

# Disparities in access to continuing vocational training in enterprises in Europe

*Katja Nestler and Emmanuel Kailis*

Statistics  
in focus

POPULATION AND  
SOCIAL CONDITIONS

THEME 3 – 22/2002

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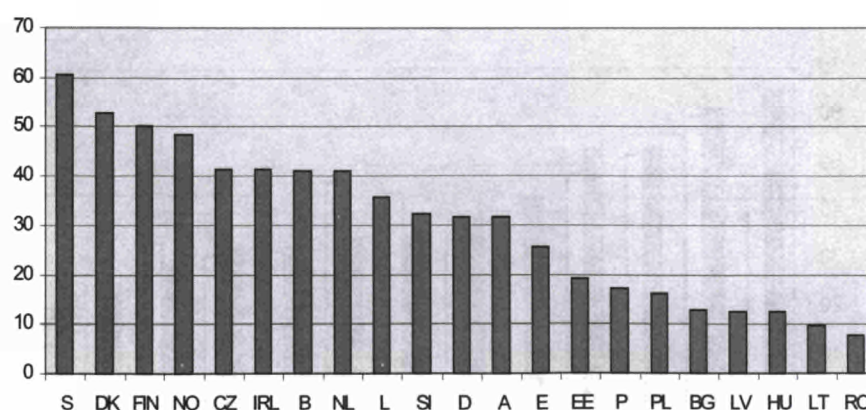


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The European Commission launched a new survey of continuing vocational training following on from the first survey, conducted in 1994, of the then twelve Member States of the European Union. The second survey (CVTS2) was conducted in 2000/2001 in all the Member States, Norway and nine candidate countries. This second survey of continuing vocational training was two-thirds financed by the European Commission.

Analysis of inequalities or disparities in access to continuing training is an important field of inquiry in any evaluation of vocational training systems that seeks to assess their selectiveness and effectiveness in supplementing the training offered, for example to employees with the lowest levels of initial educational attainment. As in any analysis of forms of inequality involving the relationship between training and employment, those under investigation here may be caused by at least two factors. The first is the characteristics of enterprises, the second those of individuals, or even both at the same time. The CVTS2 data are taken from enterprises; consequently, they do not enable us to take account of all the individual heterogeneity, which necessarily plays a part in explaining the variance in disparities that will be observed. Gender is one of the individual factors taken into consideration for analysis here.

Figure 1: Percentage of employees (all enterprises) participating in CVT courses - 1999 -



Access to continuing training is analysed in terms of participation rates in continuing vocational training courses (CVT courses) in accordance with three criteria in each country: gender, size of enterprise and sector of economic activity.

For Poland the results apply to the Pomorskie region only. For Greece, France, Italy and the United Kingdom the data were not available in time for this publication.

## Very pronounced gap in participation in CVT courses between the Nordic countries and Southern and some Eastern countries

The results (Fig. 1) show that the countries concerned can be broken down into three groups on the basis of their participation rates in continuing training courses.

The first group, in which the participation rate is nearly 50% or above, is made up essentially of the Nordic countries. They are, in order, Sweden, Denmark, Finland and Norway.

The second group, in which the participation rate varies between 30% and somewhat over 40%, is made up of, in order: the Czech Republic, Ireland, Belgium, the Netherlands (the participation rates for these countries are virtually the same), Luxembourg and, finally, Slovenia, Germany and Austria (the participation rates for these last three countries are virtually the same).

The third group, in which participation rates are lower than 30%, is made up of, in order: Spain, Estonia, Portugal, Poland, Bulgaria, Latvia, Hungary, Lithuania and

Romania. Participation rates in the last two countries do not exceed 10%.

These initial findings give rise to a number of observations. There is a very pronounced gap in access to continuing training between the Nordic countries and some Eastern and Southern European countries (Portugal and Spain). The drive to modernise productive systems in some Eastern European countries has put them in an intermediate situation alongside countries well known for the scale of their training efforts. One obvious example is the Czech Republic, where the participation rate is close to that in the Netherlands; another is Slovenia, where the participation rate is virtually identical to that in Germany or Austria.

In Romania, the participation rate is only 8%. Portugal's participation rate is lower than those of some Eastern European countries.

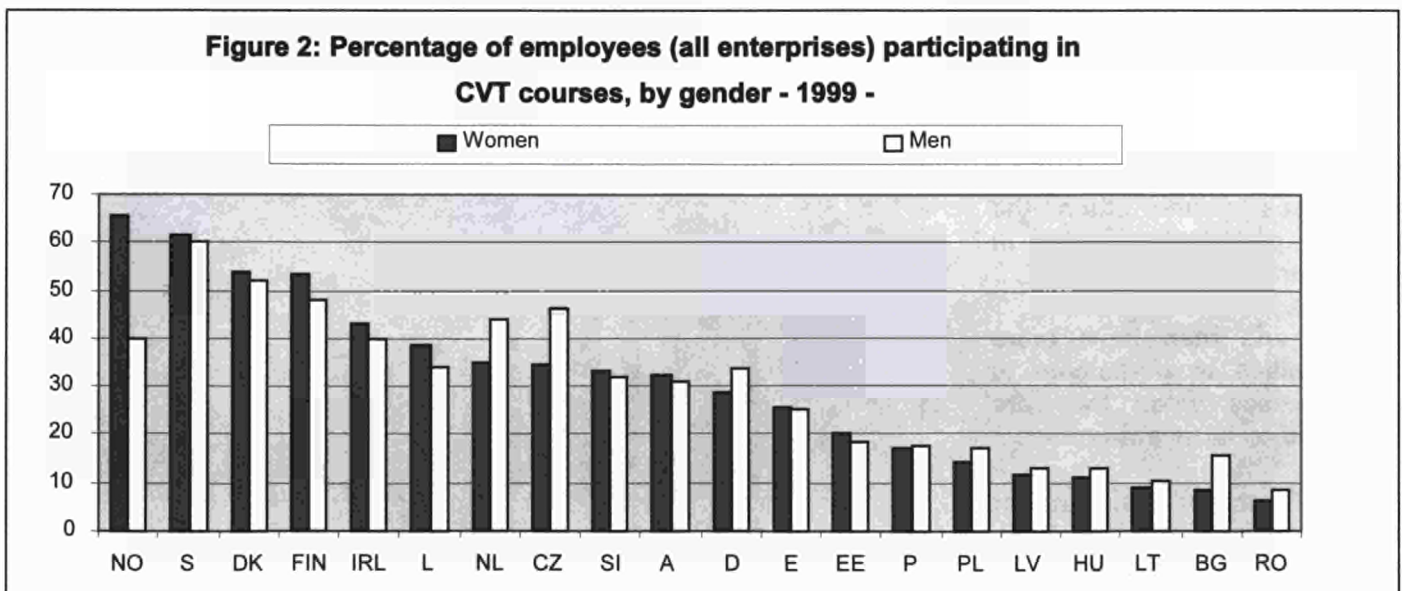
## Only slight disparities in participation rates by gender in most of the countries

Initial examination of the results (Fig. 2; B: no gender data available) shows that the participation rates of women are higher than those of men in those countries where the participation rates are higher, that is the Nordic countries (Norway, Sweden, Denmark and Finland).

Higher participation rates of women become less frequent in those countries where the participation rate in

there are lower participation rates for women.

In those countries with low participation rates, that is countries whose participation rates are lower than 30%, men generally have higher participation rates than women; the exceptions being Spain and Estonia, where the participation rate of women is higher than that of men.



continuing training is in the intermediate range, that is between 30% and about 40%. In the two Eastern European countries whose participation rates lie within this range, in Slovenia, the rate of women is slightly higher than that of men, in the Czech Republic, it is the rate of men that is considerably higher than that of women. Germany and the Netherlands are also countries where

These findings give rise to several observations. It is clear, for example, that differences in participation rates between men and women occur in both Western and Eastern European countries. It should be noted that men have higher participation rates in continuing training than women in most of the Candidate countries. By way of illustration, the case of the Czech Republic can

be compared with that of the Netherlands.

In other respects, the most obvious differences can be explained by higher participation rates of men, as can be observed in the Czech Republic, the Netherlands,

Germany and Bulgaria. Overall, however, gender differences can be said to be very low, with the exception of those countries already mentioned.

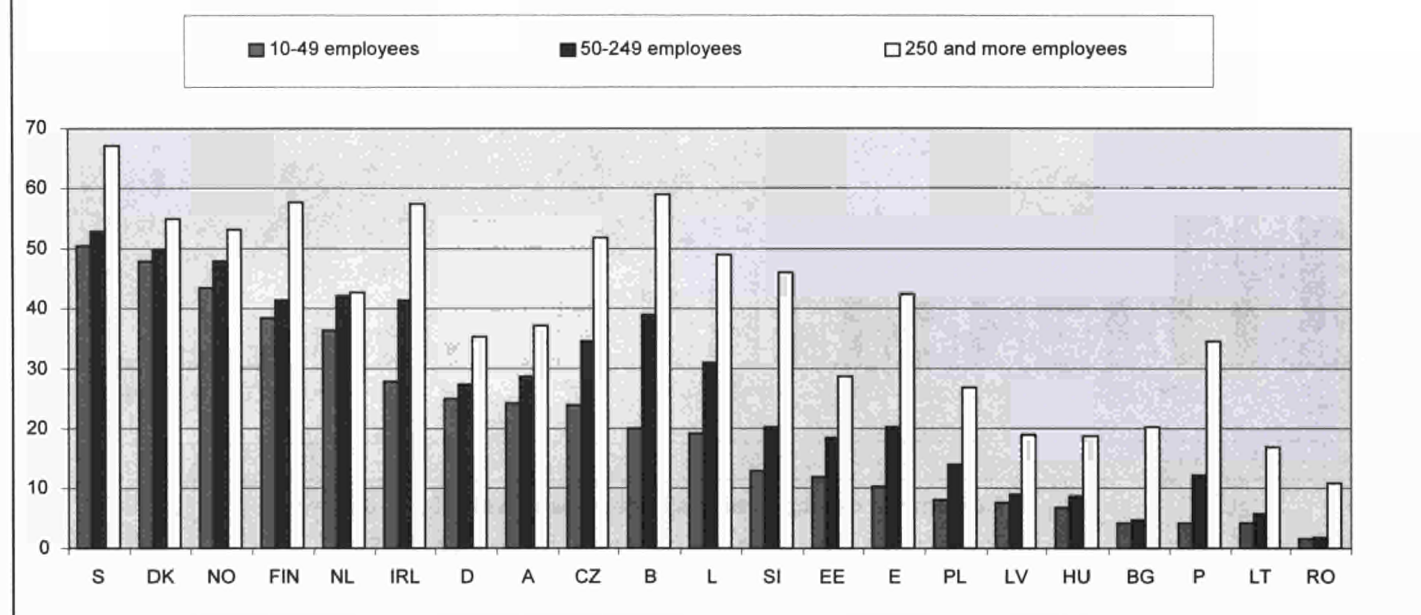
### Participation rates in large enterprises greater than the average participation rates in each country

One of the most striking findings that emerges when participation rates are broken down by size of enterprise (Fig. 3) is that it is larger enterprises employing 250 or more people that make the greatest contribution to the overall training effort. This finding is constant, irrespective of the country and of the level of the overall participation rate.

countries in which small enterprises (10-49 employees) provide the highest levels of access to continuing training; in this case, the lowest rate is in excess of 35% (Finland).

In other respects, those countries in which participation rates are lowest are those in which the rates in small enterprises do not generally exceed 5%; this is the case

**Figure 3: Percentage of employees (all enterprises) participating in CVT courses, by size class - 1999 -**



More precisely, comparison of figure 3 and 1 reveals that participation rates in large enterprises are greater than the average participation rates in each country, that is those calculated without taking the size criterion into account.

Those countries in which the training efforts are the greatest (notably the Nordic countries) are also those

in Bulgaria, Portugal, Lithuania and Romania.

If training efforts are to be revitalised and more workers are to be given access to training opportunities, small enterprises in these countries need to be made aware of or encouraged to adopt continuing training programmes.

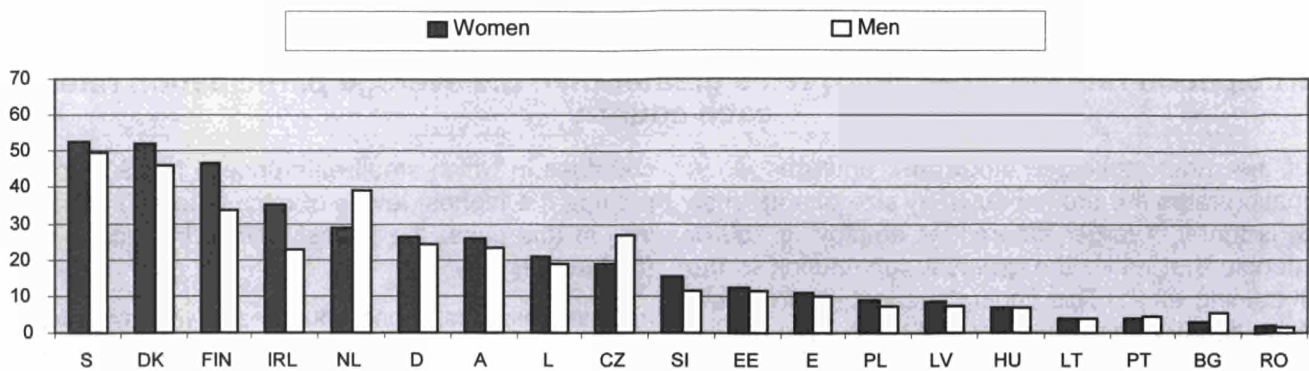
### Women and men have more opportunities to participate in CVT courses when they are employed by large enterprises

In all countries, men and women have more opportunities for continuing training when they are employed by large enterprises. The figures show clearly that the observed differences in participation rates are more sensitive to the size criterion than to the gender criterion. In other words, the share of the differences explained by gender is much smaller than that explained by size of enterprise.

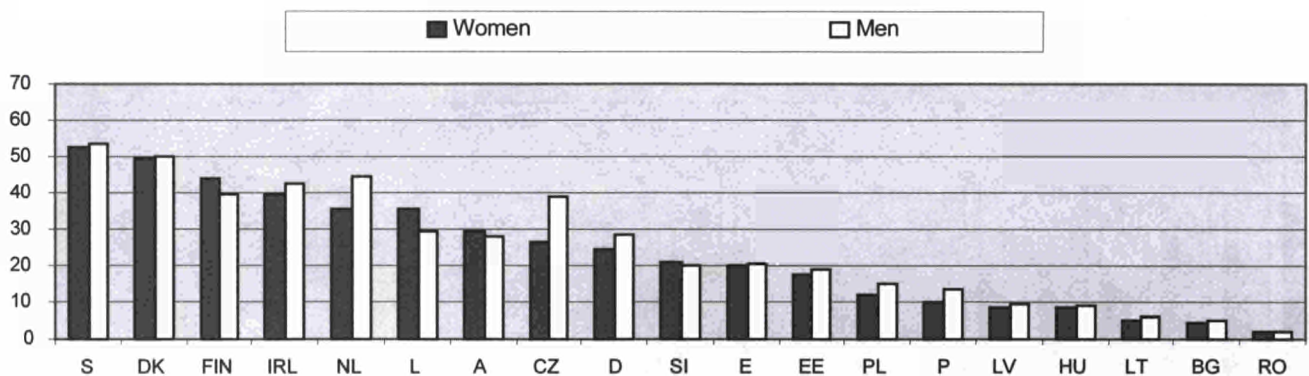
In some countries, however (figures 4, 5 and 6; NO: no

reliable data; B: no gender data available) fairly significant differences due to gender can be observed. Thus in the Netherlands and the Czech Republic, the differences between men and women in participation rates are pronounced whatever the size of enterprise. The difference is smaller in small enterprises in the Czech Republic and virtually the same in enterprises of all sizes in the Netherlands.

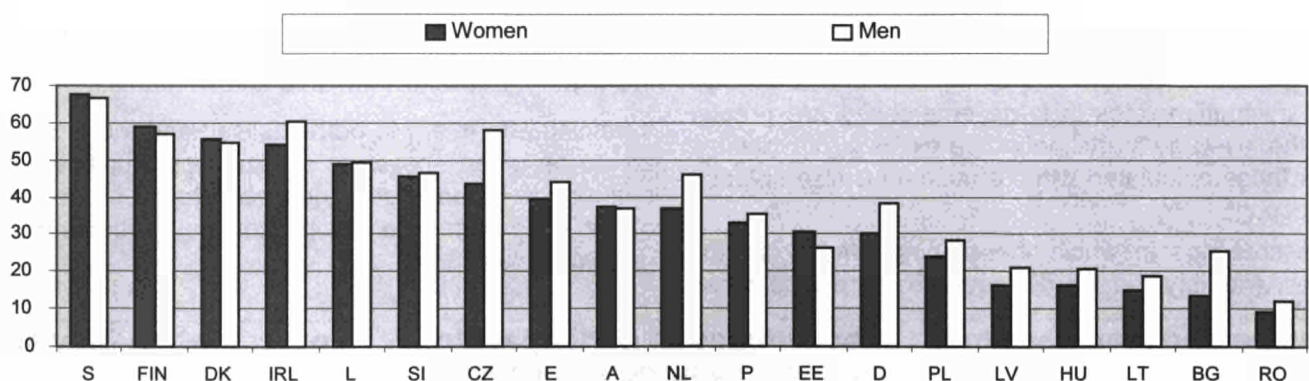
**Figure 4: Percentage of employees (all enterprises with 10-49 employees) participating in CVT courses, by gender -1999-**



**Figure 5: Percentage of employees (all enterprises with 50-249 employees) participating in CVT courses, by gender -1999-**



**Figure 6: Percentage of employees (all enterprises with 250 and more employees) participating in CVT courses, by gender -1999-**



In Bulgaria, it is in large enterprises in particular that men participate in continuing training courses to a significantly greater extent.

Conversely, in Ireland, where training efforts are very significant, participation rates are higher for women in small enterprises. In Finland, as in Denmark and Sweden it is women who generally have the higher partici-

pation rates irrespective of the size of the enterprise in which they are employed.

In sum, in those countries in which the most significant training efforts are made, the position of women as far as participation in continuing training courses is concerned is the same as, and in some cases higher, than that of men.

## Specific sector effect rather than any gender effect explains differences in participation in CVT courses

As far as differences in participation rates are concerned, our remarks go along two different lines. Firstly, is large-scale participation in continuing training always found in the same sectors of the economy irrespective of the country concerned? In other words, are differ-

more homogenous. Finland is a very representative case in this respect. But in all countries, except Luxembourg, it is the financial intermediation sector (NACE J) that has the highest participation rates in training courses.

**Table 1: Percentage of employees (all enterprises) participating in CVT courses, by gender and NACE - 1999**

	NACE D <sup>1</sup>			NACE G <sup>1</sup>			NACE J <sup>1</sup>			NACE K <sup>1</sup>			NACE O <sup>1</sup>			Other <sup>1</sup>		
	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women
<b>B</b>	42	:	:	33	:	:	66	:	:	53	:	:	39	:	:	29	:	:
<b>DK</b>	47	48	46	56	57	56	64	63	65	58	59	56	59	59	59	48	45	53
<b>D</b>	30	31	26	27	30	24	42	44	39	34	43	23	38	36	41	31	31	30
<b>E</b>	26	27	22	27	26	29	61	62	61	22	25	19	17	15	22	21	19	26
<b>IRL</b>	45	45	44	30	29	31	52	54	49	45	48	43	41	24	50	43	37	50
<b>L</b>	37	39	25	38	37	39	51	51	50	57	60	51	18	26	13	17	16	21
<b>NL</b>	40	41	34	37	42	31	65	64	66	36	41	29	39	40	37	46	48	38
<b>A</b>	28	29	23	35	37	33	54	49	61	27	26	29	20	17	24	30	29	33
<b>P</b>	14	16	12	23	20	27	47	47	47	12	15	10	14	15	12	16	14	21
<b>FIN</b>	48	49	45	48	45	50	55	60	53	53	51	55	49	45	52	54	47	67
<b>S</b>	61	62	61	55	54	57	83	78	87	65	67	63	56	55	57	56	55	59
<b>NO</b>	40	:u	:u	43	:u	:u	97	:u	:u	60	:u	:u	70	:u	:u	45	:u	:u
<b>BG</b>	10	15	6	7	7	6	33	20	41	5	6	5	7	5	9	18	21	12
<b>CZ</b>	42	49	32	26	32	21	70	76	67	36	40	30	24	27	21	48	48	46
<b>EE</b>	14	16	12	21	21	21	65	62	67	12	12	13	6	6	6	23	20	28
<b>HU</b>	11	12	9	8	9	7	45	47	44	12	9	15	7	7	8	17	17	16
<b>LV</b>	10	10	10	8	10	7	40	41	40	11	11	12	9	10	9	16	16	15
<b>LT</b>	9	11	7	5	5	5	32	33	31	11	10	12	5	5	5	12	12	14
<b>PL</b>	17	18	15	11	12	10	37	28	39	21	27	14	6	3	10	16	16	15
<b>RO</b>	8	9	6	2	1	2	12	14	12	6	7	4	10	3	15	9	9	9
<b>SI</b>	37	37	36	22	21	24	56	59	55	27	25	29	12	6	19	28	28	25

ences in participation in continuing training due more to a sector effect than to a country effect? Secondly, does participation vary by gender from sector to sector? Can it be concluded, following the examples of the observations made in respect of differences by size and gender, that the gender effect is counterbalanced by the sector effect?

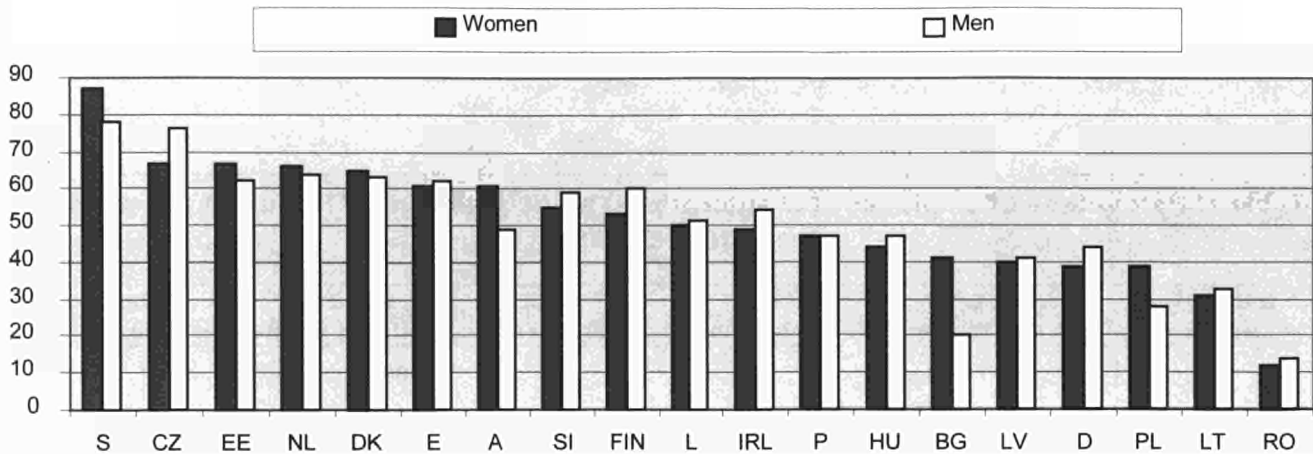
In those countries with the lowest participation rates, the training effort is differentiated by sector (Table 1). In those with high participation rates in continuing training courses, on the other hand, the distribution by sector is

Thus it is difficult in any analysis to separate out access to continuing training on the basis of the places within the productive system where it takes place. Differences are more pronounced in countries where the participation in training is low on average. In general terms, however, individuals have greater access to training in the transport, communications and financial intermediation sectors.

In the financial intermediation sector (NACE J), where participation in training is relatively high irrespective of

<sup>1</sup> See methodological notes

**Figure 7: Percentage of employees in the financial intermediation sector (all enterprises) participating in CVT courses, by gender - 1999 -**



country, there is no gender effect (Fig. 7; NO: no reliable data; B: no gender data available): depending on the country, the percentage of women participating in CVT courses is higher than that of men (Bulgaria, Austria, Poland, Sweden) or the situations of men and women are virtually identical (except in the Czech Republic).

For the industrial sectors as a whole, no gender gap can be identified.

Consequently, it is the specific effect of the sector of economic activity in question, rather than any gender effect that seems to explain the differences in participation in continuing training courses.

### Statistics in focus recently published related to the continuing vocational training in enterprises (CVTS2)

- First survey on continuing vocational training in enterprises in candidate countries (-CVTS2-) (Theme 3 - 2/2002)
- Continuing vocational training in enterprises in the European Union and Norway (CVTS2) (Theme 3 - 3/2002)
- Costs and funding of continuing vocational training in enterprises in Europe (Theme 3 - 8/2002)
- Providers and fields of continuing vocational training in enterprises in Europe (Theme 3 - 10/2002)

## ➤ ESSENTIAL INFORMATION – METHODOLOGICAL NOTES

The survey covered enterprises with 10 or more employees in Sections C-K and O of the statistical classification of economic activities in the European Community (NACE Rev.1) in the reference year 1999.

**Abbreviations:** **B** – Belgium, **DK** – Denmark, **D** – Germany, **E** – Spain, **IRL** – Ireland, **L** – Luxembourg, **NL** – Netherlands, **A** – Austria, **P** – Portugal, **FIN** – Finland, **S** – Sweden; **NO** – Norway; **BG** – Bulgaria; **CZ** – Czech Republic; **EE** – Estonia; **HU** – Hungary; **LV** – Latvia; **LT** – Lithuania; **PL** – Poland; **RO** – Romania; **SI** – Slovenia

: = Data not available.

:u = Data not reliable.

**In-service continuing vocational training:** training measures or activities financed wholly or partly by enterprises for employees with employment contracts. For the purposes of this survey, "employees" means the total number of persons employed, excluding apprentices and trainees.

**Continuing vocational training courses:** events designed solely for the purpose of providing continuing vocational training that take place away from the place of work, e.g. in a classroom or training centre, at which a group of people receive instruction from teachers/tutors/lecturers for a period of time specified in advance by those organising the course.

**Internally managed courses:** courses designed and managed by the enterprise itself, even if held at a location away from the enterprise.

**Externally managed courses:** courses designed and managed by an organisation that is not part of the enterprise, even if they are held in the enterprise.

**Other forms of in-service continuing vocational training:** planned periods of training, instruction or practical experience, using the normal tools of work, either at the immediate place of work or in the work situation, planned learning through job rotation, exchanges or secondments, participation in learning or quality-improvement groups, self-learning, information events: conferences, workshops, lectures and seminars.

**Course participants:** a course participant is a person who took part in one or more CVT courses at some time during 1999. Each person was counted once only, irrespective of the number of times he or she participated on a CVT course.

**Hours spent on CVT courses:** the total number of hours of CVT relates to the total paid working time that all participants spent in CVT courses during 1999.

**NACE Rev. 1:** Council Regulation (EEC) No 3037/90 of 9 October 1990 on the statistical classification of economic activities in the European Community. Commission Regulation (EEC) No 761/93 of 24 March 1993 amending Council Regulation (EEC) No 3037/90 on the statistical classification of economic activities in the European Community.

**NACE D** Manufacturing

**NACE G** Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles, motorcycles and personal and household goods

**NACE J** Financial intermediation

**NACE K** Real estate, renting and business activities

**NACE O** Other community, social and personal service activities

**Other  
(C, E, F, H, I)** Mining and quarrying; Electricity, gas, water; Construction; Hotels and restaurants; Transport, communication

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### For information on methodology

**Katja Nestler**, Eurostat/E3, Tel. (352) 4301 32318, Fax (352) 4301 35399, e-mail [katja.nestler@cec.eu.int](mailto:katja.nestler@cec.eu.int),

**Emmanuel Kaiilis**, Eurostat/E3, Tel. (352) 4301 35370, Fax (352) 4301 35399, e-mail [emmanuel.kaiilis@cec.eu.int](mailto:emmanuel.kaiilis@cec.eu.int) - Informatics support: **Lydie Hamel**

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Surname: \_\_\_\_\_ Forename: \_\_\_\_\_

Company: \_\_\_\_\_ Department: \_\_\_\_\_

Function: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Post code: \_\_\_\_\_ Town: \_\_\_\_\_

Country: \_\_\_\_\_

Tel.: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

### Payment on receipt of invoice, preferably by:

Bank transfer

Visa  Eurocard

Card No: \_\_\_\_\_ Expires on: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

### Please confirm your intra-Community VAT number:

If no number is entered, VAT will be automatically applied. Subsequent reimbursement will not be possible.