (33-1) 47 73 74 20
Email cinffo1@centre-info.fr
www.centre-info.fr

Moscow/Russia
6 to 7 June 2001
Continuing Vocational Training:
From Demand up to Recognition
Contact:
A. Demyanchenko, President,
Interstate Association
of Postgraduate Education
Tel. (095) 43 42 438
Fax (095) 43 42 438
demiapge@cityline.ru
www.user.cityline.ru/~demiapge

Paris/F
8 to 9 June 2001
Entre travail et citoyenneté, la for-
mation permanente France,
Allemagne, Suède
Auditorium du Centre National de la
Recherche Scientifique,
3-5, rue Michel-Ange,
F75016 Paris, France
Contact:
Mme Sandra Nicolas,
Travail et Mobilités,
Université Paris X - Batiment K,
bureau 206,
200, avenue de la République,
F-92001 NANTERRE cedex
Tel. (33-1) 40 97 71 33
Fax (33-1) 40 97 71 35
Email tem@u-paris10.fr

Paris/F
11 to 15 June 2001
Fonctionnement du dispositif de la
formation professionnelle continue
Centre INFFO - Tour Europe,
Paris-La Défense, France
Contact:
Centre INFFO - Tour Europe,
33, place des Corolles,
F-92049 Paris-La Défense, France
Tel. (33-1) 41 25 22 22
Fax (33-1) 47 73 74 20
Email cinffo1@centre-info.fr
www.centre-info.fr

Paris/F
25 September 2001
Le rôle de la formation dans
l'accompagnement au changement
Centre INFFO - Tour Europe,
Paris-La Défense, France
Contact:
Centre INFFO - Tour Europe,
33, place des Corolles,
F-92049 Paris-La Défense, France
Tel. (33-1) 41 25 22 22
Fax (33-1) 47 73 74 20
Email cinffo1@centre-info.fr
www.centre-info.fr

Page 13 Employment policy B: The work resources area: An open door to the job market; IRL: Government focus on skill development; **page 14 UK:** New Deal targets achieved - 250,000 young people move from welfare to work; **New training organisations and programmes A:** New school-based Entrepreneurship Education; D: NAKIF project to promote self-directed and experiential learning; IRL: Training on-line - FAS Net College; **page 15 E:** Open learning classrooms for adults using information and communication technologies; D/A/E/GR: Initiative of the social partners to develop innovative training modules in the use of geothermal energy; NO: Norwegian Board of Education established to develop quality; **page 16 Quality and certification NL:** Ongoing debate on qualification structures; D: Certificate to facilitate a return to vocational training.

Employment policy/New training organisations and programmes/Quality and Certification

Employment policy

Belgium

The work resources area: An open door to the job market

Since May 99, FOREM has been opening Work Resource Areas (EREs) in Wallonia (Charleroi, Mouscron, Tournai, Liège, La Louvière, Mons and Libramont).

Whatever one's professional situation, sooner or later one feels the need for information on employment and qualification.

In an effort to facilitate access to the Internet and its various job and training sites, but also in response to the need for such documentation, FOREM is offering such access to all citizens, especially those involved in employment market (job-seekers, employed or not, heads of companies, public or private bodies, students... etc). As a public employment service its generalist approach, makes the use of, and information search on, the web easy, according to individual needs.

The Work Resources Area is divided into four distinct zones of activity:

□ The **Reception Area** (or Information Counter): here the visitor expresses his or her expectations and requests and receives an initial orientation;

□ The **Lobby**: a central, open area, managed by animateurs-coaches (a multidisciplinary team), where one can autonomously consult various documentary or technological sources during set times.

Note that a so-called "self-service" part of this zone allows users to access the facilities, via a security system, outside opening hours.

□ The **Consultation Area**: direct counselling zones, where the visitor can talk with a counsellor on a one-to-one basis. This service helps the user analyse job offers, put together a CV and write cover letters.

On the basis of the autonomous research the visitor manages his or her own search. The team helps him or her gain access to this information, but may also orient the visitor towards a specialised service or information source, whether inside or outside FOREM (public services,

non-profit organisations, companies...)

A true information centre, the ERE offers tools and information in the same place, which is divided into three sections:

□ the **information section** consists of documents on job-search techniques, training possibilities, companies, social legislation (state aid for employment and training) and of course on professions, necessary qualifications and professional sectors.

□ The **support section** offers visitors, at no cost, a range of useful technical means to aid their active search for a job (telephone, fax,

photocopy machine, computers, software, databases, teaching materials, special Internet sites on employment, videos and CD-ROMs).

□ The **service section** is a counselling area where visitors can further their job-seeking efforts through specific actions, such as writing or improving their CV, looking up company addresses, consulting employment offices (whether or not managed by FOREM), exploring the job market, getting general advice and learning about other available services.

The EREs also offers services to personnel managers, who can, among other things, learn about recruitment techniques, find out

about various forms of aid for employment and training and contact a counsellor.

The usefulness of such an infrastructure can be seen in numbers: a 93% satisfaction rate among users, user loyalty (40% come more than four times a month) and a gradual opening up to other types of users (6% have a job). Thanks to this facility, users can work in real time and make closer contact with companies.

Since the creation of the ERE, FOREM has received many requests from professors to organise visits for their students - who later come back on their own.

In the future, EREs will develop partnerships with other organisations that are active in the job market. This will allow them to add value by becoming "shop windows" for these organisations.

At the end of 2001, this infrastructure will be available to all 12 regional directorates of FOREM.

The ERE wishes to become a "listening" institution and a focus for dialogue where everyone is welcome.

Further information:
 FOREM Directorate for Employment
 Mr Damien VANDESTRICK, Co-ordinator, ERE
 damien.vandestruck@forem.be
 Tel. (32-71) 206449

Source: FOREM/CIDOC

Ireland

Government focus on skill development

The economic backdrop to the latest Operational Programme* (OP) for Employment and Human Resources Development, 2000-2006 is significantly different to that of the previous OP 1994-1999. Ireland in 1994 had an unemployment rate of over 14%, the second highest in the EU and a long-term unemployment rate of 9%. The rate for the second quarter of 1999 stood at 5.7%, well below the EU average (8.3%) with a long-term unemployment rate of 2.5% amid evidence of a growing labour and skills shortage. Employment has been growing by about 5% per annum. The labour market challenges now facing Ireland require a change in focus from tackling unemployment to pursuing policies that provide the economy with an adequate supply of appropriately skilled workers to sustain economic growth. The emphasis now is on increasing labour force participation, particularly by women, the provision of enhanced education and training, encouraging job growth in the service sector and intensifying policy efforts to expand in-house training of employees.

Investment of ca. Euro 14 200 million is proposed. Of this ca. EUR 900 million will be provided by EU Structural Funds. The operational programme reflects the basic 4-pillar structure of the EU Employment Guidelines and the National Employment Action Plan (NAP).

Employability, particularly the area of mobilisation of labour supply, is the largest priority in terms of the number of measures and level of resourcing. This objective aims to ensure that all potential sources of labour supply in the economy, women returners, older workers, people with disabilities and immigrants are encouraged to enter the labour market. Support actions range from second-level education (to increase the number of leavers with modern languages), to apprenticeships (where demand remains very high for skilled people) to traineeships (which provide fast-track skills development for young labour market entrants) through to skills training for the unemployed and redundant.

The focus of the *Entrepreneurship* pillar is on in-company training, particularly in SMEs, with the emphasis on improving the quality and quantity of training and human resources development. There will be support for social partner-led approaches such as seen in the Skillnets pilot training project (see CEDEFOP Info 1/2000) and the ADAPT Community Initiative (see CEDEFOP Info 3/99). Group-based approaches, the programme suggests, will play a significant part in achieving economies of scale in the identification of training needs, the development of solutions and the purchasing of training in the marketplace. The National Training Fund, currently being established, will, with ESF

support, be the major source of funding for in-company training.

While the emphasis in the above pillar is on company development, the approach under the *Adaptability* pillar is related much more to the development of the individual. Measures to encourage further training, re-skilling and lifelong learning with more open, flexible opportunities for acquiring skills are proposed. Improving the quality of teaching at all levels of the education and training system and the ongoing development of a framework of certification and qualifications are discussed in this context.

An educational equality initiative will enable gaps in provision for educationally disadvantaged individuals and specific marginalised groups to be addressed under the *Equality* pillar. The Government commitment to mainstream equal opportunities across structural funds programming is reflected in its proposal to establish an Equal Opportunities Promotion and Monitoring Unit.

* An Operational Programme details measures to give effect to Government proposals on economic development contained in the National Development Plan.
 Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment: Employment and Human Resources Development Operational Programme, 2000-2006. 2000 ISBN 0-7076-9008-0 (Available: Government Publications, Postal Trade Section, 4-5 Harcourt Road, IRL-Dublin 2) Tel. (353-1) 647 68 34, Fax (353-1) 671 35 89
 Price unavailable at time on going to press.

Source: FAS

New Deal targets achieved - 250,000 young people move from welfare to work

The New Deal programme came into operation in April 1998. (See Cedefop Info 1/99.) An announcement was made on 30 November 2000 that the programme met its target of helping 250,000 young people off welfare into work. Education and Employment Minister David Blunkett said that the government was looking to develop the New Deal further by offering more flexibility and more focus on the individual and the employer. An extra 38 million EUR is being made available to extend the New Deal for

Lone Parents to include 150,000 additional lone parents. Next year there are plans for an extension of the New Deal for Partners of Unemployed People programme, and the government is also extending the New Deal 25plus scheme to include extra advisory time and support, and greater flexibility in the Job Seekers Grant. An additional 15 million EUR has been allocated to help those affected by large-scale redundancies, so that they could move into new jobs more easily. This would be provided through a new Job Transition

Service, where the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) will help to identify skill shortages.

Employment Minister, Tessa Jowell, cited the New Deal as a good example of the UK's ability to combine the best of USA and European models of employment policy. Jowell said, "It [the New Deal] is offering tailored support to increase opportunity and self-reliance. We have put an end to the quick-fix scheme and are progressively helping people to improve their employability through help

with work experience, training and childcare."

However, the Association of Colleges, said many college principals had concerns about the New Deal, particularly about anomalies between regions due to differences in local practice in running the programme. On entering the New Deal programme clients go through an initial guidance stage (known as the Gateway) where they are guided by a personal adviser through the New Deal options. These are: subsidised

employment; education and training; and voluntary work or participation in environmental projects. The quality of this guidance therefore has implications for the numbers and calibre of participants guided into colleges.

More information from the Department for Education and Employment's website <http://www.dfee.gov.uk> or the New Deal website <http://www.newdeal.gov.uk>. For New Deal developments in Scotland see page 7 of this issue.

Source: IPD

New training organisations and programmes

Austria

New school-based Entrepreneurship Education

Pilot class introduced by Vienna *Handelsakademie*¹

A sense of responsibility, independence and self-responsibility, combined with a keen sense of creativity in solving problems – these are the typical characteristics of successful entrepreneurs and employees and the profile which the 'Josef A. Schumpeter' pilot project, launched in Vienna in the autumn of 2000, seeks to impart.

The *Handelsakademie* team deliberately applies a holistic approach to education, combining both elements of general education and entrepreneurial thinking and action. Director Christine Werdenich does not seek to merely impart isolated factual knowledge; her aim is to turn out young people with diversified skills, who able to work in a team and think and act along entrepreneurial lines after five successful years at the school.

The curriculum includes a weekly coaching lesson to help the students keep up with the high standards. Personal time management, individual goal setting, subsequent success control and – if necessary – mental guidance in small groups are monitored by a coach.

Supplementary weekly individual lessons, extracurricular study groups and a diversified range of optional subjects are designed to

promote the independence of the future entrepreneurs.

The specifically trained teaching staff use above all action-oriented and diversified forms of tuition. Projects, team-teaching and theme afternoons in different subjects are part of the learning philosophy.

The entire project and all its players – students, parents and teachers – are supported by Univ. Prof. Dr. Josef Aff, Institute for Occupational, Economic and Social Pedagogics of the University of Cologne who is responsible for the scientific evaluation of the monitoring of the pilot project; similarly, it is to be hoped that positive experience from the project can be transferred into mainstream schooling.

^{1) *Handelsakademien* are 5-year full-time higher secondary commercial schools. They lead to the general certificate of access to higher education as well as vocational qualifications granting direct access to the labour process at middle-management level (dual qualification; recognition of vocational education and training in accordance with Council Directive 95/43/EC of 20 July 1995).}

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Fax (43-1) 802 27 86
E-mail: office@bhakwien13.at

Source: Cedefop/EWS

Germany

NAKIF project to promote self-directed and experiential learning

Twelve firms from a range of business sectors participate in a new cooperation project

The Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) has launched a new cooperation project entitled 'New skills requirements in the field of experiential working and self-directed learning for specialised industrial workers' (NAKIF). The Ministry is to spend some EUR 2.5 m to promote self-directed and experiential learning in the workplace, a form of learning playing an increasingly important role, in particular in dynamic business organisations.

The twelve participating firms from a range of business sectors are to develop innovative forms of personnel deployment and work organisation facilitating self-directed, experiential learning. This form of learning is not only necessary to continuously adapt existing specialised knowledge to constantly changing and new requirements; it is also a prerequisite for the acquisition of new competences in the work process and in the fields of organisation, management, cooperation and communication, in short 'ICT competences'.

Two to four of the twelve participating firms concentrate on one of these new competences with a view to developing models of self-directed, experiential learning. The monitoring of the project on the scientific and occupa-

tional pedagogy side is carried out by the Institute for Social Research (ISF), Munich, the Institute for Labour Research (*Sozialforschungsstelle*), Dortmund, and the Association for Training Research and Occupational Development, 'GAB' Munich.

The project is coordinated by the associate chair for the social economics of the working and professional world of the University of Augsburg. An associated working party, with the participation of the vocational training department of the metalworkers' union, IG Metall, the Association of the Bavarian metalworking and electrical industry, VBM/VBW, the VDMA user circle and the German electrical and electronic manufacturers' association, ZVEI, will guarantee timely and sustainable transfer of the project results. Firms and experts can also participate in working parties which serve as a forum for discussion and further dissemination.

The current project work and results can be consulted at www.nakif.de. Further information from University of Augsburg, Associate chair for the social economics of the working and professional world, Prof. Dr. Fritz Böhle, Universitätsstraße 2, D-86153 Augsburg, E-mail: fritz.boehle@wiso.uni-augsburg.de. Information on the project can also be obtained from the BMBF project implementing agency, Projektträgerschaft Produktion und Fertigungstechnologien, Forschungszentrum Karlsruhe GmbH, Helmut Mense, Postfach 3640, D-76021 Karlsruhe, E-mail: mense@pft.fzk.de, Internet: www.fzk.de/pft.

Source: BMBF/Cedefop/SK

Ireland

Training on-line - FAS Net College

A pilot project to determine the feasibility of delivering training online has been accepted into mainstream training by FAS-Training and Employment Authority.

The Interreg project, piloted with partners in North Wales, ran for 18 months. Target groups were potential entrepreneurs and owner/managers of SMEs. The project involved the development of an existing training programme that was delivered using traditional training methods, in a face to face context, for delivery over the web. It provided the platform for development of the technical systems and support required for on-line training and the training material for some of the courses now on offer from FAS. Over 700

people availed of training during the pilot phase.

FAS Net College* was established in June 2000. It currently offers 18 courses in business, computer software, web design and computer technical support, which are continuously updated to reflect demands in the labour market. Apart from web-based training, the College provides supportive learning systems e.g. network of learners/discussion groups, self-assessments and on-line tutor support for most of

the courses. The courses are available to everyone with Internet access, irrespective of employment status or country of origin. They range in price from EUR 38.09 to EUR 127 but are free of charge to persons in receipt of social welfare. A breakdown of users currently registered with the College indicate that FAS trainees is the largest user group 26%, followed by employed and unemployed persons 20% each, persons with disabilities 9%, persons based in the home 5%, and FAS staff approx. 20%.

The average duration of a course is 80-100 hours and the learner is provided with unlimited access for a period of six months to learn at his/her own pace. A study skills course is provided free of charge to aid participants with their studies along with on-line tutor support. Participants are advised that learning be approached in time blocks, maximum one hour at a time. As learning should be active rather than passive, it is recommended that it should be put into practice before moving on to acquire new knowledge and skills.

Nearly all the courses have an industry-recognised certification option.

Partners in the development of training material and certification currently include a university open learning centre, a professional engineering body and a commercial technology-training company. Learners wishing to pursue a qualification take their exam on-line in an accredited test centre.

* <http://www.fas-netcollege.com>
Contact: Ms Clare Wynne, Project Marketing Manager, FAS Net College, FAS Training Centre, Wyatville Road, Loughlinstown, Dun Laoghaire, IRL-Co. Dublin. Tel. (353-1) 204 37 32.
E-mail: cwynne@fas-netcollege.com

Source: FAS

Open learning classrooms for adults using information and communication technologies

In the framework of the Mentor project (part of the new information and communication technologies programme), the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports has introduced a system of distance adult education to promote the cultural development of adults and foster their vocational skilling and employability. The programme uses open and flexible distance learning environments, based on information and communication technologies.

Similarly, the law on the general regulation of the education system (LOGSE) 1/1990, dated 3

October, guarantees the access of adults to education so that they may acquire, upgrade or expand their knowledge and aptitudes for their personal and vocational development, to which end the educational authorities may enter into collaboration agreements with universities, local authorities and other public or private agencies.

Within this context, the Ministry of Education grants subsidies to local authorities for the development and maintenance of open, flexible distance learning classrooms, based on

information and communication technologies, in the framework of the Mentor project. The method used by this project is an Internet-based telematic tutorial system, whereby the enrolled students can contact their distance tutor via email, access the educational resources via the world wide web and take interactive tests, which are corrected immediately. At the end of the course they can sit an examination and obtain a certificate awarded by the national Ministry of Education (or the Autonomous community, where they are responsible for the field of education). Finally, students can

participate in these courses from their own homes; but if they lack the necessary computer facilities and Internet link-up they can go to their local Mentor contact point, where a tutor is available to provide the necessary material and information on the methodological and technological aspects of the course.

Source: Boletín Oficial del Estado, no. 219, 12 September 2000, INEM, <http://www.inem.e>

Germany/Austria/Spain/Greece

Initiative of the social partners to develop innovative training modules in the use of geothermal energy

Two training agencies sponsored by the social partners are currently developing training modules related to the use of geothermal energy in the context of the Leonardo da Vinci project 'Model for an expanded heat pump installation and use as a fixed component of initial vocational training'. This is an expanding area of environmental engineering in which no systematic approach has as yet been developed to impart skills to specialised workers in the field of initial vocational training. This initiative has been analysed in the context of the Cedefop project 'Observing innovations in vocational education and training' and rated as highly innovative.

Although the use of geothermal energy has been an expanding area of environmental engineering in a number of European States for some years, there has so far been no attempt to develop a systematic initial vocational training strategy to impart skills to specialised workers. Moreover, in the field of continuing training, there are only sporadic cases of internal company training courses and a mere handful of courses accessible to the general public.

The aim of this innovative project is to develop training modules and learning aids (handbook and CD-ROM) for the systematic and comprehensive provision of knowledge and skills to specialised workers so that by the end of their training they will have acquired a series of relevant skills, ranging from expert customer counselling to the technical installation and maintenance of heat pumps.

The project coordinator of this initiative is the District craft association of Waldeck-Frankenberg (Germany); its partner institutions are the Institute for Vocational Advancement (BFI), Vienna, Japetos Technology Consultants (Greece) and the Leonardo Liceu (Spain).

The model for the development of this training programme is a heat pump module developed in the framework of a continuing training programme in the field of solar engineering and geothermal energy by the First Solar School of the BFI Vienna. In the context of the Leonardo project, the district craft association of Waldeck-Frankenberg and the BFI, Vienna, along with their Greek and Spanish partners, are devising an initial vocational training programme on the basis of the technical know-how of the BFI Solar School, taking account as far as possible of the different occupa-

tional and training profiles and the activities of the relevant specialised workers in all four partner countries.

An innovative learning concept to underpin specialised training in environmental engineering

As well as the development of modules for the systematic and comprehensive provision of knowledge and skills to specialised workers, the project is also aimed at developing a new learning concept involving increased use of alternative learning approaches (group discussions, role-play, etc.) to impart knowledge. The main objective is to lay greater emphasis on the development of social skills – key competences such as rhetorical skills, independence of action and decision-making – which are still only to be found in isolated cases of in-company apprentice training. A particular focus is to be the optimisation of expert customer counselling on the different types of

heat pump, the specific advantages of the various technologies, etc. The acquisition of these additional key competences will not only be of advantage to the skilled workers in the field of geothermal engineering, but will also have a positive effect on all the working activities of the electricians and installers and therefore serve to enhance the competitiveness of the firms.

In the partner countries Greece and Spain the training modules could have the positive effect of stimulating the market in this area

When the project is concluded in the course of 2001, the developed modules and learning aids will be ready for implementation in the framework of initial vocational training for electricians, installers and related occupations. In Germany and Austria, direct and optimum application of the developed products is already secured and there are initiatives to

this effect under way in Greece and Spain in the form of specific modifications in the final project phase. In the two Mediterranean partner countries it will however initially be more feasible to implement the modules at the level of continuing vocational training. In contrast to the use of solar engineering for heating (where Greece is the EU leader) the geothermal market has not yet fully developed in these countries. The planned publication of the manual on the imparting of geothermal knowledge and skills in Greek means that a more extensive integration of this content in existing continuing training courses for unemployed specialised workers in Greece can be expected. In particular in combination with solar engineering learning content, skilled workers in the electrical and installation fields could therefore acquire comprehensive application-oriented specialised knowledge in the use of renewable energies.

Contact:
Roland Loos, Cedefop project coordinator, Innovations in vocational education and training
Tel. (30-31) 490 158, Fax (30-31) 490 117, e-mail: rlo@cedefop.eu.int
Yvonne Noutsia, Secretariat, Tel. (30-31) 490 118, Fax (30-31) 490 117, e-mail: yno@cedefop.eu.int
Further information can be found in the Cedefop Panorama 'Vocational training and innovative practices in the environmental sector'.

Source: Cedefop/RLO

Norway

Norwegian Board of Education established to develop quality

The establishment the Norwegian Board of Education, with effect from 1 September 2000, is an innovation in the national education administration. The Board is a state institution with its own board of directors. It is also a national resource centre for the educational sector and has responsibilities relating to development, assessment and information. It will take over the work of the National Centre for Educational Resources and the National Examination Board as well as some of the tasks, such as the production of national curricula, of the Ministry of Education, Research and Church Affairs. Primary and secondary education are priority areas. In its efforts to improve the quality of primary and secondary education, the Board aims to provide an integrated approach to educational research and development.

The ideal objective of the Board is to give the education sector in Norway tomorrow's answers to today's questions.

The areas of activity comprise:

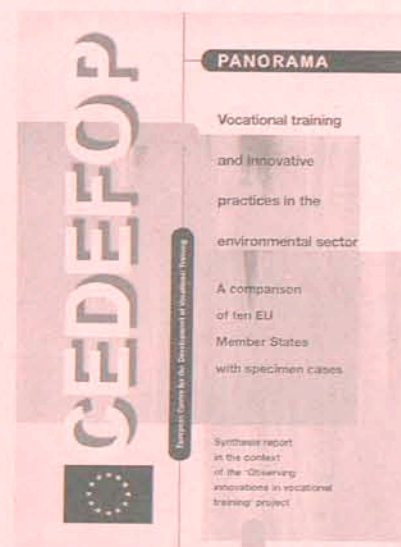
- national curricula;
- educational resources and support functions;
- information and communication technology (ICT) in education;
- the Norwegian School Net and online learning resources
- skills development;
- pilot projects and development work;
- research and documentation;
- reporting;
- final examinations in the lower and upper secondary schools.

The Board of Education is a national institution with partners throughout the country and with significant international assignments

Further information:
Norwegian Board of Education
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N-0608 Oslo
Tel. (47-23) 30 12 00
Fax (47-23) 30 12 99
E-mail: ls@ls.no
Website: <http://www.ls.no>

Source: Leonardo da Vinci, Norway

Editor's note: A full description of the VET system in Norway has been published by Cedefop in EN, FR and DE. In addition, in the National VET Systems section of the Electronic Training Village, up-dated summary notes from mid-2000 are available (also in EN, FR and DE).



Vocational training and innovative practices in the environmental sector. A comparison of ten EU Member States, with specimen cases. Synthesis report in the context of the 'Observing innovations in vocational training' project
Cedefop panorama 5106
Languages: DE, EN, ES
Cat. No: TI-31-00-045-EN-C
Free of charge on request from Cedefop

Quality and certification

Netherlands

Ongoing debate on qualification structures

What's happening in the world of qualifications, competences and structures?

The third qualification structure year-book deals with topics currently central to the Dutch discussion on qualification structures in vocational education and training. The focus is on the general, conceptual framework for (creating) a qualification structure, connecting various levels of training through the qualification structure, implementation, and assessment. Just like the two previous editions, authors from various backgrounds contributed. The 2000 issue can be characterised as 'a swing to core competencies' and, thus furthers the debate which was set in motion by the 1999 ACOA (National Advisory Committee on Vocational Education and Labour Market) report with the same name (see Cedefop Info 1/2000).

Although the debate is first and foremost a national one, some of the issues raised have a clear trans-national dimension. Comparable debates are going on in other Member States as well as on a European level.

Qualifications structure as a conceptual framework

A qualification structure can act as a straitjacket. The educational system, and in particular the schools and the teachers, set the goals for students, more or less forgetting the students themselves, by not allowing for individual variations. Of course, the qualification structure cannot be ignored, but its use could be less as a standard setting nature and more as a benchmark to see how far an

individual student has got. A related topic in the discussion is the distinction between vocational competencies and competencies for citizenship, career development and life-long learning. The challenge for the coming years will be to better define and operationalise the latter ones and to integrate them all in the qualification structure and educational practice.

Interface between pre-secondary and secondary education and between secondary and higher education

'Vertical integration' or connecting different levels, of vocational education in order to enable students to continue their studies on a higher level, continues to be complex. The 1999 year-book focussed on the connection between secondary vocational education and higher professional education. Now, the link between pre-secondary and secondary vocational education receives attention. In both cases the conclusions are the same. More transparency is needed, especially with regard to lifelong learning and employability, and more co-operation between regional training institutions and the labour market is a necessity.

Practical aspects; what and how?

The 1999 ACOA report introduced the concept of core competencies in the formal VET system. Since then, a number of pilot projects have shown that defining and elaborating competencies is not an easy process.

One way to optimise the process is by focussing on groups of related competencies. An example of good practice is the development of a completely new ICT qualification structure through the co-operation of three national sectoral bodies: administration, electronics and graphics/media. Incorporating language competencies, which should be transversal, in the qualification structure is also an area for concern.

Assessment

The assessment discussion pinpoints procedures at the periphery of the qualification structure and their implications for the regular VET system. In the case of accreditation of prior learning (for more informa-

tion on this topic and its importance to SMEs, see the article about the APL Knowledge Centre in Cedefop Info 2/2000), assessment has a dual purpose: assessing acquired competencies and deciding on suitable individualised learning pathways. Regional training centres will have to adapt their procedures in order to offer a more flexible way of testing. Also, numerous certificates exist in the periphery without a direct link to the qualifications structure, for example certain welding certificates, or a certificate for real estate agents. These certificates have a clearly limited validity (in contents as well as in time) and are awarded by special agencies. As certificates refer to relevant competencies, both the regional training centres and the awarding agencies will have to

reach agreements on how to include them in the qualification structure.

Take a look abroad

Traditionally, the last chapter of the year-book takes a look across borders. In 1998, a comparison of the qualification structures was made (the Netherlands, France, United Kingdom, Germany and Norway). In 1999, the concept of competencies in Australia was compared with the Netherlands. The 2000 year-book describes the industry driven skills standards in the United States of America. Lessons from the US approach could find their way into the Dutch qualification structures.

Further information: Blokhuis, F. and K. Visser (red.), 'Jaarboek kwalificatiestructuur 2000' (Annual review of the qualification structure - 2000), CINOP, November 2000. ISBN 90-5003-322-9 (Only available in Dutch)

Source: CINOP

Germany

Certificate to facilitate a return to vocational training

BIBB Central Board recommends document as evidence of partial vocational qualifications

With reference to the theme of the validation of partial qualifications, the Central Board of the Federal Institute for Vocational Training (BIBB), a quadripartite body representing the employers, workers, the *Länder* and the federation, which acts as an advisory body to the federal government on fundamental VET issues, has adopted a recommendation on a 'certificate of job-related skills'.

The document is intended to make it easier for institutions and firms to decide whether or not to take on a young person as an apprentice and possibly reduce his/her period of training.

The certificate is to be issued for those who have not completed an entire course of vocational training but have nevertheless gone through part of a training course and have participated in skilling programmes preparing for a vocational certificate. The board recommends that institutions and firms delivering training courses should formulate the certificate as precisely and succinctly as possible, taking the minimum requirements for the relevant occupational knowledge and skills as a general yardstick. It should further indicate the exact qualifications acquired, the time frame and fields of activity. An assessment is not envisaged.

Source: BIBB/Cedefop/SK

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See also Internet:
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Financing/ Training of trainers/ Special target groups/ Vocational guidance

Financing

Sweden Plans to launch individual learning accounts from January 2002

In December 2000 a Government appointed Commission submitted a final report* on "Individual Learning Accounts, - starting year 2002". The proposal creates a new opportunity for all adults to finance their own needs for competence development during their working life. 1 million individuals will have the opportunity to receive a basic contribution of approx. 290 Euro if they start saving in the first three years.

The tax model
 Under the proposal all employees and company owners should each year have the opportunity to save a basic amount (ca. 4 240 Euro in 2002) in an Individual Learning Account (*Individuellt kompetenssparande* - IKS), which is, in both cases, subject to tax relief.

The basic contribution
 Approximately 1 million individuals will receive a government support of approx. 290 Euro, if they start saving during the years 2002 and 2004, make at least 12 contributions, are aged between 30 and 55 and had in 2000 an annual income of between approx. 5,680 Euro and 24,500 Euro. Those who start an account will receive this sum when either their own or their employer's contributions have reached a corresponding figure i.e 290 Euro.

The competence premium
 When funds are withdrawn from the account and used for competence development, they are treated as taxable income, at a reduced rate, which is determined by the scope and length of the competence development activity. Competence development programmes which correspond to a year of full-time study or more, qualify for the maximum grant

premium. Competence development programmes of 200 days (40 weeks) or more are regarded as full-time studies. The minimum threshold is set at 5 days.

The funds in the learning account belong to the individual and can only be used for competence development decided on by the individual. Competence development is given a broad definition and covers both education and work practice.

Those providing competence development are obliged to fulfil certain minimum requirements for the course/practice to be approved. The goal of the programme should be clear and a joint evaluation questionnaire should be completed by all participants. Withdrawals from the account may be made from the age of 25 and must be twice as large as the basic contribution from the state.

Funds in the competence account which are not used by the age of retirement can be transformed into pension savings or pension insurance. When withdrawals are made for other purposes a 3% tax withdrawal charge of the amount withdrawn, which corresponds to the state subsidy, is levied. ILAs can be held in banks, insurance companies

or other savings institutes and savings can be in the form of deposit accounts, in insurance and in funds.

Cost of the scheme
 The long-term cost to state finances of the subsidy for the individuals remains well within the economic framework of 130 million Euro per year, which the Swedish Parliament (*Riksdag*) decided in the 1999 budget. In addition there is the cost of financing the reduction in payroll taxes which is estimated to amount to approximately 1/3 of all annual contributions.

Implementation
 The proposal is designed so that the system for individual learning accounts (IKS) can start in January 2002. A bill on IKS could be submitted to the *Riksdag* with a view to a decision being made during autumn 2001. An organising committee should be appointed in spring 2001 to prepare the organisational and information work. A system for follow-up, evaluation and research should be organised from the very start of IKS to ensure monitoring and analysing of the effects of IKS on the individual, employers and society.

It is proposed that from January 2002 an IKS Board be formed to take responsibility for co-ordinating the work. The IKS Board should be a small procurement and co-ordination agency whose tasks are mainly outsourced.

* The final report "Individual Learning Accounts, IKS-starting year 2002" (SOU 2000:119) is available in full in Swedish and in summary in English on the web site of the Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communication, <http://www.naring.regeringen.se>. The printed report can be ordered from Fritzes Customer Service, 106 47 Stockholm, Tel. (46-8) 690 91 90 - Fax (46-8) 690 91 91, Internet: www.fritzes.se
 Source: The Swedish International Programme Office for Education and Training

Italy Training credit card for use in purchasing ICT skills

The Italian Parliament, in the financial law for 2000-2001, is offering citizens an opportunity to discover the new technologies by creating a credit card for use in the new economy.

Specifically, this involves an amendment to Article 103 which provided that 10% of revenues from the UMTS (the newest generation of cellular 'phones) auction should go to research, innovation and training. 25.8 million EUR of this will be used to introduce the training credit card. Anyone reaching the age of 18 can, as of 1 January 2001, apply for this

card to purchase goods and services in the computer and telecommunications sector as well as to follow distance-learning courses, to a maximum value of 5,164 EUR. In practice, it is a loan - citizens will be required to refund the sum without interest - which the State, in the name of the new economy, will guarantee in the event of insolvency. Above all,

though, it is an important opportunity for anyone wishing to acquire computer knowledge and remedy the gap in training and expertise that Italy is suffering in the context of the new economy.

Further information:
 Ministero dell'Industria, del commercio e dell'artigianato
 Stefano Passigli
 Via Molise 2 - I-00187 Roma
 Tel. (39-06) 47 88 77 74 - 47 05 20 02
 Fax (39-06) 47 88 78 66
 E-mail: CCCmail@minindustria.it
 Web site: http://www.minindustria.it/Gabinetto/Uff_stam/Dicembre/191200_PCstudenti.pdf
 Source: ISFOL

Training of trainers

Greece

Development of a register for trainers in continuing vocational training

The Ministry of Labour and Social Security has issued a ministerial decision that regulates the procedures for the development of a register for continuing vocational training trainers. The decision defines the terms, requirements and specifications that trainers should meet in order to be registered. The register will include trainers' personal data, formal qualifications and teaching and occupational experience

corresponding to one or more groups of occupations. The development of the register will ensure the quality and effective operation of training programmes.

The task of the development of the register will be undertaken by the National Accreditation Centre of Vocational Training Structures and Services (EKEPIS). It is expected that the

upgrading of the qualifications of the registered trainer will be achieved through certified training of trainers programmes that will provide the necessary pedagogical knowledge, abilities and skills.

The registered trainers are obliged to have a European Computer Driving Licence (ECDL) [for more details, see <http://www.ecdl.com>]

diploma that will certify their computer use knowledge.

More information:
National Accreditation Centre of Vocational Training Structures and Services (Ethniko Kentro Pistopoiisis Daman Synechizomenis Epangelmatikis Katartisis kai Synodeftikon Ypostiriktikon Ypiresion - EKEPIS)
83-85 Petrou Ralli Str., GR-12833 Athens
Tel. (30-1) 342 8240-4, Fax (30-1) 342 8138
Website: <http://www.ekepis.gr>

Source: OEEK

Special target groups

Germany

PRAXIMO database – Model Projects: 'Young people in work'

The PRAXIMO database contains information on innovative model projects in the field of the vocational and social integration of, in particular disadvantaged young people. Data on model projects are collected nation-wide and processed to provide a rapid and comprehensive source of information for those interested in this area.

PRAXIMO gives an overview of the objectives, implementing strategies and experience of new and/or interesting pilot projects and regular programmes promoting and supporting young people on their way into training and employment.

Thanks to PRAXIMO, practitioners, politicians and the administration can draw on the ideas, knowledge and experience developed by other agencies elsewhere and in related working

areas. It provides information on the further development of policy and practice of the vocational advancement of disadvantaged groups.

PRAXIMO is an information service of the regional branch of the German Youth Institute (DJI), Leipzig, based on the studies conducted by the Institute over many years in a diversity of fields in the framework of its research priority 'transitions to work'.

The database is sponsored by the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth.

What information can be found in PRAXIMO?

The PRAXIMO database provides detailed descriptions of model projects, drawn up by

DJI specialists and their cooperation partners on the basis of standard-format interviews and following project visits on the spot.

How can PRAXIMO be accessed?

PRAXIMO is built up as a database accessible via the Internet, CD or in printed form.

□ Via the Internet, the database can be researched according to selected predefined search criteria via the DJI homepage: <http://www.dji.de>.

□ An annual CD documents the current status of the database; it can be run on a PC or Apple Macintosh. The CD offers specific search and sorting functions.

□ The current CD, featuring the first 100 project descriptions and the brochure 'Fit für Leben und Arbeit' (Fit for life and work), can be ordered from the DJI regional branch in Leipzig.

□ In printed form, the database is published annually in the series 'Praxismodelle', (Model projects) as a catalogue of the new projects included in the database and in the form of fact files on various fields of action of youth social work.

Information:
Deutsches Jugendinstitut e.V. (German Youth Institute)
Leipzig Regional Branch
Stallbaumstr. 9
D-04155 Leipzig
Tel. (49-341) 566 54-35
Fax (49-341) 566 54-47

German Youth Institute
Research Priority 'transitions to work'
Nockherstr. 2
D-81541 München
Tel. (49-89) 623 06-177
Fax (49-89) 623 06-162
Internet: <http://www.dji.de>

Source: German Youth Institute

Germany/Austria/France

Overview of skilling opportunities for women at the click of a mouse

Special database provides women job market entrants a wealth of information on continuing training

Women in Germany, France and Austria wishing to return to the labour market after a career break can now access an overview of continuing training courses specifically designed for women at the mere click of a mouse. The database, which can be accessed at www.bibb.de/internat/frauen, gives a rundown of the wide range of vocational skilling courses for women in the most diverse life situations.

In Germany and Austria, the database above all provides information on orientation and vocational preparation courses, whereas in France the focus is on specialised courses in the various occupational fields. Skilling opportunities in computer-assisted office communication are offered in all three countries.

Numerous computer courses in the office and administrative field, including training in handling information and telecommunication technologies, are available for women

job market returnees in all three countries.

Other courses addressed to different target groups include home and community services, health, ergonomics and business start-ups.

The database is a result of the international pilot project 'European network on new occupational profiles for women'. The project received EU support via the Leonardo da Vinci programme, with the Federal Institute for Vocational Training (BIBB) acting as project coordinator. The aim of the project was the transnational networking of institutions offering innovative initial and continuing training opportunities for women in new occupational fields.

The French project partners, 'Greta Leman', an association of 13 public training institutions, and the continuing training organisation 'Ceefia', can be contacted at the following addresses:

Greta Lemann,
Project partner Catherine Chaboud,
9 rue des Marronniers – BP 503,
F-74105 Annemasse Cedex – France,

Tel. (33-450) 439 181, Fax (33-450) 439 182,
E-mail: greta.leman@wanadoo.fr,
I-Net: <http://perso.wanadoo.fr/greta.leman>

Ceefia,
Project partner Claude Kelner,
14, bd Saint-Martin,
F-75 010 Paris,
Tel. (33-140) 184 772, Fax (33-140) 184 773,
E-mail: ceefia@ceefia.fr, I-Net: www.ceefia.fr

The Austrian partner, the Institute für Marketing und Management (IMM), has the following contact address:
IMM – Institut für Marketing und Management,
project partner Irene Schulte,
Operring 19,
A-1010 Vienna,
Tel. (43-1586) 4230, Fax (43-1587) 0946,
E-mail: immwien@vis.at,
I-Net: www.viaweb.at/immwien

The BIBB continues to manage and update the database. Training institutions offering vocational training courses specifically designed for women, interested in being included in the database, can request the relevant forms from: kollatz@bibb.de.

The BIBB has published the full results of the project (in German) under the title 'Neue Berufswege für Frauen in das 21. Jahrhundert' (New vocational paths for women into the 21st century), available free of charge from BIBB, A1.2 VÖ/Vertrieb,
D-53043 Bonn,
Tel. (49-228) 107-1716 or -1717,
Fax (49-228) 107-2967,
E-mail fassbender@bibb.de oder braun@bibb.de.
Source: BIBB/Cedefop/SK

Belgium

The Walloon network of skills centres (centres de competences)

The skills centres, established as from 1997 in the Walloon region, are a new concept in the training arena.

Aware of the crucial role of skills and qualifications for the innovative capacity of industry, the Walloon region designed the "new generation" skills centres according to the principles of openness and multifunctionality. The aim is to pool resources but also to prevent the dispersion of available funds.

The centres offer numerous objectives and advantages:

as areas embedded within economic life

These centres, embedded within poles of development, promote product and technology innovation and the training of human resources, thereby contributing to regional development;

as centres of training and technological dissemination

The skills centres offer state-of-the-art training programmes on a self-service or *à la carte* basis, combined with information, familiarisation with the use of the technologies and guidance.

as multi-user resource centres

The skills centres cater for various target groups: company personnel, job seekers, workers, trainers, teachers and students.

In the form of high-performance technical platforms, fitted out with modern equipment made available to the training agencies of the firms, the centres combine training activities matching the needs of the job market, continuing training, technological dissemination and business consultancy;

as a private-public partnership

The skills centres are implemented in the form of a partnership between the Walloon region, the Community and regional agency for employment and vocational training in Wallonia (FOREM), the social partners of the various occupational sectors, research centres and universities.

These partnerships are jointly funded by the Walloon region, FOREM, sectoral funds administered by the social partners and the European structural funds, ERDF and ESF.

A total of eleven skills centres catering for the development of the relevant sector are now operational in the following areas:

- Hainaut: CEMI (industrial maintenance), Technofutur CEPEGRA (graphics industry, pre-press and press), Technofutur Multimatériaux (multimaterials), Technofutur 3 T.I.C. (information and communication technologies), WAN - Wallonia Aerotraining Network (aeronautics), Hainaut Logistique (transports, logistics and vehicle maintenance);
- Province of Luxembourg: Wallonie Bois (timber);
- Province of Liège: Liège Logistique (transport and logistics), Technifutur Productique (manufacturing technology and electrical

engineering), Technifutur Assemblage (assembly methods), Technifutur N.T.I.C. (new information and communication technologies).

In terms of quality, the activities of a number of the centres have been ISO 9001-certified since 1997. The success of these centres is essentially due to their leading-edge technology equipment, flexibility and the diversity of their training provision.

The trainers follow a global approach:

- upstream: they observe trends in training requirements and awareness-raising by organising seminars and visits to the centres;

- downstream: they offer supplementary services to the training programmes in order to assist interested people to manage their skills, and to the training modules in the form of distance learning.

The public-private partnership character of the skills centres should promote and accelerate the establishment of these training programmes, always designed to match in-company reality. On 31 August 2000, the Walloon government decided to network and label the 11 skills centres according to precise specifications as a guarantee of recognised quality; both these tasks have been assigned to FOREM. The networking of the centres is to en-

sure the information flow beyond regional and federal borders. The Walloon government has also defined the arrangements according to which the centres will be able to collaborate with the education system. This policy is intended as an emblematic expression of the will to make the best possible use of existing training tools within the region.

Further information:
On the FOREM employment and training portal:
<http://www.hotjob.be/francais/accueil.htm>
Extensive information on the "where, when and how" of training can be found under: "Trouver une formation":
http://www.hotjob.be/francais/Personnes/se_former/principathe.htm and in particular the list of skills centres under:
http://www.hotjob.be/francais/Personnes/se_former/centre/principathe.htm
Source: FOREM CIDOC

Italy

Guiding young people in the world of work: a vocational guidance month

The national "Orientagiovani" day took place on 15 November 2000. It was organised by the *Confindustria* to help young people to know about the needs of enterprises and to address their vocational choices

An effective guidance service can be a useful tool in the fight against unemployment. The *Confindustria* (Italian Employers' Confederation) therefore dedicated the month of November to the theme of vocational guidance. There were numerous initiatives in many Italian cities to help guide young people in their choices and in the transition period from school to work. On 15 November 2000, the 7th National "Orientagiovani" Day, organised by the *Confindustria* and Sicily Manufacturers' Federation, was held.

Its main objective was to create closer links between the world of work and the educational system, by optimising the role of the industrial associations as partners in the educational systems. Therefore, at the same time as the meeting in Palermo, there were also initiatives in schools and industries in 50 other cities. In Milan, there was a series of meetings with young people interested in learning more about graphics, chemistry and paper; in Varese, a new web portal dedicated to school and training was

presented (www.scuolava.it), while in other cities there were presentations of "Made in Italy. Scuola, impresa, professionalità"* , a summary of the results of a research study conducted jointly by the Ministry of Education and the *Confindustria*. The volume, which describes technical and vocational schools connected with 15 major Italian enterprises, aims to show the need for a closer co-operation between the education/training

system and the economic system. In Rome, a thousand young people met young entrepreneurs. At this event, young people were able to insert data concerning their CV and expectations in terminals connected on-line, thus forming a database available to schools and enterprises which for the latter could represent a significant tool to fill their personnel requirements, while young people obtain yet another opportunity to find a job.

* Made in Italy. Scuola, impresa, professionalità. Grässina, Le Monnier 2001, 286 p. + 15 cards + 1 CD-ROM, Lit 32 000 (EUR 16.52). Casa editrice Le Monnier, Via Meucci 2, I-50015 Grässina (Firenze) Tel. (39-055) 64910 - Fax (39-055) 643983 Contact: Ms Casadei, tel. (39-055) 6491255

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Web site: <http://www.confindustria.it>
Source: ISFOL

Germany

'Europa' careers guidance hotline

A Federal Employment Agency service

The Federal Employment Agency has transferred its European-wide careers guidance service to a total of 24 job centres, each offering specialised counselling for one or two EU, EEA or candidate States.

These European careers guidance centres provide information on education, training, study, working and living conditions in the relevant partner country, and offer an

extensive collection of books and brochures for consultation purposes.

The Federal Employment Agency operates the 'Europa hotline - Learning - Studying - Working in Europe' for European careers guidance and the European Employment Services (Eures). The hotline number is (49-180) 522 20 23 (Monday - Friday 9am-8pm).

Source: Federal Employment Agency/Cedefop/SK

The editorial team of Cedefop Info constantly receive numerous press releases, reports and contributions from vocational training experts and specialised agencies of all kinds with a view to their publication. We are delighted with this response and the great interest shown in Cedefop INFO. However, owing to the limited scope of the paper-based version of Cedefop Info, we have no alternative but to make a selection and are therefore unable to publish all the contributions. Texts and information which do not appear in the printed issue are therefore made available to our readers via the Internet.

Belgium

The workplace is the ideal place of learning

The report on lifelong learning submitted by researchers from Leuven and Gent to the Flemish government in September 2000 identifies the workplace as one of the most appropriate places of learning and advocates a global policy involving all the ministries and the social partners.

Spain

Experimental training and employment programmes to identify new insertion pathways for the unemployed

Current budgetary legislation at national level stipulates that the National Institute for Employment, INEM, is directly responsible for the management of 5% of its budgetary allocation to fund the start-up of experimental training and employment programmes. The purpose of these programmes is to identify new insertion pathways for the unemployed, evaluate their impact and provide for their nation-wide implementation.

Germany

BIBB announces competition for the award of the continuing training innovation prize (WIP) 2001

Competition in the field of the early recognition of skills developments

The Federal Institute for Vocational Training (BIBB), which regards innovative continuing training concepts as important indicators for the state-of-the-art design of initial and continuing vocational training, is to award the second continuing training innovation prize (WIP) this year in the framework of its activities in the field of the early recognition of skills developments.

Germany

Public sector-sponsored continuing vocational training under scrutiny

BIBB publication traces the development of quality assurance (QA) and provides material for the current debate

Public sector-sponsored continuing vocational training only pays off - in terms of better career opportunities, a larger pool of skilled workers and enhanced mobility - if the quality is right. This is why quality control and assurance processes and instruments are necessary. New forms of continuing vocational training - and therefore obviously also new forms of quality assurance - must be taken into consideration in this context.

Netherlands

New profile for advisory body

The work of the Education Council, the Dutch government's main advisory body on education policy, is to be reorganised. The Council will provide more advice in the early stages of policy development and will focus more on the relationship between the demand for education and what is available at existing educational institutions. The new chairman, the educationalist Prof. A.M.L. van Wieringen, will take up his position on 1 January 2001.

Netherlands

New arts education programmes

As of the 2002-2003 academic year, five new tertiary-level arts programmes will be introduced in the Netherlands: Choreography, Typography, Typography & Media, Fashion, and Theatre Design. Consideration is also being given to setting up a new programme in Media Design & Communication.

Germany

New brochure helps IT pioneers to get going

Handouts provide information on examination requirements and assessment criteria

Firms, trainers and examiners alike are breaking new ground in the new occupations of IT systems electronic, IT specialist, IT-systems salesperson and information salesperson.

Portugal

Portugal to have an on-line university

Ministry of Science and Technology adopts new form of teaching

The Ministry of Science and Technology has announced plans to create a Portuguese On-line University.

The project, which is to be realised by the end of 2001, will require a restructuring of the system for recruitment of teaching staff and students by the universities.

Italy

On-line degree for foreigners in Italian language and culture

November 2001 will see the launch of the first on-line degree in Italian language and culture for foreigners not residing in Italy. The project, which is being promoted by the consortium *ICON* (Italian Culture On the Net) grouping approximately 20 Italian universities, aims at spreading Italian language and culture throughout the world by setting up a virtual university for the humanities accessible via the Internet at the site www.italicon.it.



The Agora corner

Since the detailed presentation of the Agora Thessaloniki project featured in Cedefop Info no. 2/2000, two further Agoras were held on 26-27 June and 19-20 October 2000. Their results are presented below.

Agora IX:

Alternative education and training practices, 26-27 June 2000

The theoretical basis for this Agora was provided by a team from the Autonomous University of Barcelona, whose work was published in Céreq's quarterly journal "Formation-Emploi":

Casal Joaquim, Garcia Maribel, Planas Jordi, "Reforms in training systems to combat school and social failure in Europe; the paradox of success", *Formation-emploi*, n°62, April-June 1998 (available in English, French and Spanish).

This team examined the role and the consequences of measures implemented by European countries to alleviate the effects of school failure. These programmes, most of which have undoubtedly been successful, nevertheless have had two negative secondary effects for the target group which they are actually supposed to promote:

- their existence serves as a pretext for compulsory schooling to no longer make the effort necessary for the rehabilitation of those experiencing school failure;
- young people engaging in these programmes are to a certain extent stigmatised by both potential employers and continuing training agencies.

The Catalan team therefore concludes that it is essential to make the battle to prevent failure within the compulsory (first chance) education system an absolute priority.

This point was elaborated and argued in a most convincing manner by another educational science researcher, Jean-Yves Rochex, Professor, University Paris-VIII. In his presentation, he clearly demonstrated that as well as providing an opportunity to acquire knowledge, compulsory schooling has the essential function of constructing a culture common to all citizens. The principal element of this common culture is the attitude towards knowledge itself: an open and critical stance which promotes learning, the capacity to step back from reality, to see the objects of study in relative terms and therefore to reflect on learning itself - in a nutshell, learning to learn.

This Agora also received reports on a wealth of related experience:

In integrated training: of the mentally disabled in Flanders, migrant children in Denmark, of the exceptionally gifted in the Netherlands, related to the applied leaving certificate in Ireland, etc.

In tailor-made training: including *produktionsskole* in Denmark,

second chance schools in the UK and modular adult training programmes in Berlin.

The great variety of examples presented and discussed in the course of the usual one and a half days of debate at the Agora highlighted two points:

a) The position expressed by the educational scientists in the course of this Agora is undoubtedly justified: young people should as far as possible be integrated into mainstream schooling where their differences should be taken fully into account.

This means that traditional schooling will have to adapt, change and make room for differences:

- by taking account of the different paces of learning and maturity of each individual pupil,
 - by providing for common integrated cores alongside slots to cater for the specific needs, different mental and physical conditions and the varying degrees of motivation of students experiencing difficulties.
- Although undoubtedly difficult to organise, such an approach is by no means impossible, as demonstrated by the experience of the Rahlgasse coeducational grammar school, Vienna, presented by Heidi Schrodt;
- b) This long-term effort does not however dispense with the imple-

mentation of a number of immediate actions to rehabilitate those experiencing school failure. If it is possible to implement such short-term actions within the framework of traditional schooling, all the better. However, should this prove impossible, there is no reason not to deal with the problem in other ways. Each and every individual should receive a maximum of respect for his or her personality, aspirations and specificities. The most successful examples of alternative education and training practices are always those that respect the autonomy of the individual and consciously build up the self-esteem of students and trainees. Respect for and interest in the students and trainees are one of the essential conditions for the success of any education/training action, as so eloquently demonstrated by the example of the Dioguardi firm in Italy. The firm adopted a school in difficulty in a disadvantaged neighbourhood of Bari, Apulia, and with reasonably modest resources, succeeded in transforming it from a "dead-end school" to a model of good practice. They achieved this not by changing the student population, which was experiencing difficulties, but by creating a spirit of motivation within the school and by tapping into a local network of firms and administrative services which pooled

their efforts to make the project a success.

Agora IX thus drew *two major conclusions*:

1. From the point of view of lifelong learning, the *distinction* between traditional (first chance) and alternative (second chance) schooling is certainly no longer pertinent. In particular, attitudes towards the act of learning and education in general must be changed: it is a question of working towards the establishment of a common culture, and adopting a positive approach towards lifelong learning.
2. Co-operation between the various partners, enterprises, municipalities, schools, initial and continuing vocational training establishments, is a sine qua non for the success of this long-term project which is designed to give every individual an opportunity to develop all his/her potential and faculties, regardless of their point of departure.

AGORA

THESSALONIKI

Word, Thought, Power, Deed

Agora X:

Lifelong social and vocational guidance, 19-20 October 2000

Two documents provided the theoretical point of departure for Agora X:

- the special issue on guidance *Le conseil en orientation*, March 2000/vol. 29/n°1, of the journal *L'orientation scolaire et professionnelle*, published by the French Institute of Work and Vocational Guidance (INETOP);
- the joint publication of the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and working conditions and Cedefop entitled *Lifelong vocational guidance*, by Sylvie Chioussé and Patrick Werquin, published in the Cedefop *Panorama* series (can be downloaded in English and German from the Cedefop ETV).

The Agora demonstrated that in a world characterised by constant change in the fields of technology and labour organisation, it is an illusion to seek a strict match between training and employment. As a consequence, the approach to guidance and the profession of infor-

mation and guidance counsellor have completely changed.

The traditional model - to find for each citizen the career best matching his/her capacities and preferences - is gradually giving way to a model of guidance which seeks to help individuals best adapt to the existing structures in the real world. People must now be able to seize any interesting job opportunity in a fluctuating and unforeseeable labour market (Jean-François Germe, director, Centre d'Études de l'Emploi).

As demonstrated by a number of speakers (Jean Guichard, director, INETOP, Jacques Limoges, Sherbrooke University, Canada, Finn Thorbjørn Hansen, Danish University of Education), this means that the client seeking advice can involve his/her entire personality into the counselling and guidance process.

In a society affirming the absolute need for lifelong learning, guidance can no longer be limited to a specific point in life corresponding to the transition from school to work. There

are in fact multiple points of transition and individuals must learn to obtain guidance on an ongoing basis. This is changing the nature of guidance: it has become a fully-fledged educational act in which the vocational guidance counsellor has become both a trainer and a tutor, as was demonstrated by a number of case studies presented to the Agora: guidance counselling for unemployed persons at risk of social exclusion (Centro Informazione Disoccupati per persone a rischio di esclusione sociale) in Italy, "job seeker mentor" (Berufsfindungsbegleiter) in Austria, integrated training project for young people with learning difficulties aiming at improving their lifelong vocational guidance in Bremen, Germany and the integration of teachers in a guidance initiative for initial vocational training at the higher vocational school of Frederiksberg, Denmark.

All the participants seemed to be in favour of a holistic approach to guidance, which takes account of both the occupational future and the personal life plan of the individual.

This is also the direction of the European Commission's efforts to reach a quality standard in the field of guidance.

Guidance has therefore become an increasingly complex and long-term activity. It now implies the active participation of the client, who must not only be able to evaluate his or her skills, if necessary using existing tools (skills evaluation centres in France), but also (and increasingly) demand from the counsellor analytical and educational skills which are far removed from the traditional role of careers information provider. The information side is in fact losing ground. In view of the development of modern communication and information tools, in particular the Internet, the information side of the work can be left to the client. This leaves more time and scope for the other tasks of the counsellor: training, tutoring, guidance.

A good guidance counsellor therefore requires fewer technical skills and more social skills, such as the ability to ask the right questions at

the right time and to propose the best strategy in individual (life) and collective (career) terms. This can be termed as a Socratic approach, as pointed out by Finn Thorbjørn Hansen of the Danish University of education.

More information on Agora Thessaloniki: Éric Fries Guggenheim, Agora Thessaloniki project coordinator
 e-mail: efg@cedefop.eu.int
 Tel. (30-31) 490 189
 A number of websites are referenced in the above article:
 Cedefop Info n° 2/000:
 In English: <http://www.trainingvillage.gr/download/Cinfo/Cinfo22000/Ind-en.html>
 Céreq's website: <http://www.cereq.fr/>
 Formation Emploi n° 62, presentation: <http://www.cereq.fr/cereq/fe62.pdf>
 Coéducation raisonnée (Conscious co-education): <http://www.grg6.asn-wien.ac.at/Maebub.htm>

INETOP website: <http://web2.cnam.fr/inetop/>
Le conseil en orientation, March 2000/vol. 29/n°1, special issue on guidance of the journal *L'orientation scolaire et professionnelle*: <http://web2.cnam.fr/inetop/osp1de2000.html>
Lifelong vocational guidance:
 English: <http://www.trainingvillage.gr/etv/publication/download/panorama/5079-en2.pdf>

Source: Cedefop/EFG

Selected bibliography

Some recent publications in the field of VET, especially at European level, have been selected below by Cedefop's Library and Documentation Service, Anne Waniart, E-mail: anw@cedefop.eu.int

Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the regions towards a community framework strategy on gender equality (2001-2005): proposal for a council decision on the Programme relating to the Community framework strategy on gender equality (2001-2005) / (presented by the Commission).

European Commission
Luxembourg: EUR-OP, 2000, 53 p.
(Documents COM, (2000) 335 final)
ISSN 0254-1475
Availability: EUR-OP, 2 rue Mercier, L-2985 Luxembourg, or from its national sales offices,
Tel.: (352-29) 2942118,
Fax: (352-29) 2942709,
E-mail: info.info@opoce.cec.be,
URL: <http://www.eur-op.eu.int/>

Council recommendation of 19 January 2001 on the implementation of Member State's employment policies (2001/64/EC)

Council of the European Union
Luxembourg: EUR-OP, 2001
In: Official Journal of the European Communities, L 22, p. 27
ISSN 0254-1475
Availability: EUR-OP, 2 rue Mercier, L-2985 Luxembourg, or from its national sales offices,
Tel.: (352-29) 2942118,
Fax: (352-29) 2942709,
E-mail: info.info@opoce.cec.be,
URL: <http://www.eur-op.eu.int/>

EU social statistics move into high gear.

Statistical Office of the European Communities - EUROSTAT
Luxembourg: EUR-OP, 2001
In: Sigma: the bulletin of European statistics, (2000) 3
Availability: EUROSTAT, Press and Communication Team, L-2920 Luxembourg,
E-mail: eurostat-pressoffice@cec.eu.int,
URL: <http://europa.eu.int/comm/eurostat/>

The globalisation of education and training: recommendations for a coherent response of the European Union / study commissioned by the Directorate-General for Education and Culture, European Commission
Reichert, Sybille; Wächter, Bernd
European Commission, Directorate General for Education and Culture; Academic Cooperation Association - ACA
Luxembourg: EUR-OP, 2000, 138 p.
URL: <http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/global.pdf>

Proposal for a Council decision on guidelines for Member States' employment policies for the year 2001

European Commission
Luxembourg: EUR-OP, 2000, 19 p.
(Documents COM, (2000) 548 final)
ISSN 0254-1475
Availability: EUR-OP, 2 rue Mercier, L-2985 Luxembourg, or from its national sales offices,
Tel.: (352-29) 2942118,
Fax: (352-29) 2942709,
E-mail: info.info@opoce.cec.be,
URL: <http://www.eur-op.eu.int/>

Sector analysis in employment and training: seminar

European Training Foundation - ETF; World Bank
Turin: ETF, 2001, various pagination
Availability: ETF, Villa Gualino - Viale Settimio Severo, 65, I-10133 Torino,
Tel.: (39-011) 6302222,
Fax: (39-011) 6302200,
E-mail: info@etf.eu.int,
URL: <http://www.etf.eu.int/>

20 years promoting better understanding of education systems.

Information Network on Education in Europe - EURYDICE; Brussels: Eurydice, 2001, 102 p.
ISBN 2-87116-309-X
Availability: EURYDICE European Unit, Rue d'Arlon 15, B-1040 Brussels,
Tel.: (32-2) 2383011,
Fax: (32-2) 2306562,
E-mail: eurydice.uee@euronet.be,
URL: <http://www.eurydice.org/>
URL: <http://www.eurydice.org/Documents/20ans/en/FrameSet20.htm>

Unity, solidarity, diversity for Europe, its people and its territory: second report on economic and social cohesion / adopted by the European Commission on 31 January 2001

European Commission, Directorate General for Regional Development
Brussels: DG Regional Policy, 2001, various pagination
URL: http://www.inforegin.cec.eu.int/wbdoc/docoffic/official/report2/contentpdf_en.htm

The documents mentioned above may be obtained from EU national sales offices - <http://eur-op.eu.int/en/general/s-ad.htm> - or the Office for Official Publications of the European Communities (EUR-OP): 2, rue Mercier, L-2985 Luxembourg,
info.info@opoce.cec.be
Tel. 352+2929-1
Fax 352+49 57 19



Moderne Lernformen und Lerntechniken in der Erwachsenenbildung: Formen selbstgesteuerten Lernens / Dieter Brinkmann. [Modern forms of learning and learning techniques in adult training: forms of self-directed learning]

Institut für Freizeitforschung und Kulturarbeit - IFKA; Bielefeld: IFKA, 2000, 194 p.
(Graue Reihe - Neue Folge, 17)
ISBN 3-926499-41-9
Dissertation, Universität Bielefeld, 2000
Availability: IFKA, Postfach 101522, D-33515 Bielefeld,
E-mail: ifka@uni-bielefeld.de

The public employment service in a changing labour market / Phan Thuy, Ellen Hansen and David Price.

Thuy, Phan; Hansen, Ellen; Price, David
International Labour Office - ILO
Geneva: ILO, 2001, 258 p.
ISBN 92-2-111388-4

World employment report 2001: life at work in the information economy.

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation - UNESCO
Paris: UNESCO, 2001, 300 p.
ISBN 92-3-103729-3
URL: <http://www.unesco.org/education/information/wer/index.htm>

Youth unemployment and employment policy: a global perspective / Niall O'Higgins.

International Labour Office - ILO
Geneva: ILO, 2001, 212 p.
ISBN 92-2-111348-5

Cedefop publications



Erhvervsuddannelses-systemet i Danmark

Monograph 7006
Language: DA
Price: EUR 18.50
Cat. No: HX-21-99-795-DA-C

May be obtained from the EU sales offices



Das Berufsbildungssystem in Italien

Monograph 7010
Languages: DE, IT
Price: EUR 18.50
Cat. No: HX-22-99-822-DE-C

May be obtained from the EU sales offices



Vocational education and training in Iceland

Monograph 7013
Language: EN
Price: EUR 18.50
Cat. No: HX-09-97-850-EN-C

May be obtained from the EU sales offices



TTnet no 1

Reference document 3009
Languages: EL, EN, FR
Price: EUR 8.50
Cat. No: TI-29-00-513-GR-C

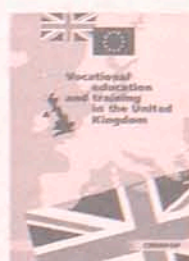
May be obtained from the EU sales offices



Changing occupational profiles in the hotel industry Case studies in France, Italy and Spain Synthesis report

Reference document 3012
Languages: EN, EL, IT
Price: EUR 8.50
Cat. No: TI-32-00-047-EN-C

May be obtained from the EU sales offices



Vocational education and training in the United Kingdom

Monograph 7005
Language: EN, FR
Price: EUR 18,50
Cat. No: HX-12-98-271-EN-C

May be obtained from the EU sales offices

Training in Europe. Second report on vocational training research in Europe 2000. Background report

Reference document 3008
Language: EN
Price: EUR 21 for volumes 1+2+3
Cat. No: TI-44-00-000-EN-C package

TI-44-00-001-EN-C Vol. 1
TI-44-00-002-EN-C Vol. 2
TI-44-00-003-EN-C Vol. 3

May be obtained from the EU sales offices



La financiación de la formación profesional en España Retrato descriptivo de la financiación

Cedefop panorama 5102
Languages: EN, ES
Cat. No: TI-27-00-960-ES-C

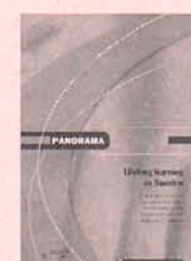
Free of charge on request from Cedefop



The financing of vocational education and training in Italy. Financing portrait

Cedefop panorama 5108
Languages: EN, IT
Cat. No: TI-32-00-952-EN-C

Free of charge on request from Cedefop



The extent to which vocational education and training policy is nurturing lifelong learning in Sweden

Cedefop panorama 5112
Language: EN

Cat. No: TI-35-01-320-EN-C

Free of charge on request from Cedefop