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CVET IN EUROPE

the way ahead

CVET in Europe: the way ahead

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The **European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training** (Cedefop) is the European Union's reference centre for vocational education and training. We provide information on and analyses of vocational education and training systems, policies, research and practice. Cedefop was established in 1975 by Council Regulation (EEC) No 337/75.

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Foreword

Europe 2020 strategy challenges European economies to produce world-class performances in innovation, competitiveness and growth while ensuring at the same time high employment and social inclusion. Addressing these objectives with intensifying globalised competition, persisting economic crisis, booming unemployment and an ageing and shrinking workforce is in it-self a formidable challenge.

Continuing vocational education and training (CVET) has recently emerged in the European policy mindset as a promising tool to meet these challenges. Starting with the 2010 Bruges communiqué, a range of major European Union (EU) policy statutes – including the 2011 *Council resolution on a renewed European agenda for adult learning* and the 2012 communication *Rethinking education* from the Commission – have acknowledged CVET's potential as a major instrument in the European policy toolbox.

Recent Cedefop work has confirmed this potential. Cedefop's analyses have shown that CVET supports lifelong learning, integration and inclusion, employability and employment, mobility and better allocation of labour, innovation, productivity, competitiveness and growth. Cedefop's recent work has also highlighted CVET's uniqueness for productivity as it cannot be substituted with any other learning approach. Higher education and initial VET are important but need to be complemented by CVET to deliver their full effects.

This publication synthesises recent Cedefop research on CVET. It analyses how CVET contributes to reaching the EU's economic and social policy objectives. It outlines major achievements in CVET practices and policies over recent years, both at European and national levels. The book also highlights policy gaps and challenges that remain to be addressed in the future. It thus paves the way for future developments in CVET policies in Europe.

I trust this publication will represent a noteworthy milestone in building a knowledge base on European CVET policy. I hope it contributes fruitfully to the policy-making process towards the EU 2020 objectives.

James James Calleja
Director

Acknowledgements

This publication draws on previous work carried out by Cedefop since 2010 on key topics of adult learning. Cedefop expert Guy Tchibozo carried out the desk research and wrote the publication with valuable input from several Cedefop experts in the preparation and reviewing phases.

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Executive summary

This publication takes stock of recent Cedefop research on continuing vocational education and training (CVET). It analyses how CVET contributes to reaching economic and social policy objectives of the European Union (EU) with respect to social inclusion, employment, innovation, productivity, competitiveness and growth. It outlines the major achievements in CVET practices and policies over recent years, and highlights gaps and challenges for future CVET policies.

Chapter 1 analyses work-based CVET, a form of CVET insufficiently investigated in the European context to date despite its high potential for boosting adult participation in learning, and reaching social and economic objectives of CVET policy. CVET is work-based when it takes place in work conditions (whether simulated or real) and is focused on improving a worker's ability to perform work tasks. The chapter first reviews work-based learning in CVET in Europe. It analyses statistical data on participation in work-based CVET in Europe and shows that while participation rates can be estimated between 20% and 32.2% among people in employment, much less is known about participation among the inactive and unemployed, and about participation in formal and informal CVET.

It also appears that practices of work-based learning in CVET are very diverse. In some cases, they are driven by strategic considerations (such as pedagogical approaches and class size), but a complete overview of practices and their underlying rationales is still missing.

The chapter also categorises policies and governance models in work-based CVET. It shows that work-based CVET policies can be 'conducive', 'just allowing' and 'unconcerned', depending on their degree of openness to this form of learning. 'Conducive' policies meet five criteria:

(a) they acknowledge work-based learning as a regular method for delivery of CVET;
(b) they finance training and learning that contain work-based elements;
(c) they give room for specifically work-based learning-oriented programmes;
(d) they recognise learning and competencies ([1]) non-formally and informally acquired through work;

([1]) For the purpose of this publication, a distinction is made between 'competency' (a synonym for ability in general) and 'competence', defined as the complex ability to mobilise in a relevant manner

(e) they benefit from stakeholder interest and backing.

England and Italy were found to be good examples of this type of work-based CVET policy.

'Just allowing' policies verify only some of the above five criteria, while 'unconcerned' policies verify just one or none of them. An example of a country with a 'just allowing' policy for work-based CVET was found to be France, where explicit recognition of work-based learning as a regular delivery method in the formal CVET system, and also prominent CVET programmes specifically requiring use of work-based learning, seem to be lacking. In the 'unconcerned' policies category, Bulgaria was found to be a good example as, although work-based CVET programmes can be financed through public/European funds, the other four criteria do not seem to be met.

On the governance side, the chapter suggests that, depending on which players are responsible for determining quantities of work-based CVET provision, learning content, standards and financing, and generic governance models can be distinguished. In the 'unregulated employer-led' model, employers have full responsibility in the four areas mentioned (quantity, content, standards and financing) and outsourcing training providers insofar as they deem it necessary for implementation. In the 'policy and top-down-led' model, basic responsibility in the four areas lies with public authorities, but these can also delegate part of their responsibilities to employers where and when they judge it more appropriate. The third possible model is 'semi-regulated and corporatist governance', where employers and trade unions share basic responsibility in the four areas and govern the system jointly, where necessary promoting collective agreements or proposing legislation to

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appropriate skills, values and other resources (whether intellectual, physical, material and social), in order to handle, master and resolve identified occupational problem situations. The term 'competency' is generic and covers elementary abilities (processing information, reasoning, abstracting, etc.) as well as skills (ability to manage complexity-free situations by means of routines) and competences. This approach is based on the educational theory of enacted competence. It is justified whenever instructional design and assessment are concerned, because learning settings and assessment methods depend on the complexity of the task to perform and for which the learner prepares. These concepts are compatible with the glossary issued by Cedefop in 2014 (Cedefop; Tissot, 2014) and with Cedefop; Winterton; Delamare-Le Deist and Stringfellow (2006): 'Competency captures skills and dispositions beyond cognitive ability such as self-awareness, self-regulation and social skills; while some of these may also be found in personality taxonomies (Barrick and Mount, 1991) competencies are fundamentally behavioural and susceptible to learning (McClelland, 1998). This tradition has remained particularly influential in the US, with competency defined in terms of underlying characteristics of people that are causally related to effective or superior performance in a job, generalising across situations and enduring for a reasonably long period of time (Boyatzis, 1982; Guion, 1991; Hay Group et al., 1996; Klemp and Spencer, 1982; Spencer and Spencer, 1993)'. The use of 'competency' as a generic term for elementary abilities, skills and competences is also in line with OECD's terminology in the 2013 report on the first results of the PIAAC survey (OECD, 2013).

government. Work-based CVET for the employed in France and Germany illustrates the corporatist model. In practice, however, countries tend to combine aspects of different models, for example by using different models in different regions as in Italy.

The chapter also highlights work-based CVET's potential for lifelong learning, employment and corporate innovation. It shows that work-based CVET offers better chances to fit participants' learning styles and can be particularly adapted to learners who need practical meanings of what they learn emphasised and better explained. In CVET programmes for the unemployed, it appears that work-based CVET improves learners' self-confidence and helps (re)establish appropriate work habits and provide job opportunities. It thus proves effective in easing and speeding up access to work, and supporting reintegration into work.

Innovation also benefits from spreading work-based learning in enterprises. It appears while CVET has a positive effect on corporate innovation, types of CVET matter. Impact of internal courses is higher than external courses, and work-based forms of CVET have greater impact than courses.

Chapter 2 addresses CVET's policy potential from the career management and guidance standpoint. It shows that CVET's learning dimension (through challenges and interactions at work as well as relational, cognitive, practical and emotional development activities) contributes to developing an individual's occupational identity, autonomy, adaptability and career management skills. Career management is also eased by guidance. The chapter shows that learning and guidance dimensions thus make CVET a vehicle for lifelong learning and inclusion, labour market transitions, employability and employment, mobility and better allocation of labour, competitiveness and growth.

Emphasis is put on two specific target groups of guidance, older workers and migrant workers. Regarding older workers, over the recent period, enterprises have developed guidance practices within a framework of overarching approaches. These approaches (in terms of retaining older workers or coping with economic restructuring) are driven by specific situations with which enterprises are faced.

For migrant workers, guidance strategies have been put in place at State level. A common European pattern of guidance strategy for integration of migrant workers is emerging, which articulates assessment, information and clarification phases. Promising avenues are highlighted. First, potential of partnering with migrant communities is outlined. Given the experience their

members have accumulated in adapting to receiving countries, immigrant communities have a strong integrative potential. Interesting experiences are presented, showing how established members of migrant communities can engage in guidance programmes for more recently arrived migrants. Second, is starting the guidance process before migration takes place. Providing prospective migrants with quality information on the target country before migrating can increase chances for the migration process to be successful.

Chapter 3 analyses validation of CVET from the companies' practices standpoint. Though enterprises assess competencies on a day-to-day basis, in-company validation of learning acquired by employees is rare as in-company learning and assessment do not generally translate into delivery of certificates – not attendance certificates, but certification of acquired knowledge, skills and competences (KSCs). Delivering certificates is normally not a role of enterprises, which basically explains why they rarely practice it. However, validating KSCs acquired is key to motivating employees to engage and persist in learning. Validation is also a major tool for smoothing labour mobility, geographical allocation of labour, and therefore functioning of the labour market.

Basically, enterprises are reluctant towards validation because they fear losing their returns on investment if employees quit after receiving employer-sponsored training. The chapter explores approaches to reducing reluctance of enterprises *vis-à-vis* validation. First, a step to open the way for spreading validation in future could be to harmonise competency-based assessment practices at sectoral level. Harmonisation would ease labour mobility within sectors. Second, extending use of payback clauses to validation is also considered. Payback clauses already exist to help enterprises recover costs of training when employees leave too early after training. The same mechanism could apply to validation so enterprises can recover costs of guidance, assessment and certification they have incurred while validating employees' KSCs.

Chapter 4 shows quality's state of play in some major areas of CVET, competence of trainers, accreditation of providers, guidance and validation. It shows that since adoption of the recommendation of the European Parliament and the Council of 18 June 2009 on establishment of EQAVET (European Parliament; Council of the EU, 2009) progress has been made on improving CVET quality across EU Member States. Most countries have addressed competence of CVET trainers, by putting missing procedures and tools in place. Countries have formalised occupational profiles, established training programmes, defined competence and qualification standards, set certification

processes and issued codes of professional practice. A dominant competence profile of CVET trainers is emerging, based on four major pillars oriented towards professional technicality, ability to adapt training to a company's strategy, familiarity with training adults (andragogy), and transversal/soft skills respectively. General guiding principles for professional development of CVET trainers have also been identified, outlining a need for recognising their common identity, securing backing from all stakeholders, and positioning professional development of CVET trainers in a broader agenda for VET and skills development, lifelong learning, employment and economic growth.

Progress has also been made on accreditation of CVET providers. In several countries, policies, frameworks or labels have been put in place, whether at national, regional or sectoral levels. A lot remains to be done in terms of European harmonisation however, as common European quality frameworks and criteria do not yet exist and need to be defined in areas of accreditation of providers, guidance and validation.

Chapter 5 addresses costs, financing modes and benefits of CVET. It highlights information and evidence that justifies involvement and supports investment in CVET. The chapter provides data on CVET costs per participant (between EUR 394 and EUR 2 150 depending on the country; EU average EUR 1 357) and per training hour (between EUR 17 and EUR 73 depending on the country; EU average EUR 54) in 2010.

The chapter next analyses stakeholders' roles in financing CVET. It shows that while the 'who benefits, pays' approach justifies why companies and learners should be involved, contributions of public authorities is less straightforward and rather depends on whether they have legitimacy in orienting the economy. Where this legitimacy is recognised by society at large, public authorities have a choice between operating training provision by themselves or financing training providers, companies or learners, each channel having its advantages and disadvantages in terms of simplicity, risk of dead weights, and ability to convey priorities of public CVET policy. The chapter also reviews the major financing instruments used for CVET in European countries, namely grants, tax incentives, levy grants, training leaves, vouchers, learning accounts, saving schemes, and loans.

Findings on benefits of CVET are highlighted in the chapter. It shows individuals, organisations and society have an interest in investing in CVET, as they can draw a range of monetary and non-monetary benefits from it. The reported benefits are in terms of wages, health and well-being, civic participation, satisfaction with work, innovation, productivity, labour retention, strategic management, and social and intergenerational equity.

Finally, some major challenges and suggestions for future policies are highlighted in the general conclusion. Where necessary, actions for visibility, image and recognition of CVET should be reinforced. On guidance, better documenting rates of return on investment in CVET, and ensuring more systematic and tangible figures on both direct and wider benefits of CVET are necessary to support and motivate involvement and investment in CVET. Improving competence of guidance practitioners in terms of labour market intelligence and multicultural understanding, tailoring approaches to target groups and improving coordination between guidance stakeholders, are important too. Regarding migrant workers' integration, starting the integration guidance process before migration, enabling employers to make better use of the migrant labour force, and connecting with migrant communities should also be considered.

More has also to be done to make participation in CVET easier. Appropriate arrangements in terms of work organisation and working time should be promoted. Space should be made available for more learners to attend, and pedagogy should be adapted to adult learners. Involvement of smaller enterprises should also be encouraged through providing them with necessary administrative support, in particular when applying for funding.

On validation, harmonising companies' competency-based assessment methods at sectoral level, adapting payback mechanisms, and improving competences of in-company assessors are promising directions to consider.

Improving quality is also a need. In particular, work already initiated on designing frameworks and indicators for accrediting trainers, guidance and validation, and investment in quality should be continued.

Finally, strong impetus should be given to improving statistical information on CVET. Indicators from different EU surveys on participation in CVET among people in employment and participation in the non-formal segment of CVET need to be harmonised. Indicators on participation of the unemployed and inactive in formal and informal CVET, and participation in work-based CVET, are missing and should be developed.

Introduction

Continuing vocational education and training (CVET) is 'education or training after initial education or entry into working life, aimed at helping individuals to improve or update their knowledge and/or skills; acquire new skills for a career move or retraining; continue their personal or professional development' (Cedefop and Tissot, 2014, p. 51). In that sense, continuing vocational education and training (CVET) is basically a part of adult learning oriented towards professional development. It has increasingly become prominent in European policy over recent years. Its importance has been acknowledged by all major statutes of European Union (EU) education and training policy, in particular the Bruges communiqué (Council of the EU and European Commission, 2010); the Council resolution on a renewed European agenda for adult learning (Council of the EU, 2011); and the Commission's communication on rethinking education (European Commission, 2012).

CVET is key for reaching social and economic objectives of the EU. It is a way to improve participation of adults in lifelong learning, reinforce their employability and increase employment in Europe. Improving CVET and adult learning is also crucial to widen the base for knowledge economy and society, and for innovation. As a factor of innovation, CVET is essential for economic competitiveness, productivity and growth. Cedefop's analyses (Cedefop, 2014b) have shown CVET's uniqueness, a form of learning that cannot be substituted by others, whether higher education, general education or initial VET.

At national level, a range of approaches to handling CVET are emerging in Member States. Even though they are often still finding their way and a complete overview is still to come, generic governance patterns are becoming discernible. Some countries approach CVET as a matter mainly for the social partners. In Germany and France, employers, employees and public authorities collectively determine the policy for CVET including training volumes, content, standards and financing, at least as regards the people in employment who represent most CVET users. Other countries have opted for a top-down policy lead, with public authorities retaining primary and overall responsibility. In practice however, without sufficient information and control of sectoral and local circumstances, State and regional authorities may implicitly give up their directing/orienting power to employers and training providers that exert it *de facto*. Bulgaria and Greece are good examples of

this approach. Another approach is more clearly inspired by a liberal market vision, with main responsibility clearly attributed to employers for determining training quantity, content, standards and financing, resorting to provision from providers through free market relationships as necessary. Slovakia, the Czech Republic and England illustrate this third type. These approaches are not always applied in their pure form however. Reality is rather that of mixed models, combining traits from two patterns or more. In England where the liberal market approach is widespread, the State nevertheless plays an important role in funding CVET. Italy exhibits a much more hybrid way as, depending on the region, a major role in determining training content and quantity is attributed either to enterprises (Piedmont) or to steering committees controlled by local authorities and/or social partners (Apulia, Campania) ([2]).

Increasing participation in CVET is essential for CVET to realise its social and economic potential and contribute to reaching EU policy objectives. For analysis fruitfully to identify relevant ways for increasing participation in CVET, recent Cedefop work has developed the concept that CVET should be understood and approached as a multidimensional, multistakeholder and multilevel process at the interface between learning and the labour market.

First, while CVET is core to lifelong learning, it is not learning for learning's sake. Among all forms of adult learning, CVET is singled out by its particular orientation to professional development and meeting labour market needs.

Second, CVET is a multidimensional process. Considering its learning dimension is not enough. A learning offer not known to potential users, potential benefits of which are not understood by them, runs the risk of being widely ignored and underused, thus failing to realise its full social and economic potential. CVET therefore necessarily includes a guidance dimension. Guidance aims at developing learners, in particular their career management skills. Its major role from the standpoint adopted here is to:

(a) inform users of the benefits they can expect from CVET, thus motivating them to participate, persist and progress in it;
(b) make clear to them the costs incurred as well as the funding options available, thus allowing for informed decision-making in CVET investment; and
(c) enable the potential public to make best use of the offer.

([2]) These trends are presented in more detail in Chapter 1. Research on typology of CVET policies and governance is still at a very early stage. More fieldwork across EU Member States is needed before stable and empirically validated classifications are available, and complete clusters of countries can be set.

Validation is another dimension of CVET. It opens possibilities for learners to use their acquired learning for career moves and professional development as they intended when they engaged in CVET. Validation is, therefore, an insurance mechanism for CVET participants. As such, it is another motivational factor for participation, persistence/retention, and progression in CVET. Consequently, validation is also an essential dimension to consider for CVET policy to reach its objectives.

Alongside learning, guidance and validation, quality is the fourth major dimension of CVET. Like guidance and validation, quality is a factor of CVET motivation, attractiveness and effectiveness. It is also transversal and questions all other dimensions: quality is not only that of learning (content, trainers, fitting of outcomes to market needs) but also that of guidance and validation. As a determinant of attractiveness and effectiveness, quality too is an essential dimension of CVET.

Third, CVET is also a multistakeholder process. Considering actors in isolation can only lead to a risk of irrelevance in analysis and conclusions. Cedefop's analyses instead plead for considering roles, standpoints and needs of a range of stakeholders, workers-learners, trainers, delivery organisations, employers-enterprises, and public authorities. In game theory terminology, CVET is a cooperative game, which requires that interdependence and interaction among players should be considered. Failing to take these interrelationships and the need to balance interests of parties on board can only lead to misunderstanding reality and lack of relevance.

Finally, CVET is a multilevel process. It has to be approached both at the workplace and outside work; at practical level as well as from theory and policy standpoints. Analysis should consider individuals and their dispositions (attitude and self-perception), as well as families and social groups, organisations, sectors, institutions and socioeconomic conditions. Analysis has also to be conducted at local, regional, national, EU and international levels.

This book presents how Cedefop has developed this comprehensive and multisided approach to CVET participation in its recent work. The book is organised in five chapters. The learning dimension is analysed in Chapters 1 and 2, with emphasis in Chapter 1 on work-based CVET, a form of CVET rarely investigated to date despite its high potential for boosting participation and reaching social and economic objectives of CVET policy. The information and guidance dimension is addressed in Chapters 2 and 5. Chapters 3 and 4 address the other two dimensions (motivation, attractiveness and effectiveness), validation and quality respectively. In each chapter, a state of

play is first established, then major policy and practice achievements are analysed, and finally gaps to be filled and challenges for future CVET participation policy are highlighted. Particular focus of challenges is on support to be brought to stakeholders, policy frameworks to be set, and coordination initiatives to be taken. The ultimate goal is to contribute to paving the way forward.

CHAPTER 1

Structuring work-based learning in CVET

Work-based continuing vocational education and training (CVET) can be defined as intended and structured learning of direct relevance to a worker's current or future tasks and taking place in simulated or real working conditions. It is in other words CVET in work conditions and targeted at work tasks. Work-based CVET aims at improving workers' mastery of work tasks through providing them with the necessary skills whatever these may be, for example basic, soft or transversal.

Work-based CVET is at the crossroads between learning and the labour market. It has emerged as a first-rank concern in EU policy over the past decade. Developing work-based CVET is a major objective in the Bruges communiqué and the Council resolution on a renewed European agenda on adult learning ([3]). In 2014, the European Commission's report on implementation of the EQAVET recommendation also reaffirmed work-based learning's importance in CVET (European Commission, 2014a).

Work-based learning is of particular importance in CVET due to its motivational power and attractiveness, hence potential to improve participation in CVET and effectiveness of CVET policy. It has the potential to stimulate innovation in enterprises, lifelong learning and employment. Employees appreciate work-based CVET because it gives them an opportunity to serve as trainers and mentors and hence be recognised as responsible and experienced employees. When in a learner role, work-based CVET enables them to link newly acquired concepts to practical applications. It thus helps them to embed better acquired knowledge in their minds.

Enterprises appreciate work-based CVET because it: (a) helps employees to adapt to new processes or machinery; (b) speeds up induction of newly hired personnel; (c) is immediately translatable into daily tasks and procedures at a specific work place; (d) eases direct assessment of training's impact on functioning of the enterprise; and (e) allows for combining sustained

([3]) Council of the EU and European Commission, 2010; Council of the European Union, 2011.

production with promoting training and professional development of employees (Cedefop, forthcoming).

However, work-based learning also suffers from lack of identity and visibility in CVET. Stakeholders often do not realise it is there, sometimes even when they themselves are practising it; varied terminologies and definitions prevent its visibility and recognition, and it receives less attention than work-based learning in initial education and training. There is, therefore, room for improving identification, recognition and use of work-based CVET to boost participation in it.

Taking a multisided approach embracing diverse CVET dimensions, stakeholders and levels, this chapter will explore work-based CVET's multifaceted potential. Section 1.1 will establish an overview of work-based learning's landscape in CVET in Europe. Data on the extent of work-based CVET will be discussed, and patterns of work-based CVET policies, governance and practices will be analysed. Section 1.2 will discuss how work-based CVET can support lifelong learning, highlighting how it can be particularly adapted to certain categories of learners. Work-based CVET can also make a difference to employment. Section 1.3 will outline how it supports employment through addressing individual dispositions and creating work opportunities. Section 1.4 will analyse work-based CVET's impact on corporate innovation and will compare its effectiveness to that of higher education and non-work-based CVET. In conclusion, issues and challenges for future policy will be presented.

1.1. Work-based learning landscape in CVET in Europe

Work-based CVET appears as a set of practices implemented under governance principles within a framework set by policy orientations. Policies of work-based CVET result from country regulations on education, training and the labour market influenced by related EU policies. Governance principles determine how implementation of these rules and running stakeholders' activities is organised. Implementation is carried out by practitioners through performing work-based learning activities on a day-to-day basis. Cedefop's study on *Work-based learning approaches in CVET in Europe: policies and practices* (Cedefop, forthcoming) analyses these activities, policies and governance principles.

1.1.1. Participation in work-based learning in CVET in Europe: a statistical portrait

No statistical indicator on spread of CVET and work-based CVET in EU Member States is currently available. CVET essentially encompasses all adults involved in formal, non-formal and informal ([4]) learning activities for their professional development. CVET includes not only people in employment, but also the unemployed and inactive adults preparing for possible future reentry into the labour market. An indicator on participation of all adults (whether inactive, unemployed or in employment) in formal, non-formal and informal CVET in Member States does not exist to date. Consequently, little is also known about participation in work-based CVET. However, indicators can be found for two subgroups of CVET participants, those in non-formal learning and in employment.

1.1.1.1. *Participation in non-formal CVET and work-based CVET*

First, the 'job-related non-formal education and training' indicator from Eurostat's adult education survey (AES) ([5]) can be used to estimate how many adults participate in non-formal CVET. This indicator accounts for survey respondents who declared they had undertaken learning in view of a current or future job, increasing earnings, and improving career opportunities. It is, therefore, close in essence to CVET, but is limited to non-formal learning, thus excluding participants in formal and informal CVET. Columns 1 and 2 of Table 1 present the figures for this indicator in 2007 and 2011. These data suggest that nearly one third of the EU population aged between 25 and 64 years participated in non-formal CVET in 2011. But, once again, participation in formal and informal CVET is unknown.

In this area of non-formal CVET, participation in work-based learning can also be (roughly) estimated. As defined at the beginning of the chapter, work-based CVET refers to learning of relevance to work tasks and takes place in simulated or real working conditions. The AES provides an 'employer-sponsored, job-related, non-formal education and training' indicator which isolates the (at least partly) employer-paid component of the abovementioned

([4]) CVET is formal when it has an educational intention, structured (in terms of objectives and method), and subject to a process of learning outcomes assessment leading to certification. Non-formal CVET is intentional and structured, but is not associated with a process of certification. Informal CVET may have an educational intention (or not), but is non-structured and has no process of certification.

([5]) The AES has been carried out by Eurostat since 2005. Two rounds have taken place so far, relating to 2007 and 2011: http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/microdata/adult_education_survey

Table 1. **Participation of adults (25-64 years) in job-related non-formal education and training (whether employer-sponsored or non-employer-sponsored) in 2007 and 2011 – AES**

(%)

	Job-related non-formal education and training – Total (employer-sponsored + non-employer-sponsored)		Employer-sponsored component		Non-employer-sponsored	
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	2007	2011	2007	2011	2007	2011
EU	25.7(e)	30.9(e)	22.1(e)	27.5(e)	3.5(e)	3.4(e)
Belgium	28.5	29.8	25.7	27.0	2.9	2.8
Bulgaria	33.9	23.1	32.8	22.1	1.2	0.9(u)
Czech Republic	33.1	29.7	31.9	26.7	1.1	3.0
Denmark	35.0	46.4	33.7	43.2	1.3(u)	3.2
Germany	38.0	41.8	32.3	37.5	5.7	4.3
Estonia	36.4	39.6	34.5	36.5	1.9	3.1
Ireland	:	15.3	:	8.2	:	7.2
Greece	10.7	6.9	7.6	4.6	3.1	2.3
Spain	19.8	28.6	14.9	24.5	5.0	4.2
France	:	40.1	:	36.9	:	3.2
Croatia	14.4	:	13.4	:	1.0(u)	:
Italy	14.3	25.2	9.5	20.8	4.8	4.4
Cyprus	31.9	32.7	28.1	29.1	3.9	3.7
Latvia	25.9	23.6	23.3	19.8	2.6	3.9
Lithuania	27.6	22.5	24.2	19.8	3.4	2.7
Luxembourg	:	53.1	:	48.1	:	5.0
Hungary	5.5	33.6(b)	4.0	29.2(b)	1.5	4.5(b)
Malta	22.2	33.9	19.5	24.6	2.7(u)	9.3
Netherlands	35.7	49.0	33.4	46.2	2.3	2.8
Austria	32.0	34.9	27.1	30.0	5.0	4.9
Poland	16.2	17.9	16.2	15.6	:	2.2
Portugal	18.9	33.3	17.6	29.3	1.3	4.0
Romania	3.9	5.6	3.3	4.6	0.6	1.1
Slovenia	25.6	25.1	23.6	22.9	2.0	2.2
Slovakia	38.0	34.7	36.7	32.9	1.2	1.8
Finland	43.8	43.9	38.8	41.2	5.0	2.7
Sweden	61.0	58.7	58.1	55.9	3.0	2.8
United Kingdom	30.6	21.6	26.7	19.1	3.9	2.4

(e) estimated; (b) break in time series; (u) low reliability; : not available.
Source: Eurostat database (indicator trng_aes_123, retrieved August 2014).

Table 2. **Participation of persons in employment in CVET according to the**

	CVTS4 Participation in employer-provided CVT – Employees – No age limitation				
	Courses (trng_cvts42)	Other forms of CVT (trng_cvts50)			
		CVT in work situation	Job rotation	Learning / quality circles	Self-learning
		2010			
EU-28	38(e)	20	2	3	8
Belgium	52	21	2	3	7
Bulgaria	22	20	1	8	3
Czech Republic	61	31	1	3	6
Denmark	37	16	4	3	11
Germany	39	28	2	4	11
Estonia	31	14	3	2	7
Ireland	:	:	:	:	:
Greece	16	6	1	4	2
Spain	48	20	2	3	9
France	45	14	2	1	4
Croatia	23	15	1	3	5
Italy	36	11	3	1	9
Cyprus	37	18	2	9	3
Latvia	24	21	2	2	2
Lithuania	19	25	0	6	7
Luxembourg	51	20	3	5	8
Hungary	19	12	1	2	8
Malta	36	15	3	4	3
Netherlands	39	14	2	4	9
Austria	33	12	3	10	6
Poland	31	11	1	0	3
Portugal	40	20	2	5	6
Romania	18	10	2	1	5
Slovenia	43	25	1	7	6
Slovakia	44	21	2	10	7
Finland	40	12	2	9	12
Sweden	47	24	9	1	4
United Kingdom	31	30	4	3	9

(*) EU-27; (e) estimated; (b) break in time series; : not available.

Source: Eurostat database (indicators trng_cvts42, trng_cvts50, trng_lfs_03) and Eurofound data tables (http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/surveys/ewcs/2010/datatables.htm – Table 1). Retrieved August 2014.

CVTS4, LFS and EWCS5

(%)

Conferences, workshops, lectures and seminars	LFS 'Participation rate in education and training' Persons in employment aged 25-64 (trng_lfs_03)		EWCS5 Participation in training to improve skills Persons in employment No age limitation	
			(Question 61a) Training provided or paid for by employer	(Question 61b) Training paid by employee
	2010	2013	2010	
8	9.7	11.3(b)	33.7(*)	8.7(*)
7	7.6	7.0	36.5	10.0
6	1.0	1.3	9.4	3.4
11	8.6	11.3	46	7.8
20	33.0	32.0	44	5.8
15	7.7	7.7	36.8	9.7
8	12.9	13.6	36.6	7.9
:	6.1	6.2	41.8	12.1
2	2.9	2.9	13.9	6.9
5	10.9	11.2	31.1	15.7
2	5.1	19.7(b)	25.1	5.0
8	1.7	2.5	20.8	3.8
5	6.2	6.0	26.1	8.6
17	8.2	7.4	27.8	7.4
4	5.3	6.9	29.2	11.2
19	4.4	6.7	23.5	11.0
14	14.5	15.3	35.1	9.3
5	2.5	2.9	26.7	7.3
8	7.0	9.5	31.6	9.3
9	18.1(b)	19.3	48.8	8.7
14	14.5	14.6	40.9	14.3
5	6.2	5.1	32.8	8.0
5	4.8	9.3	28.2	6.4
3	0.9	1.8	18.3	8.3
31	18.3	13.8	48	11.2
10	2.9	3.2	36.1	8.8
5	25.0	27.0	51	9.6
19	23.2	27.1	48.7	6.6
8	21.4	17.8	44.8	7.4

'job-related non-formal education and training' indicator. Linking this employer-paid component with work-based learning resides in the idea that employers more likely fund training relevant to work tasks, so employer-sponsored training most likely includes work-based learning activities. However, it cannot be assumed that only work-based learning activities are included in employer-sponsored learning, so this indicator most probably overestimates work-based learning's real extent in non-formal CVET. In that sense, the employer-paid component most likely provides a kind of ceiling estimate of participation in non-formal work-based CVET in EU Member States. Non-employer-sponsored training could also be considered to estimate non-formal work-based CVET, as there is no reason why non-employer-sponsored training should not include work-based learning elements. However, participants in non-employer-sponsored learning prove to be few (3.4% of all adults in 2011), so incidence of those among them who participate in work-based learning is probably marginal. Columns 5 and 6 of Table 1 show the figures.

Overall this suggests that fewer than 27.5% of adults aged between 25 and 64 participated in non-formal work-based CVET in the EU in 2011.

1.1.1.2. *Participation of persons in employment in CVET and work-based CVET*

More data are available for the population in employment.

(a) **Participation in CVET**

First, regarding persons in employment (employed persons, including employees and self-employed) participating in both formal and non-formal CVET, three surveys give indications, Eurostat's continuing vocational training survey (CVTS) ([6]) and labour force survey (LFS) ([7]), and the European working conditions survey (EWCS) ([8]) from Eurofound. The CVTS distinguishes between courses and other forms of CVET. Table 2 shows the data for 2010 and 2013 (latest available data for all three surveys).

([6]) Four rounds of the CVTS have taken place so far, relating to years 1993 (CVTS1), 1999 (CVTS2), 2005 (CVTS3) and 2010 (CVTS4). CVTS5 is planned to take place in 2015: http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/microdata/continuing_vocational_training_survey

([7]) The LFS is carried out quarterly across 33 countries including the 28 Member States: http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/statistics_explained/index.php/EU_labour_force_survey

([8]) The EWCS has been carried out since 1990. Five rounds have taken place to date, 1990/91 (EWCS1), 1995/96 (EWCS2), 2000 (EWCS3), 2005 (EWCS4) and 2010 (EWCS5): http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/surveys/ewcs

According to these data, between 9.7% and 38% ([9]) of persons in employment participated in CVET in 2010 in Member States. The strong difference between LFS and CVTS due to differences in coverage, object and methods, means comparability of data from these three surveys is very limited. Badescu et al. (2011) reviewed some of the differences between LFS, CVTS and AES. CVTS focuses on a reference year and does not have an age limitation but has size and sectoral limitations. It does not take into account enterprises that have fewer than 10 employees. CVTS also does not cover such economic sectors as agriculture, public administration, defence, compulsory social security, education, human health and social work activities. In addition, CVTS is a survey of enterprises and covers only training provided by them for their employees.

LFS is a survey of individuals. It focuses on the four weeks prior to the interview, and has age limitations, but does not have enterprise size or sectoral exclusions. It covers both employees and the self-employed. The training referred to can be either employer- or non-employer-provided. However, it is not necessarily vocational ([10]) and the LFS indicator is in that sense an imperfect measure of the real extent of workers' participation in CVET. The fact that LFS covers four weeks (versus a full year in CVTS) is probably a reason why its measure of the extent of participation in CVET is lower than that of CVTS.

Data from EWCS5 are closer to those from CVTS. EWCS5 was based on a representative sample of people in employment in the EU. It has no age limitation (interviewees are aged 15 or older) and no size or sectoral exclusions. Similarly to CVTS, the reference period for identification of training was one year (the past 12 months) ([11]). Question 61 posed to respondents regarding training explicitly referred to training aimed at improving skills (CVET).

([9]) Different columns of CVTS data cannot be summed as the same person may have participated in several forms.

([10]) The question to respondents is: 'Did you attend any courses, seminars, conferences or receive private lessons or instructions outside the regular education system (hereafter mentioned as taught learning activities) within the last four weeks?' No reference is made to vocational or non-vocational orientation of the training.

([11]) The question to respondents (question 61 A and B) was: over the past 12 months, have you undergone any of the following types of training to improve your skills:
(a) training paid for or provided by your employer or by yourself if self-employed;
(b) training paid for by yourself?

(b) **Participation in work-based CVET**

Regarding participation of the employed in work-based CVET, three indicators could be considered:

(a) 'continuing vocational training in work situation' indicator (formerly 'guided on-the-job training') from CVTS4. This indicator accounts for persons in employment who have participated in employer-sponsored on-the-job training. On-the-job training here refers to learning activities carried out in the workplace using normal work tools in normal working conditions: the CVTS4 manual explains that 'guided on-the-job training is characterised by planned periods of training, instruction or practical experience in the workplace using normal tools of work, either at an immediate place of work or in a work situation' (European Commission Eurostat, 2012, p. 26) ([12]). Columns 1 and 2 of Table 3 present the figures for CVT in work situations;

(b) 'having undergone on-the-job training' indicator from the EWCS. This indicator compiles positive responses of workers to the question 'over the past 12 months, have you undergone on-the-job training?' (Eurofound, question 61(c)). Column 3 of Table 3 presents the figures;

(c) previously mentioned 'employer-sponsored, job-related, non-formal education and training' indicator from the AES, which is calculated here for people in employment only. Columns 4 and 5 of Table 3 present the figures.

However, these indicators can only be regarded as default proxies as none of them satisfactorily approach and can exactly catch the real extent of work-based CVET for employed persons:

(a) the 'CVT in work situation' indicator suffers from coverage limitations of the CVTS survey itself (see above). In particular, the CVTS does not consider enterprises that have fewer than 10 employees. However, though small enterprises train less, they still train, so coverage limitations of CVTS are likely to lead to estimates different from the real extent of work-based CVET among those in employment;

(b) the 'having undergone on-the-job training' indicator refers to on-the-job training defined as 'training given by other colleagues of the company where the respondent works' (fifth EWCS glossary). This indicator is interesting in that training provided by colleagues and supervisors is most

([12]) By contrast, definition of CVT courses emphasises that they are 'typically clearly separated from the active workplace (learning takes place in locations specially assigned for learning, such as a classroom or training centre). They exhibit a high degree of organisation (time, space and content) by a trainer or a training institution. The content is designed for a group of learners (a curriculum exists, for example)' (European Commission Eurostat, 2012, p. 24).

Table 3. **Participation of persons in employment in work-based learning in CVET according to indicators from AES, CVTS and EWCS**

(%)

	CVTS CVT in work situation Employees No age limitations (trng_cvts50)		ECWS Having undergone on-the-job training Employed persons No age limitations (Question 61(c))	AES Employer-sponsored job-related, non-formal education & training Employed persons aged 25-64 (trng_aes_123)	
	1	2	3	4	5
	2005	2010	2010	2007	2011
EU	16	20	32.2	30.6(e)	37.7(e)
Belgium	21	21	36.3	35.8	37.3
Bulgaria	12	20	21.7	47.1	34.7
Czech Republic	32	31	32.1	42.6	36.1
Denmark	25	16	47.0	39.7	53.7
Germany	26	28	39.7	43.6	47.7
Estonia	16	14	33.2	42.3	48.2
Ireland	:	:	37.8	:	9.5
Greece	4	6	16.0	10.9	7.7
Spain	19	20	24.2	20.6	32.6
France	7	14	25.3	:	46.7
Croatia	:	15	20.5	22.6	:
Italy	7	11	17.3	14.6	32.6
Cyprus	6	18	27.1	36.5	38.2
Latvia	7	21	29.3	31.4	28.3
Lithuania	11	25	27.5	33.4	28.9
Luxembourg	23	20	31.1	:	60.4
Hungary	13	12	28.3	6.3	44.4(b)
Malta	17	15	28.4	32.4	37.8
Netherlands	11	14	40.8	43.4	59.8
Austria	9	12	43.5	36.8	39.6
Poland	15	11	29.6	24.2	23.4
Portugal	9	20	24.3	23.8	41.4
Romania	14	10	17.6	4.8	6.7
Slovenia	20	25	45.3	32.5	33.4
Slovakia	20	21	50.2	47.3	42.8
Finland	16	12	57.8	50.9	53.2
Sweden	21	24	46.8	71.4	67.0
United Kingdom	:	30	44.7	35.2	25.5

(e) estimated; (b) break in time series; : not available.

Sources: Eurostat database (indicators trng_cvts50 and trng_aes_123) and Eurofound EWCS 2010 data tables (http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/surveys/ewcs/2010/datatables.htm – Table 1). Retrieved August 2014.

likely to focus on work tasks and take place in work conditions. However, work-based CVET could also take place in simulated work conditions outside the workplace with no involvement of colleagues from same enterprise (external provision). This indicator is in that sense too restrictive and likely captures only part of the real magnitude of work-based CVET among those in employment;

(c) the 'employer-sponsored, job-related, non-formal education and training' indicator, calculated for people in employment only, is restricted to non-formal learning and is, therefore, probably an imperfect estimator of the magnitude of work-based learning among the employed in both formal and non-formal CVET. In addition, even if employer sponsorship suggests that the training is likely focused on work tasks, this is not guaranteed, and there is also no certainty that the training takes place in work conditions.

However, comparability of data from these three different surveys is limited. For example, the AES indicator is restricted to those aged 25 to 64, and limited to CVET's non-formal segment, which is not the case for the other two. Nevertheless, some information can still be drawn from them. It can be estimated that percentages of employed persons who participated in work-based learning in CVET (both formal and non-formal) in 2010 in the EU was most likely between 20% (CVTS) and 32.2% (ECWS). AES figures are limited to non-formal learning and therefore apply to a very different subject from that of the other two surveys. AES figures should therefore be left aside here.

So, in conclusion, complete statistical data on magnitude of participation in CVET and work-based CVET in Europe are lacking. Major lacks are on: (a) work-based CVET among the unemployed and inactive; (b) work-based CVET through informal learning; (c) work-based CVET in formal education; (d) participation of the unemployed and inactive in formal and informal CVET.

Partial clues for subcategories (the non-formal learning sector and the population in employment) exist however: in 2010/11, (a) about one third (30.9% according to AES 2011) of the EU population aged between 25 and 64 participated in non-formal CVET; (b) between 9.7% (LFS) and 38% (CVTS) of Europeans in employment participated in CVET; (c) fewer than 27.5% (AES) of Europeans aged between 25 and 64 participated in work-based forms of non-formal CVET; and (d) between 20% (CVTS4) and 32.2% (EWCS5) of Europeans in employment participated in work-based CVET.

1.1.2. **Practices of work-based learning in CVET**

Practice of work-based CVET is diverse. Mechanisms vary in terms of location (in or outside the workplace); duration of training (from a few hours to several

months); timing (during work hours, whether full-time or part-time; or after work hours); origin of trainers (internal employees or external provider's staff); and number of participants per training (from a few people to several hundred). Data from a small Cedefop survey give a few examples of that diversity (Table 4).

Table 4. **Examples of work-based CVET practices in a small set of 63 European enterprises: number of cases observed per practice**

	Bulgaria	England	France	Germany	Italy	Sweden
Location						
On-the-job	6	3	3	–	4	2
Off-the-job	1	1	–	1	–	1
Combination of on-the-job & off-the job	3	12	2	8	1	6
Timing						
Work hours, full-time	–	3	2	2	5	1
Work hours, part-time	7	13	3	1	3	–
After work hours	2	–	–	2	–	–
Origin of trainers						
In-house	2	8	2	4	3	2
Formal education institutions	–	–	1	2	1	1
Non-formal education institutions	–	–	1	–	–	–
Commercial institutions (*)	3	1	1	–	1	2
External individual freelance	–	1	–	–	–	–
All 63 enterprises taken together						
Duration of training (number of hours)						
Up to 10	4					
11 to 25	10					
26 to 50	5					
51 to 100	6					
More than 100	12					
Number of participants per training						
Up to 10	13					
11 to 20	13					
21 to 50	6					
More than 50	7					

(*) Commercial institutions do not have education and training as their main activity. The most frequent case in this category is that of providers of equipment that give training in use of their equipment.

NB: Cedefop surveyed 63 enterprises in Bulgaria, England, France, Germany, Italy and Sweden in 2013. The sample was not representative and the results do not pretend to inform on any general trend across EU enterprises. The figures given here are just to illustrate the practices that could be observed.

Source: Cedefop, forthcoming.

Though these figures do not allow generalisations, they nevertheless show that at least one example could be found for each of the possible features. This at least suggests that there is a high level of diversity in work-based CVET practices in EU enterprises.

Another observation from the survey is that determinants for choice of practices are not well known. Practices may be inspired by ad hoc practical considerations linked to a specific situation and conditions the enterprise is faced with. But choice of practice may alternatively be determined by strategic considerations. An example of such strategic consideration might lie in a choice of combining on- and off-the-job locations for work-based CVET. Combining can be a way to make the off-the-job sequence prepare for the on-the-job one: learners first receive basic theoretical and practical training on off-the-job sites and then, when ready, are placed in on-the-job positions where they use what they have learned, realise its value and consolidate it (Section 1.2).

Pedagogy is another field for strategy. The keywords here are: lead of the learning process (self-regulation ([13]) by the learner versus regulation by a trainer); and individual or collaborative nature of the learning process. Observation on the ground showed that, in practice, both modalities of a criterion can be combined, for example a same work-based learning mechanism can combine a learner-regulated sequence with a trainer-regulated one. The following three examples illustrate how these criteria can be used in practice.

(a) *Example 1: an individual and learner-regulated learning process*

This refers to training provided by a social healthcare institution in France. The organisation provides care for people with multiple disabilities as well as those profoundly or severely mentally disabled. Work-based learning is used to train employees in new methods by pairing them up with a mentor. The mentor trains the other employee and transfers knowledge on how to perform work tasks, in particular conducting workshops for people suffering from disabilities. These workshops consist of activities designed to improve clients' well-being.

The mechanism is based on individual rather than collaborative learning. The learning process is mainly self-regulated by the learner in the sense that the learner performs work tasks, and then receives suggestions from the mentor, who then may also demonstrate certain techniques.

([13]) Self-regulated learning refers to metacognitive, motivational, and behavioural processes individuals use to direct and control their learning (Zimmerman, 1990; Jossberger et al., 2010).

(b) *Example 2: a collaborative and trainer-regulated learning process*

This describes a training package delivered in Italy by a training provider to a medium-sized enterprise operating in distribution and processing of fresh vegetables. The training objectives were to improve quality and efficiency of the production process, and develop the employees' problem-solving capacities. Activities were related to three broad business areas, production and processing of organic products; use of newly purchased machinery; and safety and security in the workplace for newly hired workers.

In close cooperation with company management, the provider conducted a preliminary analysis of the situation in the company to spot skills gaps, and design types of activities. Learning activities were carried out in small groups of five people to allow more systematic interaction between the learners and trainers. Practical activities were combined with theoretical classes. Trainers steered activities with support from tutors, while learners were expected to find proactively relevant information/solutions.

(c) *Example 3: a learning process combining learner and trainer regulations with individual and collaborative sequences*

This training was provided in an English company that delivers audio, web and video conferencing and integrated communications solutions to enterprises of all sizes. The company has a broad learning management system, including virtual classrooms, workshops, e-learning, and webinars. The objective is to train employees in use of new products which the company will have to work with and sell to clients.

The training system is based on a structure of green, red and black belts that indicate different types of completed training. The green belt is the formal part of training and consists of classroom meetings and e-learning. The red belt consists of attendance in webinars, reading various documents, and passing a multiple-choice quiz. A crucial element of red belt training is a sales pitch. This is a simulated scenario where the trainee has to sell a product to a client (played by an experienced sales manager). When the pitch is delivered successfully, the trainee receives a red belt. The black belt (or practical part) is based on performance and revenue. A trainee has to pass certain threshold values to attain a black belt. The green belt is trainer-regulated; the black belt attainment process is self-regulated by the learner, while red belt training is a mixture of the two approaches.

Aspects of work-based CVET practices remain unknown however. In particular, choice of timing (training during or outside work hours, full-time or part-time) as well as training duration and origin of trainers might also be driven by strategic considerations. These are not well-known to date and require further investigation ([14]).

1.1.3. **Policies of work-based CVET**

A common source of influence for country policies of work-based CVET is EU policy. Although limited in number, specific guidelines regarding work-based learning in CVET (as opposed to work-based learning in IVET or adult learning in general) can be found in the Bruges communiqué and the Council resolution on a renewed European agenda for adult learning. These documents recommend that:

(a) operation and implementation of work-based learning in CVET should be carried out in combination with other forms of adult training ([15]);

(b) the combination should be targeted at reaching two objectives:

  (i) developing 'both job-specific skills and broader skills' ([16]), i.e. covering the full range of skills;

  (ii) improving the flexibility of learning provision so as to meet the diverse needs and situations of learners ([17]). The flexibility of learning provision itself should be aimed at supporting the inclusion of the low-skilled and the at-risk groups ([18]).

Figure 1 synthesises these directions.

A major channel that conveys EU messages to national policies and actors on the ground is the European Social Fund (ESF). The Bulgarian case provides a good illustration of this.

In Bulgaria, the ESF's programme 'human resource development' (OP HRD), administered by the employment agency, has within its scope provision of work-based learning for employed persons (Republic of Bulgaria, Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, 2007). CVET that includes work-based learning can be financed in particular through two schemes of this programme:

([14]) More generally, research on work-based CVET practices across Member States is at a very early stage. A more complete picture of practices in countries as well as analyses of relations between practices and participation levels are needed before implications in terms of participation policy can be drawn.

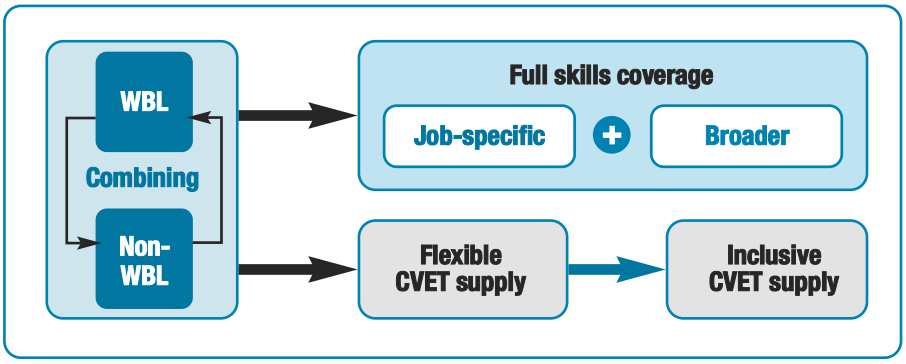
([15]) Council of the EU and European Commission, 2010, p. 10.

([16]) Council of the European Union, 2011, p. 5.

([17]) Council of the EU and European Commission, 2010, p. 10; Council of the European Union, 2011, p. 3.

([18]) Council of the European Union and European Commission, 2010, p. 16.

Figure 1. **EU policy guidelines for work-based learning in CVET**



(a) qualification and training of employees, phase 3;
(b) social innovation in enterprises.

On the skill coverage side, the first scheme finances activities targeted at acquisition of both job-specific skills (to improve professional competence and prepare for future developments) and key competencies (communication in the mother tongue and foreign languages; basic competencies in science and technology; digital competency; learning to learn; social and civic competencies; initiative and entrepreneurship; cultural awareness and creativity). The 'social innovation' scheme is more specifically targeted at promoting flexible work arrangements (flexitime, job rotation, individual plans of work), reconciliation of private and professional life, and social benefits in the workplace for employees (leisure and recreation, dining areas, playgrounds for children). It also gives priority to learning activities that improve job-specific skills and key competencies.

Social inclusion is explicitly part of the OP HRD ([19]) strategic objective. The 'social innovation in enterprises' scheme gives priority to training activities for employees over 55. For an application to be eligible for funding, it must foresee that employees over 55 will be trained as trainers. It must also provide workplace training for staff trained by those employees trained as trainers. Application guidelines for the scheme further specify that an awarded grant can be used to remunerate employees trained to provide work-based training for their colleagues.

([19]) The strategic objective of OP HRD is to 'improve the quality of life of people in Bulgaria through enhancement of the human capital, achievement of high employment levels, improvement of the productivity, access to high-quality education and lifelong learning and strengthening the social inclusion' (Republic of Bulgaria, Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, 2007, p. 6).

However, EU orientations are only part of the influences that shape country policies of work-based CVET. Other important determinants of these policies are country legislation for continuing training and recognition of non-formal and informal learning, professional regulations issued by professional bodies ([20]), and pressure exerted by sector organisations, social partners and other major stakeholders. All these influences result in diverse policies that can be categorised as proposed below.

1.1.3.1. *Categorising policies of work-based learning in CVET*

Cedefop's research has identified five operational criteria that allow for categorising countries' policies on work-based CVET (Cedefop, forthcoming):

(a) extent to which legislation of formal CVET includes work-based learning as a regular method of delivery of CVET. The criterion can be considered met when, for example, it is specifically mentioned that training can (should) take place (at least partly) on the enterprises' premises;
(b) extent to which national/regional/sectoral programmes of non-formal CVET specifically requiring use of work-based learning exist;
(c) extent to which training with work-based learning elements can be financed through the main national financing instruments. The criterion can be considered met when, for example, the conditions for accessing State funds specifically mention that (at least part of) the financed training must be practical with direct relevance for employees' current work situations. The opposite situation is when financing instruments only finance school-based training;
(d) extent to which national/regional/sectoral system(s) of recognition of learning acquired through work exist(s). When such is the case, competencies obtained through informal and non-formal work-based learning can be assessed and recognised and as such form a basis for further education and upskilling;
(e) extent to which stakeholders such as social partners have specific focus on work-based learning, are interested in it, and promote and support it.

Based on these criteria, three categories of country policies for work-based CVET can be distinguished. They are termed 'conducive', 'just allowing' and 'unconcerned', depending on their degree of openness to this form of learning.

Conducive policies acknowledge work-based learning as a regular method for delivery of CVET. They finance training and learning that contain work-

([20]) For example, regulated professions may require CVET to maintain a licence of practice.

based elements. They give room to specifically work-based learning-oriented programmes. They recognise learning and competencies non-formally and informally acquired through work. Such policies are also characterised by a context where stakeholders (unions and employers' organisations) have an interest in and focus on work-based learning, and promote and support it. England and Italy were found to be good examples.

Just-allowing policies verify only some of the above five criteria, while unconcerned policies verify just one or none of them. France was found to belong to the second category. Bulgaria was categorised as unconcerned because, although work-based CVET programmes can be financed through public/European funds, the other four criteria were not met.

1.1.3.2. *Two examples of conducive policies for work-based CVET: England and Italy*

England has apprenticeships for employed adults as a central part of its CVET system (Box 1). Financing schemes for these apprenticeships exist. Recognition is ensured through the qualification and credit framework (QCF – formerly national vocational qualifications, NVQ) system ([21]). Stakeholders' support is longstanding as illustrated already in 2002 by the unions' push for the Employment Act to provide union representatives with a statutory right to paid off work time to promote, support and arrange learning in the workplace (Box 1.2).

Box 1. **Adult apprenticeships in England**

Who introduced it (where did the idea come from)?

Apprenticeship types of learning have a long history. In 1994, the so-called modern apprenticeship was introduced by the government and since then apprenticeship has developed as an important instrument for work-based learning.

Why was it introduced (challenges addressed)?

The objective was to overcome skills shortages, especially at intermediate level. Originally, the programme focused almost entirely on occupational competence and was based on the older apprenticeships that England employed, which had been in

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([21]) The NVQ/QCF system is built on assessment of competencies acquired in the workplace. QCF's novelty is that it brings together achievements from different places, so qualifications can be made up of units from training at work and units completed at college.

rapid decline during the 1980s. Since then there have been important revisions, such as introduction of a theoretical underpinning of knowledge, a technical certificate (2001), rebranding of modern apprenticeships as 'apprenticeships' and creation of higher apprenticeships at level 4 (2004). Very recently after the *Richard review of apprenticeships* (Richard, 2012), new standards were developed in specification of apprenticeship standards for England (SASE). Since 2003, apprenticeship has also deliberately been developed as a way of reskilling and upskilling employees already working for some time (CVET) by removing restrictions to funding.

What are the main elements?

The principle is to alternate on-the-job and off-the-job learning. Every apprenticeship is based on a framework devised by a sector skills council, encompassing four elements: a knowledge-based element, a competence-based element, key skills and employment rights and responsibilities. Application of this is checked by official training providers and tested through use of personal portfolios and other means. Over the years there have been many changes to the original system, including apprenticeships for different levels (higher, advanced and intermediate), changes in the minimum time spent and changes in the funding system.

Currently, an apprenticeship needs to take at least a full year, including a minimum of 100 off-the-job learning hours (which constitute at least 30% of overall guided learning). The other part of guided learning hours is on the job. The competence-based element should lead to a competence-based qualification. In most cases, this is fulfilled by using qualifications from the NVQ system which are now integrated into the QCF system. The learning outcomes are what matters and are tested through assessments.

Apprenticeship can be delivered in several ways: various forms of partnership with a training provider (including mentoring) or delivery by the company itself.

The apprenticeship system is currently being revised and reviewed.

How does it influence WBL-CVET?

Although apprenticeships are not purely CVET, the proportion of employees already working for some time is very high (estimated based on age: more than 40% in 2011/12 are over 25). Apprenticeships are seen as the golden standard in terms of work-based learning in England and both highly supported by government and widely used by companies. As all apprenticeships work through use of competence-based qualifications like the NQV (work-based learning with work-based assessments like portfolio building on the job, workplace projects and direct observations) and have a very large on-the-job component, they are the major WBL-CVET influence in England.

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References/links

- Brockmann et al., 2010.
- Gambin, 2013.
- several relevant government reports, including the *Richard review of apprenticeship* (Richard, 2012) and the *Holt review* (Holt, 2012).
- information on the recent standards formulated in the *Specification of apprenticeship standards for England (SASE)* (BIS et al., 2013).

Box 2. **Union representatives in the Employment Act in England**

Who introduced it?

Introduced by the UK government in 2002.

Why was it introduced?

The act was introduced to make it easier for union members to become learning representatives as well as make learning more of a workplace priority, after a call from unions during the 1990s to make training and development of employees more into a social partnership.

What are the main elements?

The Employment Act provides a statutory right to paid time off work for appropriately trained union representatives to carry out a range of duties including:

- promoting value of learning;
- supporting learners;
- arranging learning/training;
- supporting workplace learning centres to embed learning in the workplace.

How does it influence WBL-CVET?

The Employment Act of 2002 influences WBL-CVET by improving provision of training by unions, which includes (among others) work-based training.

References/links

- Rainbird, 2003.
- Legislation.gov.uk: the National Archives: *Employment Act 2002*: http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/22/contents

Italy also has apprenticeships for employed adults as a central part of its CVET system. In addition, the 2012 Law on Territorial Networks defined a new strategic approach to CVET (Box 3). It acknowledged that learning can be formal, non-formal and informal and recognised the workplace as a learning place thus reinforcing the basis for development of work-based learning in CVET. Financing of work-based learning is ensured through joint interprofessional funds (JIPFs) which are bilateral bodies jointly managed by trade unions and employers. JIPFs are dedicated to financing training for their members. A system of recognition exists in some regions and is being extended. An example of stakeholders' support is the 2008 initiative of Fondimpresa, the biggest JIPF, to give priority to on-the-job training and other unconventional training modes (action learning, coaching, mentoring, etc.) (Box 4).

Box 3. **Territorial networks in Italy (Law 92/2012)**

Who introduced it?

Ministry of Labour.

Why was it introduced?

The reform is part of an effort undertaken by the government to promote economic growth and simplification of labour market provisions. Setting up territorial networks represents an attempt to foster links between the different actors participating in CVET and promote economic growth, labour market access, active citizenship and ageing, and reform of the welfare system.

What are the main elements?

The law is aimed at:

- supporting creation of customised learning paths by integrating formal, non-formal and informal modalities. Particular attention shall be paid to identification of learning needs, especially language and IT skills;
- recognition of learning credits and certification of competences;
- using orientation services throughout life.

The law promotes creation of integrated territorial networks which bring together various actors (higher education institutes, training providers, beneficiaries and public bodies) to develop integrated and consistent paths of formal, non-formal and informal learning, identification of skills shortages, validation of the qualifications

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acquired. Universities are expected to play a primary role and to rethink their approaches to reach out to a wider population of potential students, including workers. This requires them explicitly to endorse CVET in their strategic plans and devise more flexible learning packages.

The government commits itself to design an appropriate framework for certification of competences (however attained) by defining homogenous minimum service standards. Validation is realised by means of a certificate/diploma or other official document issued by a public institution and/or an accredited body. Qualification and competence standards shall be listed in a national/regional inventory.

How does it influence WBL-CVET?

This legal provision defines a new strategic approach to CVET and acknowledges that learning can be formal, non-formal and informal. By bringing together various actors ranging from universities to enterprises it stimulates development of more innovative approaches to learning. Further, it recognises the workplace as a learning place thus creating the basis for development of WBL-relevant activities. Finally, it sets out a plan for development of a national inventory of qualifications and competences to be used as the reference point for the (yet to be adopted) validation and certification procedure.

References/links

- Law on provisions for reforms of labour market policy in a perspective of growth (Law 92/2012).
- CGIL and Dandolo, 2013.

Box 4. **Fondimpresa's strategy to promote unconventional training activities in Italy**

Who introduced it?

Fondimpresa is the biggest joint interprofessional training fund in Italy. It is open to businesses of every size and industry. According to Italian law on continuing training, 0.30% is withheld from the pay check of every worker, whether in the private or public sector, to finance CVET. These contributions are managed by the training funds. If an organisation does not adhere to a training fund, its contribution is managed by the public system.

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Why was it introduced?

To create incentives for use of unconventional training methodologies that guarantee flexibility and customisation that better respond to specific needs of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

What are the main elements?

Award of funds for training activities in periodical calls for tender issued by Fondimpresa is the responsibility of a committee of experts that assesses tenders based on their quality and against a strategic objective of the fund. Since 2008, Fondimpresa decided to include experimentation with unconventional training modes (such as action learning, coaching, mentoring, on-the-job training and distance learning) among their priorities. Financial incentives have also been provided.

How does it influence WBL-CVET?

This creates a more WBL-friendly framework in general CVET. According to statistics, this kind of activity was carried out in 15% of training hours.

References/links

- Fondimpresa, 2012.

1.1.3.3. *Example of a 'just allowing' policy for work-based learning in CVET: France*

France does not have a specific, explicit and identifiable approach to work-based learning in its CVET system. It lacks explicit recognition of work-based learning as a regular delivery method in its formal CVET system, and also prominent CVET programmes specifically requiring use of work-based learning. Criteria 1 and 2 are therefore not sufficiently met. Work-based CVET can be financed however, through *organismes paritaires collecteurs agréés* (OPCAs), which are training funds. For a training to be eligible for OPCA funds, parts of it must contain practical elements, which include work-based learning. As regards recognition, France has a system called validation of experience (*validation des acquis de l'expérience* or VAE). VAE means that an applicant can be granted a university degree, diploma or professional certificate, in part or fully based on work experience (a minimum of three years' experience is required) ([22]). Stakeholder participation in this recognition system suggests they support the work-based CVET concept.

Table 5. **Generic models of governance for CVET and work-based CVET**

	Model 1 Unregulated employer-led governance	Model 2 Policy- and top-down-led governance	Model 3 Semi-regulated and corporatist governance
Employers	Determine training quantity ([a]), content and financing	Possible de facto delegation ([b]) to comanage training quantity, content and standards with providers at local/sectoral levels	Co-responsible ([c]) for training quantity, content, standards and financing
State and/or regions	None	Determine training quantity, content, standards and financing	
Employees	None	None	
Training providers	On demand	Possible de facto delegation ([b]) to comanage training quantity, content and standards with employers at local/sectoral levels	On demand

([a]) Quantity is the volume resulting from supply and demand interaction in a liberal market training model, or the volume set by the responsible entities in a top-down or corporatist model.
([b]) As the State and public regional authorities may lack sufficient information and control of sectoral and local circumstances, they may implicitly give up their orienting power to employers and training providers, who thus de facto exert it.
([c]) Social partners act through collective agreements or proposing legislation to government.
Source: Cedefop, forthcoming.

1.1.4. Governance of work-based CVET

Within the framework set by country policy, stakeholders implement their work-based learning activities in CVET, pursuing their different interests, finding compromises and making decisions. Governance models describe the overall lines along which this implementation activity is organised ([23]). Governance of CVET can be described according to how roles and responsibilities are distributed among stakeholders (Table 5). Differences appear across countries.

([22]) The applicant must write an application which can be rejected, accepted or partially accepted. In the latter case, the board will suggest actions which the applicant can take to have the application accepted. Subject to some minimum requirements, everybody can apply for validation of their work experience.
([23]) Governance here is defined according to United Nations' Commission on Global Governance as 'the process of developing and discussing different interests of stakeholders and finding compromises and accepted decisions: governance is the sum of the many ways individuals and institutions, public and private, manage their common affairs. It is a continuing process through which conflicting or diverse interests may be accommodated or cooperative action may be taken. It includes formal institutions and regimes empowered to enforce compliance, as well as informal arrangements that people and institutions either have agreed to or perceive to be in their interest' (Commission on Global Governance, 1995). The concept of governance goes far beyond that of government, which refers to a system of institutions as executive authorities for control and administration in the interest of the State.

In a given country, however, analysis does not suggest that governance of work-based CVET is different from that prevailing for CVET in general.

A major observation is that in a given country, all segments of CVET do not necessarily follow the same governance style. The major distinction is between CVET for people in employment and that for the unemployed. The governance model applied may be different from one segment to another. A good example is France.

In France, CVET for people in employment is governed following Model 3. Employers assess training needs in their companies and submit funding applications to OPCAs. OPCAs are regional or sectoral training funds accrued by enterprises' regulatory contributions and jointly managed by representatives of trade unions and employers' associations. Social partners are thus responsible for setting the priorities for training quantity, content and standards. OPCAs receive funding applications from enterprises (and employees), and decide which ones will be funded. The system is organised in concertation with public authorities. As people in employment make up the bulk of the labour force, CVET as a whole can be presented as governed according to Model 3 in France. However, this does not mean that the overall governance style applies to each and every part of CVET. On the contrary, enclaves may exist. The most obvious is CVET for the unemployed, where responsibility on quantity, content, standards and financing lies with public national and regional authorities, and a major operational role is attributed to the public employment service. Social partners' corporatism does not prevail there.

Another example for classification is provided by Bulgaria where overall governance of CVET policy is under responsibility of the State. A reform to introduce a dual education system including CVET is currently under consideration by State authorities (Ministry of Economy and Energy, Ministry of Education and Science, Ministry of Labour and Social Policy and the Bulgarian SME promotion agency), but with no involvement of social partners (at least in the initial phases). While this policy is seen by public authorities as a need for the private sector, employers are to be consulted only at a later stage. Public authorities (National Agency for Vocational Education and Training) also have responsibility for licensing internal training centres set up by big private companies. CVET for employed persons that will result in attainment of a professional qualification as defined in *national education requirements* ([24]) is

([24]) National education requirements (Държавни образователни изиксвания) for different vocations are published in the State Gazette (Държавен вестник) and provided on the web page of the National Agency for Vocational Education and Training (NAVET): http://www.navet.government.bg/bg/doi/doi_dv. The list (in English) of available requirements can be found here: http://www.navet.government.bg/en/ser_en_main/en_ser_list_avail

also regulated, for example with respect to curricula or qualifications of trainers. However, not every aspect of CVET is regulated top-down. Employers have control of analysis of internal training needs and on scope, design, content, standards and implementation of training implemented, provided they finance it themselves and official national qualifications are not required. In that sense, CVET and work-based CVET in Bulgaria can be regarded as an illustration of Model 2, with room (de facto delegation) left to employers on aspects which public authorities do not wish to handle directly by themselves.

England tends to illustrate Model 1, at least to a certain extent. Volume and content there are largely governed by forces of demand and supply between employers and training providers. However, State financing plays an important role through direct subsidies to training providers that thus have in practice an important role in initiating training. So the system seems to be a non-regulated employer-led one, but with elements of policy orientations. Reforms in preparation seem likely soon to move England further in a direction of a non-regulated employer-led system.

Italy shows a much more mixed governance approach. Quantity and content are determined by liberal market relationships between employers and providers. Enterprises are responsible for assessing their own skills' needs and designing training plans, including curricula and methodologies (with help from training providers and/or external experts when necessary). The central government (Ministry of Labour) plays a role in setting standards through laying down general guidelines and ensuring minimum quality standards for CVET in general. Enterprises are also responsible for activating appropriate financial channels for funding training activities: they may draw on their own budgets, or apply either for joint interprofessional funds or for funds made available by regional governments. The system's mixed nature is likely to be reinforced in the near future as planned introduction of tools such as training vouchers (for example in Piedmont, Veneto, Friuli Venezia Giulia, Emilia Romagna, and Sardinia) will further empower the demand side; and, on the other hand, social partners are playing an increasing role in defining content and modes of training.

1.2. Role of work-based CVET in lifelong learning

Analyses of programmes for reintegration of low-qualified unemployed adults into the labour market (Cedefop, 2013b) have unveiled a specific role of work-based CVET in lifelong learning.

These programmes were developed in several countries over the past decade. They aim at improving beneficiaries' basic skills ([25]), job-specific competencies and job-seeking skills. Accurately analysing training needs of learners from the beginning is of particular importance for success of the training, and has been identified as a good practice (Box 5).

Box 5. **Induction process in the French ACI programme**

Elaborated approaches to induction enable delivery organisations to develop a thorough understanding of participants' needs, and individual tailoring of programmes. When a person arrives at the *ateliers et chantiers d'insertion* (integration workshops and worksites, ACI) delivery organisation, a detailed initial diagnosis is carried out, using the tools (grids) developed by the *chantier école* (worksite schools) network. This diagnosis covers both the technical skills and capacities required for the work they will be carrying out (there are currently 56 different booklets for technical skills for different professions), and their key competencies (conduct and basic skills). The process is clearly explained to beneficiaries, to assess 'what they have forgotten or don't know yet' and which skills they need to learn to get a job. An individual 'progress assessment booklet' with clear progression grids is set up for each participant covering these two types of skills, which will stay with them throughout the programme and against which they will be assessed periodically.

Source: Cedefop, 2013b, pp. 67-68.

Learning activities can be located off-the-job only (such as the Danish vocational basic education for adults programme – *Grunduddannelse for voksne*, GVU). Off-the-job locations sometimes consist in simulated work environments. Learning activities can also be located only at the workplace (such as the French integration workshops and worksites programme – *Ateliers et chantiers d'insertion*, ACI); or they can be performed in alternance in both types of locations (such as the Estonian labour market training programme).

In the learning centre segment, emphasis is put on role playing, group working, observation, study trips (to firms or other work-related institutions,

([25]) Mother tongue communication (generally considered as the most important), learning skills (learning to learn), mathematics, digital competencies, social and civic competencies, and sense of initiative and entrepreneurship.

etc.) and individual project work. Role play is used for example for improving job interview skills or teamwork behaviour. Group work helps develop competence in handling teamwork situations. Both methods help learners share ideas and experiences, and realise that others may share their problems, which can help deal with lack of self-esteem and confidence. Attempts to make classroom teaching more attractive and suitable to the target group are made through use of small groups (maximum of five participants), discussion groups, one-to-one supported training, giving and receiving feedback.

In the work placement segment, focus is usually put on developing job-specific skills, acquiring work experience, learning appropriate attitudes and behaviour, developing social competencies, and networking with employers.

When the programme combines both types of segments, the centre-based phase often serves to prepare participants for work placement, where they will use what they have learned, realise its value and consolidate it. In some programmes, beneficiaries can also receive individual coaching or support from a mentor. Support provides 'a security net to keep the participant on the course'.

Particular importance of work-based CVET in this context comes from beneficiaries' specific situations. Low-qualified adults have often not been successful at school when younger and this may have resulted in a negative attitude towards learning. This often leads to a vicious cycle in which early failure prompts rejection and lack of engagement with learning, leading to further failure in learning.

Work-based learning offers a different mode of learning more suitable to them. It basically contrasts with traditional schooling, as it is by definition practical and inspired by the learning-by-doing approach. Work-based CVET is also different from traditional learning because instead of proposing juxtaposed specialised content, it integrates content under an umbrella of the work objective, thus both extending their scope and making them more meaningful.

Work-based learning also differs from traditional learning as it combines different learning methods, using not only classroom modules based on textbooks and lectures but also observation, action, experience and reflection on practice, thus offering more chances to fit learners' various learning styles.

Work-based CVET thus constitutes an alternative that offers those with prior negative learning experience, a second chance to resume learning in a different way that might be more appropriate to them. It allows them to rebuild self-confidence and possibly engage in further training and qualification.

A further and non-negligible aspect of this process is impact on family. Examples show that success gained in recouping with learning is also recognised in personal life. Family members who themselves failed feel success of their relatives as a source of motivation that pushes them to return to learning. Initial success then paves the way for a virtuous cycle. This is important because coming from a disadvantaged background increases the risk that children might experience difficulties at school and in the labour market later on. The 2013 PIAAC ([26]) study emphasised the family background's role in construction of 'information processing' skills (OECD, 2013, pp. 111-112). Therefore, work-based CVET's impact on lifelong learning also builds on breaking a cycle of disadvantage across generations.

Analyses (Cedefop, 2013b) highlighted some success factors for this form of work-based CVET to have a positive impact on lifelong learning. Thorough initial assessment of learners' needs is important. This includes assessment and validation processes for prior learning, and continuous monitoring of the learning process through individual training plans offering staged development with clear goals and progression and continuous monitoring. Valuing a whole range of skills (whether basic or job-specific) and attitudes, finding the right balance between theoretical and practical learning, integrating learning, and linking learning acquired in different settings is important too. Finally, it proves effective to provide mentoring to accompany the learning process (to foster motivation and develop self-confidence) and support to help learners deal with practical obstacles, such as financial difficulties or childcare.

1.3. Work-based CVET and employment

Cedefop's analyses (Cedefop, 2013b) show that work-based CVET helps tackle adult unemployment from three angles: improving confidence, restoring work habits and providing job opportunities.

First, lack of confidence appears to be a major obstacle to employment. People away from employment for a while may see the workplace as an unfamiliar environment and may have difficulties in understanding how to deal with it and how to fit in. For example, they may feel unable to meet people and interact with them. In this regard, the workplace dimension of work-based CVET appears particularly relevant to tackle a lack of familiarity with the work environment and help people regain confidence.

([26]) Programme for the international assessment of adult competencies.

Second, attitude to work is a major determinant of access to employment. The same Cedefop survey (Cedefop, 2013b) shows that many employers prefer to employ a worker who demonstrates suitable work attitudes. Attitude to work includes interest in and motivation to work; understanding what behaviour is (in)appropriate in a work environment; reliability; punctuality; and willingness to try new things. Work-based CVET is crucial in this regard too, as it provides those out of work for a long time with a locus for practising and recovering appropriate behaviour and communication skills.

Third, a major barrier to employment is lack of opportunities. Employers fear recruiting applicants not ready for work. They, therefore, will not hire applicants they lack sufficient information about. Work-based CVET programmes play an essential role on this front. Training providers that operate these programmes build trusting relationships with employers. Employers themselves may be keen to be involved in programmes, particularly if they see these as a means to recruit (in particular when faced with recruitment difficulties), a source of suitably trained workers, and a way to test people before recruiting them. Based on these trusting relationships, training providers play a role of labour market intermediaries and develop signalling and matching actions. On the signalling side, they make sure that programme participants have sufficiently developed basic key competencies, job-readiness skills and attitudes, before proposing them for work placements, and they will put forward programme achievers who are job-ready. On the matching side, training providers plug their job-ready trainees into their network of contacts and potential employers. Employment fairs sometimes organised by training providers are examples of these matching actions.

Signalling and matching are essential roles for training providers to be seen as credible both by employers and trainees. For providers to succeed in these roles, work placements must be well prepared and successful. This induces a risk of bias as training providers can tend to select more 'easy-to-place' applicants for participation in their programmes. At least, a common observation is that the most disadvantaged and the most in need are often not given priority for access to programmes. Cedefop's study observed that 'only a few programmes actually set a priority for specific disadvantaged groups, in particular those with low qualification levels, while, in addition, certain criteria in the recruitment process effectively meant that more "easy-to-place" participants joined the programmes […]. Prioritisation of people furthest from the labour market appears to be rare, apparent only in three of the investigated programmes (Spain, France and Sweden)' (Cedefop, 2013b, p. 64). The dilemma is that although having people easy to place helps raise

a programme's performance, image and attractiveness, not giving priority to people most in need means resources are used below their full potential.

The conclusions are clear however. For work-based CVET to be effective in supporting return to work, it is important that training providers ensure 'work-readiness' of learners before start of work placements; arrange opportunities for contacts between learners and employers not only through work placements but also study visits or employment fairs; and develop close cooperation and relationships of trust with employers.

A side effect of creating contacts with employers is it can help change employers' negative views on groups such as the low-skilled, and (long-term) unemployed, and turn around their prejudices.

1.4. Work-based CVET as a factor of corporate innovation

In-company work-based learning is a factor of innovation insofar as it is integrated into a specific work process of an enterprise and helps cope with complexity in work organisation. Cedefop's analyses show that work organisation is crucial in the relationship between CVET and innovation (Cedefop, 2012a). Its most decisive feature is complexity of tasks. In complex work organisation, employees need to interact and deal with various tasks and purposes which require a wide variety of actions to complete assignments successfully. Processes of planning and organising as well as feedback loops, correcting phases and frequent changes, including tasks and requirements, are part of this complexity. Complex work contexts challenge employees, increase their need for learning, reflecting and thinking, motivate them to acquire the necessary knowledge, skills and competences (KSCs), and increase their ability to transfer their KSCs to new potential problems. Complex work organisation thus both stimulates knowledge growth and supports innovation.

Cedefop demonstrated that a positive effect of complex work organisation spreads beyond innovation. As complex work organisation challenges employees' skills, it mitigates risks of skill obsolescence (Cedefop, 2012c) and reduces likelihoods of skills mismatches (Cedefop, 2012e). In addition, ongoing research tends to show that firms with complex work organisation need to recruit more skilled individuals, which in turn positively impacts on productivity.

The link between CVET and work organisation indicates that what matters is in-company CVET rather than CVET offered by external providers. In-

company CVET refers to learning activities designed and managed by the enterprise itself. A reason for a stronger effect of in-company training on innovation is that it is firm-specific and therefore more likely to be applied during a specific work process of the enterprise. It is also more likely to integrate better into the firm's innovation process. Statistical analyses confirm that in-company CVET courses have a greater impact than external courses on innovation (Cedefop 2012a, p. 42). When it comes to comparing courses with 'other forms of training', which include on-the-job training and job rotation, innovative effects of alternative forms of learning prove stronger than courses. This confirms that the impact on innovation is higher with work-based learning, when learning activities are embedded in daily performance of work tasks and are more firm-specific. Table 6 shows correlation coefficients between innovation and three forms of CVET.

Table 6. **Correlations between the innovation index and three types of CVET: average for 28 European countries, 2005-06**

	External CVT courses	Internal CVT courses	Internal work-based CVET
Correlation with innovation index	0.28	0.49	0.68

Source: Based on Cedefop, 2012a, p. 42.

Cedefop's investigation of European countries' developments showed they could be clustered into five categories depending on their use of work-based learning, spread of learning-conducive work organisation, and their innovation performance (Table 7). It can be seen that Denmark, Germany and Sweden demonstrate intensive use of work-based learning and widespread learning-conducive work organisation, and they have highest levels of innovation performance.

These analyses highlight CVET's and work-based CVET's importance for corporate innovation. However, these CVET-related issues are usually ignored in 'research, development and innovation' (R&D&I) reporting. In this connection, higher education indicators (such as number or proportion of science and engineering graduates) are widely recognised for their importance with regard to innovation, and are, therefore, integrated in R&D&I reporting systems. This is justified by established empirical relationships between these higher education indicators and innovation performance. Analyses show that CVET may have an even stronger relationship with innovation performance

Table 7. **Clustering European countries in terms of use of work-based learning, spread of learning-conducive work organisation, and innovation performance**

High type Intensive use of work-based learning Widespread use of learning-conducive work organisation High level of innovation performance	Denmark, Germany, Sweden
Solid type Moderate use of work-based learning Widespread use of learning-conducive work organisation Moderate to high level of innovation performance	Belgium, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Austria, Finland
Moderate 1 type Moderate use of work-based learning Widespread use of learning-conducive work organisation Moderate level of innovation performance	Estonia, Malta, Norway
Moderate 2 type Low use of work-based learning Low spread of learning-conducive work organisation Moderate level of innovation performance	Czech Republic, Ireland, Greece, Spain, France, Italy, Cyprus, Portugal, Slovenia, United Kingdom
Low type Low use of work-based learning Low spread of learning-conducive work organisation Low level of innovation performance	Bulgaria, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovakia

Source: Based on Cedefop, 2012a, p. 45.

than higher education. It should, therefore, also be considered for a more complete picture of critical factors supporting innovation capacity of enterprises and countries.

1.5. Conclusions

Approached through its multidimensionality and diversity of its stakeholders, work-based CVET certainly appears as a promising element of the European policy toolbox for lifelong learning, employment and innovation. The above analysis shows that work-based CVET covers between one fifth and one third of the European population in employment, and that it is practised in very diverse ways in European enterprises. At country level, models of work-based CVET policies ('conducive', 'just allowing' and 'unconcerned', depending on their degree of openness to this form of learning) can be identified. Governance models (unregulated, top-down and corporatist) are emerging too. Analysis also shows that work-based CVET is a unique tool to address further learning and employment of the low-qualified and is at the same time a powerful conveyor of corporate innovation. Work-based CVET has, therefore, the potential to promote adult participation in lifelong learning, and contribute to other major EU policy objectives, combating low-skills traps and inequity in distribution of key 'information-processing' skills ([27]), promoting inclusion, tackling adult unemployment and underemployment, and supporting innovation, competitiveness and growth.

Although specific provisions of EU policy for work-based CVET are limited and do not cover such important issues as the pedagogical methods to use, their message is nevertheless very clear: work-based CVET should be included as part of a comprehensive adult learning strategy where all forms of adult learning are combined, with objectives of covering a whole range of skills and promoting flexibility of provision to reach social inclusion, fit all learners' situations and needs. Countries that have put in place conducive policies for work-based CVET have shown the way forward.

However, challenges that need to be addressed are many. Work-based CVET suffers from lack of visibility and understanding, in the first place due to absence of unified and meaningful terminology among stakeholders across enterprises and countries. Principles, functioning, costs and benefits of work-based CVET are also often not known or well understood. There is, therefore, a need for highlighting successful experiences that could be used as references to promote the approach. There is also a need for better recognition of work-based CVET's potential in supporting innovation capacity of enterprises and countries.

([27]) Literacy, numeracy and problem-solving in technology-rich environments (OECD, 2013, p. 23).

Another limitation is enterprises, training providers and trainers willing to implement work-based CVET sometimes lack necessary pedagogical guidelines and materials. Development of toolboxes and methodological guidelines for work-based CVET would be welcome. Improvements in training of trainers are also necessary. What is pointed out here is not a CVET trainer's general knowledge, but their particular ability in enrooting learning activities in performance of work tasks; showing the learner how to observe and analyse work tasks to identify learning points; how to conduct reflection and develop reflexive practice; how to reconstruct concepts and knowledge from that basis; how to apply these learning outcomes in the work process; and how to continue experimenting and learning through work over time. There is a need for introducing at least some minimum requirements and criteria for qualification of trainers/mentors in specifics of work-based CVET, to ensure high quality and effectiveness of their interventions. Introducing a qualification for trainers who have obtained the necessary professional skills and competences to provide work-based learning could be considered.

Access to funding is another issue. Though financial support is available in VET in general, the procedures to access them specifically for work-based CVET are often felt to be lengthy, time-consuming and extremely rigid. This applies to both the ESF and national public funding. Application procedures for micro, small and medium-sized enterprises and the resulting administrative burden, are often felt as not well-suited to their needs. Dealing with documentary requirements for applications for funding under both ESF and national funds is often mentioned as an issue in several countries, for example Bulgaria, Italy, Denmark and (though to a lesser extent) Croatia, Cyprus and the Netherlands. Only large companies can afford to hire consultants to prepare applications for them. Procedures need to be simplified especially for smaller firms. These should be given (more) access to support services (information and administrative assistance).

Lack of validation procedures is a barrier. Work-based CVET programmes do not systematically lead to a full qualification; most often, they simply lead to a certificate of completion. Making this approach to adult learning attractive requires that recognition, validation and certification procedures be put in place for skills acquired through work-based learning.

Finally, it is not easy to analyse a field and make an informed decision without an appropriate set of data. Yet, in work-based CVET, comprehensive and reliable statistical data on participation are lacking. Policy-makers should encourage improvement of existing data on participation in non-formal CVET, non-formal work-based CVET, and work-based CVET among the population in employment. They should encourage and support harmonisation of indicators across surveys. They should also encourage development of reliable statistical data on participation of the unemployed and the inactive in formal and informal CVET and work-based CVET.

CHAPTER 2

Learning and guidance for labour market transitions

Supporting labour market transition is a major challenge for continuing vocational education and training (CVET). Labour market transitions are diverse. They include geographical moves, in particular workers' mobility across European labour markets, including labour immigration from third countries. Labour market transitions also include status moves (change in individuals' labour market status) and age-related moves (the change towards becoming 'silver workers').

Geographical mobility of labour across Europe is one of the oldest objectives of the European Communities. It is a condition for labour availability for enterprises, sustainable wage rates, low inflation, competitiveness and growth. Immigration from third countries plays the same role and has attracted increased policy interest as the European population and workforce are ageing. Demographic ageing also raises interest in age-related transition. As noted by the European Commission in its 2014 communication *Taking stock of the Europe 2020 strategy*, 'the working age population is set to decline and will increasingly consist of older workers' (European Commission, 2014b, p. 9). Policies of working age extension will reinforce this trend. In that context, it becomes crucial to understand better how workers cross the age threshold (how they experience the shift to a position of older worker), how they can maintain positive and productive participation at work, and what is needed for enabling them to do so.

Labour market transitions also include status moves. First, a consequence of demographic ageing is reinforcement of activation policies which will cause part of the economically inactive to move towards the labour market. This move will have to be framed and accompanied. Second, labour market status moves also refer to career-related transitions. Globalisation, economic uncertainty, crises and change, standing level of high unemployment, and increasing labour market flexibility which enterprises need to ensure competitiveness, have made career courses more uncertain. This has attracted attention to a growing need for career management competencies.

Addressing the challenges posed by labour market transitions is crucial for reaching EU policy objectives. Labour availability for enterprises, employment, competitiveness and growth is at stake. This points to a need for individuals to develop appropriate autonomy, adaptability, mobility and career management skills. CVET has a role to play to address these challenges. Participating in CVET can help individuals find the tools they need to navigate labour market transitions.

Taking the perspective of CVET acting as an interface between learning and the labour market, this chapter will analyse learning and guidance's potential for addressing labour market transition. Section 2.1 will present learning's role in assisting career and professional development. It will analyse how learning can promote adaptability through improving and linking identity and skills development. Section 2.2 will analyse how guidance can support career transition. It will discuss how guidance can help keep older workers in work through tackling the dispositional and situational barriers they are faced with; and how systematic provision of guidance and cooperation with migrant communities support migrant workers' integration. Approaching these issues at different levels (dispositional, situational and systemic) from a range of stakeholders' standpoints (workers, organisations, social groups) will point to links between learning, guidance and work. Challenges for future policy will be identified and discussed in conclusion.

2.1. Learning to cope with flexibility and uncertainty

Learning, in various forms (formal, non-formal and informal) both inside and outside the workplace, is a vital factor in the transition from one type of job to another. Especially, learning plays a central role in enabling workers to manage transitions at the workplace. Learning helps drive transitions but transitions may also drive the need for learning. Such is the case, for example, when persons change jobs and are faced with challenging tasks that urge them to engage in some learning to improve performance.

Learning's role in labour market transitions can be analysed using a tridimensional model (Cedefop, 2014c). The model is based on the idea that learning is: (a) a process of building identity, and (b) a process of skills development, that (c) take place in a context. Successful use of learning for career and labour market transition depends on the individual's ability to switch back and forth between these three aspects of learning.

2.1.1. Learning as a process of building identity

Identities are various meanings attached to an individual by self and others, and are displayed in attitudes, behaviour and the stories we tell about ourselves to ourselves and others. Occupational identities are associated with work roles, while personal identities are based on personal characteristics, attitudes and behaviour individuals display or which others attribute to them. The first element for an occupational identity to emerge is self-awareness: individuals need reflexive awareness that they have an occupation and what this means to them. They need to be able to monitor what it means to engage with particular ways of thinking, practising and being associated with an occupation. Often allied to this is a sense of personal agency, where an individual is conscious of making and acting upon a choice (with some sense of possible alternatives), particularly as a process of occupational choice has become more extended and complex. Development of occupational identity also requires recognition by others, as identities are socially constructed. Meaning-making is also a key component of occupational identity development. All these aspects need time to be developed, and going through them represents a first dimension of individuals' learning for professional development.

Personal qualities aid processes of occupational identity development. They include a sense of personal agency, namely the ability to exert control over and give direction to one's life. Learning to be more 'self-organising' is itself underpinned by self-efficacy and self-belief. Other important factors of identity development are resilience, and motivation and career adaptability, in other words, learning to take on different roles across a developing career, negotiate transitions successfully and cope with traumas in occupational roles.

With respect to developing identity, the key challenge from a policy, organisational and counselling standpoint is how best to support individuals to invest time and effort in honing their personal qualities. Although no ready-to-use toolbox exists, research suggests that in adaptability skills, at least, three major approaches to learning could be considered. Career adaptability could be fostered across a course of working life through:

(a) challenging work. Learning through challenging work includes mastering practical, cognitive and communicative demands linked with particular work roles and work processes. Challenging work can help individuals adapt across their careers through iterative interaction between work and personal development. Mastering challenging work can help build a platform from which to adapt to work in other fields;
(b) interaction at work. Learning also develops through interaction at work.

Opportunities for 'learning by interacting' are often seen as a key component of learning-rich jobs, where workers can learn from interacting with colleagues, customers, clients, etc. Participation in and learning through interacting within communities and networks is a vehicle to develop expertise, including how to communicate effectively in different contexts. Interactions may be formalised, but more informal personal networks and relationships are also learning conveyors;

(c) self-directedness. Being self-directed at work helps take advantage of learning opportunities and aids individual development. One special aspect of being self-directed relates to being self-reflexive, namely being able to identify a current skill set and how this might be improved and extended. Those who make successful transitions are often self-directed in either or both their learning and development, and their careers more generally. The link between being self-directed in one's own learning and development and making successful transitions is transparent: learning to adapt and continue to develop in one's current job, even in less than ideal circumstances, provides a basis for making successful future transitions. There is also a psychological dimension to being self-directed and successful in making a major transition: it reinforces self-confidence that one would be able to do this again in future. Individuals who see that their skills can be transferred to other contexts have significant advantages in changing career direction over those who define themselves almost exclusively by their occupational and organisational attachments. This advantage stems from the former having a dynamic sense of themselves as being able to navigate their own routes through the labour market, while the latter are dependent on pathways linked to a particular organisation or occupation. Self-directed people are in charge of their own destinies which is an important component of adaptability ([28]).

2.1.2. **Learning as a process of skills development**

This second dimension includes relational, cognitive, practical and emotional development. Relational development could be supported through promoting interaction at work. Updating a substantive knowledge base or mastering a new additional substantive knowledge base and any subsequent technical aspects are usual ways for allowing cognitive development. Project work, changing ways of working, reflection on practice, in particular in challenging

([28]) However, progress has still to be made in fully understanding how development of self-directedness in people can be supported and promoted.

work environments, are factors of practical development. Finally, emotional development can take place through engagement, the search for meaning in work, understanding views of others, and also reflexivity that leads to greater self-understanding.

2.1.3. **Learning as a process that takes place in context**

Learning is a process that takes place in a context of opportunities offered to individuals. These opportunities include for example openness of employer recruitment practices; progression to and permeability with higher education from VET; recognition of prior learning; support structures (such as family, personal networks, public employment services); career guidance; and extent of opportunities for learning for personal development.

2.1.4. **Addressing all three aspects is vital for transition**

Learning for career transitions may start with any of the three aspects of the process. Wherever the starting point, all three aspects must be addressed: skills development requires identity formation and will be defined by the opportunities available (context).

Cedefop's analyses of individual biographies show that those who made a series of successful transitions in the labour market, also had, either explicitly or implicitly, worked out all three aspects. Where development in one domain was lacking, this almost always represented a serious skills gap which affected performance and/or opportunities for progression. Active labour market policies and support structures such as guidance services should be able to help workers follow the right approach. They should offer support for identity development, skills development, and for navigating opportunity structures.

This echoes the T-shaped ([29]) skills profiles' concept, specialist expertise coupled with broad general or soft skills. Many educational institutions and mechanisms, in particular in VET, already apply this pattern, for example dual forms of learning in higher education. It should be more prevalent in all forms of VET. Narrow focus on technical skills for immediate employability can lead to locking people into low-skilled employment, while opening up all domains of identity and skills development not only offers immediate prospects but also provides a foundation for continuing learning and career development.

([29]) A human resources management metaphor to describe a profile of somebody who has in-depth knowledge of a given field of specialism (the vertical bar) associated with a broad understanding of other disciplines (the horizontal bar).

2.2. Guidance to support career and professional development

In 2008, a Council of the EU resolution on better integrating lifelong guidance into lifelong learning strategies acknowledged guidance's importance and set priorities for guidance policies in the EU: encouraging development of career management skills; widening access to guidance for people of all ages and backgrounds; assuring quality of career guidance provision; and improving coordination and cooperation among stakeholders (Council of the EU, 2008).

Guidance is a major dimension of CVET. It helps people make informed decisions on investing in CVET. Guidance supports learners in choosing appropriate opportunities and reducing risk of drop-outs. It highlights benefits of investing in CVET, and eases learners' use of the CVET offer. Career guidance helps people choose their learning for upskilling and reskilling but also in managing career transitions by maintaining a positive self-image (even when transitions are not working out). Guidance can play that role provided attention is focused on specific needs of individuals, in particular building confidence and resilience, improving access to specialist information, finding motivation, getting clear and new insights. Workers who have benefited from guidance services acknowledge that this has resulted in direct and positive change in their situations, developing strategic career thinking; being pointed in the right direction; being given alternative options and ideas to consider. Guidance thus appears as a powerful factor of CVET attractiveness and effectiveness.

Positive effects of guidance on work transitions and helping to navigate opportunity structures can be particularly well illustrated in two specific cases, those of older and migrant workers. Providing guidance increases older employees' self-confidence, job satisfaction and motivation. Guidance improves their willingness to stay in their jobs, learn new skills, transfer expertise, and continue working as productively as possible until retirement. For migrant workers, guidance provides them with better information; increased self-awareness, self-confidence, motivation and autonomy; increased enrolment in VET and general education; higher rates of completion of learning and integration programmes; improved access to traineeships and internships; better job mobility; successful business start-ups; and better understanding of the receiving country's society and culture. The next sections explain how these benefits can be reached.

2.2.1. Older workers

Guidance is of particular importance in a context of an ageing workforce. Older workers are faced with specific systemic, situational and dispositional challenges. While systemic challenges refer to law and socioeconomic conditions, situational challenges refer to life contexts (whether social, organisational or family), and the dispositional side relates to attitudes and self-perceptions. Table 8 sums up some of these challenges (Cedefop, 2014a).

Table 8. **Overview of challenges for keeping older workers employed**

Systemic barriers	Situational barriers	Dispositional barriers
Eligible pension age	Social attitudes in the workplace and expectations towards older workers	The generally negative image of older workers could form a self-fulfilling prophecy
Legislation and tax/benefit structures regarding early retirement	Lack of age aware human resource policies and guidance activities	Loss of confidence and self-esteem and unwillingness to learn or tiredness
Lack of access to active labour market services after retirement age	Companies' cost-benefit analyses of investments in training older workers	Lack of vocational qualifications and practical skills (outdated skills)
The economic situation and demographic developments	Family circumstances (caring responsibilities for senior family members)	Internal urges to exchange work for leisure or a life away from formal work (voluntary)
Society's view/perception/ prejudices towards older workers	Working conditions and work structures which do not directly support further learning	The ability to manage and cope with change in later life
Lack of incentive for companies to deploy active age management strategies	Changing and emerging career development models and flexibility of the labour market	Lack of understanding of how the labour market operates
Lack of guidance and lifelong learning opportunities	Older workers competencies concentrate increasingly on a specialised field of work	Age-related health problems

Source: Cedefop, 2014a

Career guidance is particularly appropriate for tackling situational and dispositional barriers. Cedefop's analyses show that organisations provide work-related guidance within a framework of overarching approaches dictated by their specific contexts. Depending on a firm's situation, the overarching

approach can be focused on, for example, training and lifelong learning; career development; working time flexibility to offer older employees an opportunity to rearrange or reduce their working hours; health protection, with guidance activities to help employees create a healthy work life (through participation in health checks and fitness activities, etc.); redeployment, with guidance to support job retraining and job search; or transition to retirement, with guidance activities to inform and advise employees about consequences of retirement (such as its effects on income and lifetime) (Cedefop, 2014a, pp. 73-74).

Once the overarching approach is adopted, companies accordingly select the appropriate guidance tools. A wide range of tools are usually mobilised. Table 9 lists the most frequent.

Table 9. **Career guidance activities for older workers**

Name	Description
Signposting	Information on guidance provision and outreach to older workers
Informing	Information about career opportunities available, according to life stage and career path
Advising	Helping individuals and groups to interpret information and choose the most appropriate option, regarding retraining, career management skills (CMS) development, redeployment options, among others
Counselling	Working with individuals to help them discover, clarify, assess and understand their own experience, and explore alternatives and their possible implementation
Mentoring	Offering client-focused support – Can also work as intergenerational dynamic allowing common development and exchange of knowledge among workers in different career and life stages
Assessing	Helping individuals, by formal and informal means, to obtain a structured understanding of their personal, educational, and vocational development – for experienced workers, assessment of their skills, needs and aspirations is a fundamental step to plan the mature career stage
Teaching and training	Learner-centred experience to enable individuals to acquire KSCs, related to making career management, educational, and career decisions and transitions – can refer both to technical and key skills, such as social interaction or ICT skills
Sampling	Providing work experience, work trials, learning tasters, and other experiences that enable individuals to gain first-hand experience to assist and clarify decisions – for experienced workers, it might open pathways to redeployment in different functions from those performed

Name	Description
Enabling	Supporting (groups of) older workers in dealing with organisations providing or influencing employment and learning opportunities
Advocating	Negotiating directly with organisations on behalf of individuals or groups for whom there may be additional barriers to access – for example, older workers frequently need organised representation before their employers
Following up	Keeping in touch with individuals after main guidance interventions
Networking	Establishing links with a range of individuals and organisations, such as employment services, social security, civil associations, to support and improve guidance provision
Feedback	Gathering information on needs of individuals or groups and encourage providers of opportunities to respond by adapting or developing provision for specific age groups
Managing	Managing guidance activities in a coherent programme, with the necessary human and organisation resources, and evaluation
Innovation / system change	Supporting developments and changes in origination and guidance practices to improve quality and organisation of provision, to better serve integrated career support along the life-span

Source: Cedefop, 2014a, pp. 25-26.

A good practice observed in some enterprises from the Czech Republic, Spain, France, Italy, the Netherlands and Poland is that enterprises design their overarching approaches and select their guidance methods with support and assistance from internal or external experts (experts from employers' organisations, trade unions, universities or public employment agency, etc.). Once this is done, the provision itself does not necessarily require a formally dedicated structure. Enterprises frequently outsource provision of guidance (private consultants), or they otherwise rely on their existing human resources services or other internal actors such as supervisors/line managers, peers and other employees. Generally, these internal actors in career guidance are limited to issues where they contribute with relevant experience. When further intervention from internal actors is needed in a more comprehensive guidance role, they receive training in guidance. In some cases, staff members who upskill to be able to play a wider guidance role receive a bonus.

Two major success factors for these strategies could be identified. First, anchoring guidance activity in all levels of an organisation is important. This means involving administration, human resources department and operational

levels. It also means engaging external stakeholders, such as unions, particularly where there is a high turnover of employees and management. To maintain awareness of the guidance approach and strategy, an organisation must pay continuous attention to introducing new managers to this strategy. Otherwise, continuity can be compromised if managers are replaced. Internal communication is key.

Common trust is a second major success factor. Managers must be willing to provide guidance. This can be hindered by lack of trust in a company's strategy. Employees also become hesitant to participate if they lack trust. To reach common trust, a 'win-win situation' must be created where both parties understand and experience actual benefits of guidance.

2.2.2. **Migrant workers**

Ageing and foreseen decrease of the European population pose a challenge to supply of qualified labour and point to a need for a workforce from third countries, to complement active ageing and activation strategies. Specific action was called for in 2011 by the European *Agenda for integration of third-country nationals* (European Commission, 2011). More recently, the 2014 Commission's communication *Taking stock of the Europe 2020 strategy* has recalled the risk that ageing poses to growth, and the need for migrations from outside the EU to tackle this risk (European Commission, 2014b, p. 9).

Guidance services are important to provide the arriving workforce with quality information on the labour market and local work regulations, the system for recognition of qualifications, learning options, housing, health system, and access to knowledge of the receiving country's culture, language and institutions.

Observation of practices on the ground (Cedefop, 2014e) shows that, although still at different stages, Member States are implementing/adapting guidance to accommodate migration-related needs. From observed practices, a most frequent common pattern could be identified. Typically, arriving immigrants undergo different stages in a face-to-face guidance process. To begin with, they are received at the front office where they are introduced to and welcomed by a counsellor. In this first stage, their needs are assessed in particular regarding their skills (including language level and key competencies, such as mathematics or ICT use). Following this stage, the counsellor informs the migrant about the labour market, legislation, housing, healthcare, education and training and other practical aspects of integration. In principle, this information is targeted to needs of individuals, rather than general. Information on the procedures for recognition and validation of

qualifications, prior learning and work experience is provided as well. After the information stage, individuals may undergo a personal clarification phase which will eventually lead to establishment of a personal career plan. In the clarification phase, the immigrant's values, perceptions and expectations are assessed, which plays an important role in achieving progressive autonomy in career decision. In parallel, the migrant can be assigned to catch-up training courses as necessary (language, key competencies, culture and institutions of the host country, etc.).

In practice however, the process is not always so clear cut and may suffer many variations. It may be only partially implemented. Also, it may be scattered among different public and private providers.

Participation in these programmes is voluntary in most European countries, although language requirements are becoming standard for residence permits and nationality requests (several countries have introduced language tests). However, attendance is compulsory in some countries and is frequently a clause in 'integration contracts' signed by immigrants and public authorities (local or central). Such is the case in Belgium (Flanders) *inburgering* contract, or the *contrat d'accueil intégration* (CAI) in France. In the Netherlands, all migrants who arrived after 2007 must undergo a civic examination.

In general, access to these programmes is free of charge for migrants. Exceptions exist however, for example a small access fee in Germany, and full participation cost in the Netherlands.

2.2.2.1. *Partnerships with migrant communities*

An approach to increasing interest in guidance strategies for integrating migrant workers is partnerships between guidance services and migrant communities. Immigrant communities have strong integrative potential given their members' experience in adapting to the receiving country and in finding effective cultural equivalents and translations across cultures. Liaising with migrant communities has two major advantages. First, this allows better identification and reaching target groups, identifying their needs and potential (qualifications, skills, entrepreneurial attitude, etc.) and better tailoring provision of guidance. Second, closer links with migrant communities and their key actors can promote guidance interventions. Prominent members of an established community (employers, public figures) can act as role models and provide insight into successful career paths and access to wider social networks. Socialising contexts (schools, firms, local associations) can be used to multiply guidance interventions, and teachers, managers, and older workers

can be involved as mentors and tutors. Professional insertion offices (*Gabinetes de Inserção Profissional* – GIP) in Portugal, the 'meeting point' guidance centre in Austria, the IQ network validation centre in Berlin, the NOBI network in Hamburg and Kiel, and the training programme by immigrant entrepreneurs developed by the Interkulturelles Bildungszentrum in Manheim (Germany) provide suggestions for developing this approach (Box 6).

Box 6. **Connecting with migrant communities to improve guidance for migrant workers: some examples**

Gabinetes de Inserção Profissional – GIP (professional insertion offices), Portugal

Professional insertion offices aim at improving labour market integration of immigrants, with a prime target of reducing waiting time to obtain a job. Guidance activities include information about education and training, validation/recognition procedures, apprenticeships, labour market and, career management skills development. The services are developed by non-profit or public organisations, frequently associations of immigrants, in cooperation with the public employment service. Clients are directed to specific GIPs according to geographic or cultural criteria. The project is financed by the public employment service and coordinated by the High Commissioner for immigration and intercultural dialogue (ACIDI). All professionals involved have a degree (BA) in human sciences and receive counsellor and multicultural training by ACIDI. ACIDI also monitors the process and follows up clients.

– Project website: http://www.acidi.gov.pt/

Meeting point for information and career guidance for migrants – Austria

The 'meeting point's' main purpose is to provide a free access career support service to at-risk groups, with special emphasis on migrants and older workers. The services and activities have a broad and open access and are not mandatory. Guidance activities developed include individual counselling in several languages, multilingual collective information sessions, workshops on the training system, history and culture of the receiving country. Awareness-raising workshops are developed near to project partners, resorting to experts with immigrant backgrounds. Approaches are adapted to groups' typology (women, youth, low-skilled). The project is led by an NGO specialised in multicultural guidance – ZEBRA – and relies on a network

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composed of training centres, women's associations, public employment services, German language providers, social support organisations, hospitals, guidance centres and regional administrations.

Project website:
– http://www.stvg.com
– http://www.bildungstreff.at/bildungsberatung/angebot.html

Germany

- IQ (integration by qualification) network (Berlin) is a nationwide information and counselling network for adult immigrants covering the following fields: consulting, German at the workplace, business start-up, cultural mainstreaming, skill auditing (assessment) and vocational qualification (information and tailor-made course design). Professionals (such as from human resources services or cultural mediators) with immigrant backgrounds are involved in the project. The network is promoted by the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (BMAS) and the German Federal Employment Agency (BA). IQ acts as an umbrella network and supports regional initiatives such as NOBI.
  – More information at: http://www.netzwerk-iq.de/

- NOBI (Hamburg, Kiel) is a regional network supported by IQ network, which develops activities to enable recognition of professions developed abroad, development of standards for complementary qualifications to achieve full recognition, and intercultural training for public bodies or labour administrations. Guidance activities include information, advice and support in procedures driving to recognition of regulated professions/qualifications. NOBI also cooperates on development of the standards referred to above with the Chamber of Skilled Crafts Hamburg. Other activities include intercultural training for counsellors in job centres and agencies in Hamburg and Kiel, networking of organisations to support business start-ups for immigrants, and professionalisation of immigrant organisations. NOBI focuses on developing guidance competences among immigrant communities, by providing training to associations and immigrant entrepreneurs.
  – More information at: http://www.nobi-nord.de/

- Interkulturelles Bildungszentrum (Manheim) identifies and develops capacities of immigrant entrepreneurs willing to provide apprenticeships for school-leavers from migrant backgrounds. The project is run by the non-profit organisation ikubiz in cooperation with the Chambers of Industry, Commerce and Crafts, (vocational)

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schools, the Labour Office and the City of Mannheim. Guidance activities include assistance with administrative issues, coaching trainees, mentoring apprenticing companies and training trainers. Information is provided at schools, apprenticeship fairs and through a magazine distributed at schools. The network supports school-leavers in finding internships/apprenticeships and provides vocational counselling, training and social-pedagogical support.

– More information at: http://www.ikubiz.de/

Source: Cedefop, 2014e.

Another interesting current trend in guidance for integration consists of triggering the guidance process from upstream. The integration process is more successful if prospective migrants have access to quality information on host countries before migrating. This includes having access to quality information on admission procedures, housing systems, health systems, social security issues, labour market participation, learning opportunities, and recognition and validation procedures. It can also include development of counselling and advice and familiarisation with other cultures and learning foreign languages.

In general, this type of process is made more effective by cooperation between origin and host countries, through the responsible ministries and services for integration. Besides face-to-face support, some services can also be provided online. Host countries can take the initiative to provide fundamental online information in foreign languages, to ease entry, recognition, study and work permit processes and rationalise flows/applications. Such approaches can be observed in Belgium, the Czech Republic, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Luxembourg, Portugal, Slovenia and the UK.

2.2.2.2. *Challenges*

Multicultural readiness of guidance practitioners who have to deal with migrant workers is an important concern. They should have knowledge about their target groups' cultural backgrounds. Important issues include value of work and formal learning in each culture, impact of gender stereotypes, traditional gender roles and how they affect women's work and learning, particularly young women's performance, interests and aspirations.

Running guidance activities may require using native languages of migrants. In oral face-to-face sessions, active listening and using adapted

language in terms of clarity, vocal cadence and body language may be of particular importance. Advising activities may require a sense of cultural relativity to establish bridges between different culture-based valuing systems. Advising must incorporate care for specific world-view of migrant groups and the way it can articulate with local systems. Mentoring requires that mentors take value frames of reference of targeted cultures into account. Providing culturally non-communicative role models, potentially offensive or meaningless for other cultures, will result in a non-effective experience. Assessing includes use of testing methods, some of which (such as personality types or types of intelligence) can be sensitive to cultural difference. Networking and feeding back will extend to cooperating with immigrant associations and imply improving knowledge on specific qualities and problems of immigrant groups.

Yet, in many countries, multicultural training is not a mandatory part of guidance curricula. When training is alleged, when it occurred and what its contents were is not always reported clearly. Where such training could be checked by third-party experts, they were sometimes found to be insufficient due to limited development of both necessary knowledge contents and appropriate skills (Cedefop, 2014e). Legislation ensuring necessary content and skills are included in training of guidance practitioners should be defined, issued and implemented. Certifications that validate such training should be put in place.

Effective guidance for integrating migrants also requires shifting from a deficit-focused approach to a potential-oriented one. The deficit-focused approach regards migrants as flawed individuals who need compensatory, recovery, corrective and educative measures to adapt to the receiving society. The potentials-oriented perspective departs from migrants' relevant experiences, knowledge, interests, culture and other types of potential. It aims at bridging personal values and perceptions with the host country's systems, culture and values. It encourages individual ownership of the career development process, autonomy and empowerment, reducing feelings of alienation, with direct effects on productivity and academic success. In macro terms, this also corresponds to attributing to guidance the role of a tool that improves active contribution of migrants to the economy and their participation in civil society.

Empowering employers is another issue. For employers, insufficient knowledge about labour legislation for immigrant integration and procedures for recognition of qualifications/prior learning, lack of public employment service support, and cumbersome bureaucratic procedures, discourage them from hiring immigrants. This is particularly true for SMEs, which have limited

resources and fewer possibilities to invest in new workers, who ideally should be job-ready, for the firm to have investment returns. Further, information provided by public services (mainly the public employment service) on migrant labour may be organised in a way (experience, skills descriptions, personal profiles) which is not relevant to firms, since it might not relate to the firm context (organisation of the production lines, commercial organisation and strategy, etc.). Therefore, more (and more appropriate) information, guidance and support should be provided to employers, especially SMEs, on procedures for hiring migrants, along with simplification of administrative procedures.

2.3. Conclusions

CVET is a powerful resource that can help individuals master their labour market transitions. Gaining this capacity is a major reason for participating in CVET. Analysis outlines roles of the learning and guidance dimensions for developing workers' adaptability. Learning is effective when targeted at improving and linking identity and skills development. Guidance eases access and use of existing learning offers and increases workers' motivation to learn and also stay in work. It helps tackle dispositional and situational barriers which individuals are faced with. Guidance also assists better integration of migrant workers into receiving countries (through systematising supply, coordinating with migrant communities, and already starting the process in countries of origin). Learning and guidance thus make CVET a vehicle for lifelong learning and inclusion; labour market transitions, employability and employment; mobility and better allocation of labour, competitiveness and growth.

Progress has been made across European countries in developing guidance along the lines prescribed by the 2008 Council resolution on lifelong guidance, in particular in developing provision of career management skills, widening access to guidance and increasing overall quality of guidance. However, 'integrated (education, training and employment) guidance services' called for by short-term deliverable No 10 of the Bruges communiqué (Council of the EU and European Commission, 2010), and the holistic approach to guidance and counselling it implies, are not yet a reality. Only a few countries, such as France, the Netherlands, Finland and the UK, seem to be clearly moving towards this direction.

More has also to be done with access to guidance. In some countries (such as Bulgaria, Greece, Italy, Portugal and Slovakia), those most in need,

namely the lower-qualified, older generations and disadvantaged groups, find it most difficult to get proper services and thus consider that career guidance services are not (easily) available to them.

Efforts to improve coordination and integration between guidance providers and cover better ranges of needs expressed by guidance users/clients remain important objectives. Providing employers with support to make better use of the migrant labour force, and simplifying related procedures, is crucial too. Some other challenges should also be addressed.

2.3.1. **Preparing guidance practitioners**

Competence of guidance practitioners is essential. Guidance practitioners should have a correct set of competences and knowledge for guidance provision to be effective. It is fundamental that practitioners can provide reliable information about the labour market, and they have mastered tools and methodologies to produce useful information for labour market signalling, identification of training opportunities and successful job matching. Professionals involved in informing and advising immigrants need to have knowledge of integration procedures, legal and policy frameworks related to integration, benefit schemes, labour market legislation, housing legislation, access to health and social security, contact points and means of articulation between administrative services. Within their field of competence they must also be available to network and advocate their clients' interests before other organisations, supporting them until they have achieved autonomy.

Providing guidance practitioners with updated, reliable, accessible and easy-to-use information about the legal framework, administrative procedures and labour market conditions is fundamental for quality of the services provided.

2.3.2. **Tailoring approaches**

One-size-fits-all approaches may not work. Guidance provision should be tailored to users' needs. Frequently, target groups are not distinguished and are instead included in a general category of 'at-risk'. Immigrants, for example, are taken as a whole, while their contexts and needs are diverse. Consequently, specific categories become less visible, and it becomes more difficult to address their problems, since these have not been mapped ahead, and tailored measures have not been designed. Specifically on guidance for migrants, contextual adaption would include a systematic account for integration issues such as status of women; identity and attitudes of youth groups within the host country's culture (accounting for different degrees of

cultural proximity in first, second or third generations); occupational distribution of employment in the community; identification of effective role models in each culture; specificity of discrimination phenomena in each community.

2.3.3. **Documenting guidance outcomes**

Finally, several countries lack a systematic monitoring and assessment system of guidance activities and their benefits. Although outputs are indicated, they are frequently unreported, partly due to lack of monitoring and follow-up mechanisms. Absence of evidence about effects of guidance creates uncertainty among governments and employers about benefits of career guidance. Further, absence of a knowledge base hinders possibilities of transferring practices across different organisations, sectors or countries. Showing effects of guidance policies for organisations and individuals would largely reinforce the case for adopting such policies, stimulating adoption and diffusion of good practices.

The argument holds for guidance for older workers and active age management strategies, as well as guidance targeted at integration of migrant workers. Monitoring and assessment is certainly made complex by the relative difficulty in measuring the full impact of guidance over people's careers, and also because of the immaterial and not (immediately) accountable nature of some guidance process outcomes. Nevertheless, there is a fundamental need for such monitoring to document better impacts, costs and benefits of guidance, make its results visible and understandable, allow for objective exchange of experiences and practices, and help rationalise investment in guidance.

CHAPTER 3

Making validation worthwhile for companies

Validation of non-formal and informal learning is a process of confirmation by a competent body that learning outcomes (knowledge, skills and competences) acquired by an individual in a non-formal or informal setting have been assessed against predefined criteria and are compliant with requirements of a validation standard (Cedefop, 2014d, p. 24). The validation process comprises two major sequences, assessment of an individual's knowledge, skills and competences (KSCs) against relevant standards; and granting by an authorised body a certification confirming that the individual has acquired (part of) the relevant KSCs. Several intermediary stages may take place, including guidance; identification of particular experiences and related KSCs of an individual; documentation, evidence gathering and analysis of the identified KSCs; and complementary training.

A major objective of validation is to make the individual's learning outcomes visible on the labour market and in society in general. Transparency of learning outcomes promotes a better match between labour supply and demand and helps improve mobility on the labour market. It allows companies to find more easily the workers they are looking for and fully utilise otherwise hidden and invisible human capital. It increases individuals' opportunities to find jobs they are actually skilled for and pursue their careers. It also improves individuals' self-esteem and enables them to progress in the education and training system, from one level to another or from one institution to another. Finally, validation of non-formal and informal learning may stimulate individuals to take up learning opportunities and, therefore, contribute to boost lifelong learning.

Validation is an essential dimension of continuing vocational education and training (CVET). Through making human capital visible for further progress in learning and career, validation increases learners' chances of reaching the professional development objective set when initially entering CVET. Validation is, therefore, an important factor of motivation for participation, persistence and progression in CVET, and a key determinant for effectiveness of CVET policy.

In May 2004, the Council of the EU adopted a set of common European principles for identification and validation of non-formal and informal learning

(Council of the EU, 2004). These principles were followed by European guidelines published by the European Commission and Cedefop as a practical reference point and checklist for policy-makers and practitioners for developing validation methods and systems across Europe (Cedefop and European Commission, 2009). A European inventory on validation of non-formal and informal learning targeted at monitoring validation practices in European countries was published by the European Commission and Cedefop in 2004, 2005, 2008 and 2010. In December 2012, the Council of the EU adopted a recommendation on validation of non-formal and informal learning (Council of the European Union, 2012). This recommendation invites Member States to put in place national arrangements on validation of non-formal and informal learning by 2018. In 2014, the European Commission and Cedefop published an updated version of the *European inventory on validation of non-formal and informal learning* (European Commission et al., 2014). The 2014 inventory takes stock of progress made in countries on implementation of the 2012 recommendation. It shows that several countries have introduced new legislation or amendments to reach the objectives set. However, practices, terminology and assessment methods remain highly fragmented across and within countries, and level of engagement of stakeholders and degree of coordination varies widely.

Following the general perspective adopted in this publication, this chapter approaches validation from a specific angle of CVET as an interface between learning and work. Enterprises are central to this perspective, so focus will be on validation of CVET in enterprises. The chapter will show that several enterprises are still reluctant about validation or harmonising practices, due to fears that trained, assessed and certified workers leave for other jobs (Section 3.1). A solution could be found in payback clauses. The extent to which such clauses could serve to decrease employers' reluctance to validation will be explored (Section 3.2). The conclusion will highlight challenges for future policies aimed at better validation for more CVET participation.

3.1. Validation of CVET in companies: state of play

Recent Cedefop investigation on validation practices in enterprises shows that although 'competency-based assessments' are a daily practice in businesses, companies do not validate that much (Cedefop, 2014d). The term 'validation' itself is not often used in enterprises, preference being clearly given to such terms as appraisals, assessments, (performance) reviews, measurement,

profiling or evaluation. In fact, enterprises assess competencies every day for a wide range of reasons, for example recruitment; management and planning of employment and careers; training; quality assurance; restructuring and organisational change; repositioning of the disabled; reintegration after long sickness leave (Cedefop, 2014d, pp. 29-34). But this list of purposes reveals that the assessment exercise in enterprises is essentially oriented towards accommodating internal needs of the company. Enterprises assess competencies, but do not provide certifications targeted at promoting visibility on the external labour market and in society at large. Their competency-based assessment activities are not aimed at improving the match between labour supply and demand on the external labour market, or at encouraging external labour mobility and progress in the education and training system. Examples of certifications issued by a company as a result of an in-house competency-based assessment could certainly be found (Box 7), but they are rather rare.

Box 7. **Certifying competences assessed in companies: some examples**

A first example is the German Daimler AG which, in cooperation with the specialised certifier DEKRA, developed an examination standard for Daimler's car dealer advisors. Certification of advisors is done by an independent certifier based on a company-specific standard.

In Finland, in banking and insurance, the Pohjola Group requires insurance advisors to complete an internal group degree. In Norway, oil companies also have an internal validation system including certification.

In some countries (such as France, the Netherlands, Norway or the UK), companies may be involved in validation processes provided by the national education system. It is usually not the companies which issue the certificates, but specific accredited bodies.

Validation can also be organised at sectoral level. In Austria, the banking industry (organised within the business association WKO) developed a validation and certification scheme for specialists in security papers administration in 2008. The aim was to safeguard transparency and quality of competencies of employees who work in administration and settlement of security papers. Certification is carried out by an independent, accredited body against the standards defined and adopted by the industry. Requirements for the certificate include two years' relevant job experience and an employer's recommendation, as well as written and oral examinations. Validity of the certificate is limited in time and requires recertification.

Source: Cedefop, 2014d, p. 61.

3.1.1. Understanding the reluctance to validation

Understanding enterprises' approaches to validation requires adopting the investment logic that pervades the overall business approach. In enterprises' eyes, validation is an investment, a cost to be considered in light of the returns it generates. The investment logic applies to three aspects of validation, assessment, learning and certification.

First, the investment logic clearly applies to the assessment side of validation. It could be observed that enterprises see competency-based assessment as a significant financial and time investment. They generally do not assess all groups of employees to the same extent. Appraisals are most developed and detailed for executives, leadership positions, and highly qualified technicians and engineers. They are far less used for blue-collar workers. Similarly, enterprises tend to use the cheapest assessment methods, which are also the less complex: in Cedefop's survey (Cedefop, 2014d, p. 49), 87% of the 400 surveyed enterprises used interviews and talks to assess their employees' competencies, but only 25% used psychometric tests or assessment centres (Table 10). The nature of the investment returns on the assessment side depend on what was expected from the assessment, for example assigning the right person to the right place, effectively identifying future training or recruitment needs, making the right promotion decision, making sure to meet quality-assurance requirements.

Table 10. **Methods and instruments used in companies for assessing competences, skills or knowledge of employees, percentage of surveyed companies** (from a survey over 400 enterprises in 10 Member States)

	Percentage of the surveyed enterprises
Interviews and talks	86.9
Screening CVs, certificates, qualifications and references	50.5
Continuous observation of work behaviour	47.2
Work samples	39.7
360 degree feedback	39.4
Psychometric tests/questionnaires	26.6
Simulations, exercises	25.6
Assessment centres	24.9

Source: Cedefop, 2014d, p. 49.

Second, investment logic also applies to learning and certification sides of validation. Competency-based assessment often leads to complementary training, which entails costs. Despite its costs, training may be provided, as it can generate returns in terms of productivity, innovation, competitiveness and growth. Certification also entails costs. However, as it is oriented more towards the external labour market and society, and does not as such generate returns for the certifying firm, it is in general not further considered. In addition, certifying KSCs acquired through provided training would enable employee mobility towards the external labour market and increase the risk that employers do not recover the returns they expect from their training investments.

Finally, both the learning and certification sides can trigger wage claims as employees can allege either higher productivity or a more attractive wage offer elsewhere. A risk of wage claims is a threat on getting back full returns on investments and therefore reinforces reluctance to validation.

3.1.2. From validation to competency-based assessment: a step back for a better jump

An alternative to fully fledged validation (including certification) is use of standardised methods for competency-based assessment. In principle, competencies to be assessed for a specific job position are those defined for that position in reference grids or catalogues established by human resources management research, sector or professional organisations, and private consultants ([30]). Such grids and catalogues usually serve as references as they most often build on in-depth and extensive analysis of experiences of a variety of enterprises. They are therefore a good basis to assist companies conducting their own internal competency-based assessments, as they can even be adapted to a specific context of a company. Even with absence of validation in a strict sense, using standardised methods and tools for in-company competency-based assessment would at least contribute to promote common standards, which would ease external mobility and labour supply-demand match.

Cedefop's analyses show, however, that use of such external grids and catalogues is not as systematic as it could be. Actually, companies'

([30]) Examples of these catalogues are those developed by SHL (http://ceb.shl.com/uk/solutions/products/) for various job families (clerical, sales, ICTs), various job levels (entry-level, manager, director) and various sectors (manufacturing, retail, banking). Cedefop's survey found SHL catalogues to be among the most used (Cedefop, 2014d, p. 42).

competency-based assessment practices are most often firm-specific. This leads to multiplicity of firm-specific assessment practices in the business community, which generates distrust over quality and credibility of assessments conducted in other companies. As a consequence, appraisal results from other firms are rarely used, and employees can rarely use their assessments for mobility purposes outside their own companies.

Initiatives to harmonise competency-based assessment methods at sectoral level exist but are rare. Cedefop (2014d) found that only 7.5% of 400 companies surveyed were involved in such initiatives, and 47.5% were neither involved nor interested in such standardisation. These figures most likely reflect a fear of losing investment returns.

3.2. Payback clauses as a facilitating tool

One core investment risk is when an employee leaves a company shortly after termination of training, for example for a better-paid job. The new employer reaps the benefits from the training provided by the former employer. Validation makes it easier for other employers to identify better workers' competencies and capture the KSCs a worker had built up in a previous company. Payback clauses could serve as a means for overcoming this risk (Cedefop, 2012b) and so support more widespread use and development of validation.

Payback clauses mean that an employee who terminates an employment relationship within a contractual retention period has to reimburse (part of) the training costs borne by the employer. The contractual retention period is a certain period of time following training during which an employee is expected to stay with a company in compensation for provision of training by that employer.

National regulations and collective agreements provisions (at sectoral or company levels) on payback clauses exist in almost all Member States (Cedefop, 2012b). The clauses specify the conditions for reimbursement, in particular type of training and groups of employees for which payback clauses apply, and types and amounts of costs to be reimbursed. These most often depend on the time elapsed after training and the contractual retention period.

Across countries, payback clauses are applicable for almost all employees and no distinction is made between permanent full-time and part-time contracts. However, in Belgium for example, only employees with permanent contracts and an annual income of EUR 30 227 can be requested to reimburse

costs of training. This amount can be reduced proportionally for part-time employees. Payback clauses apply in particular to transferable training. In the Netherlands, however, provisions of several collective agreements suggest that reimbursement of training costs can be requested for both general and firm-specific training. In Slovakia and the Czech Republic, labour code set minimum training costs of EUR 3 320 and EUR 3 000 respectively for the clause to be applicable, which indicates that payback clauses apply only to expensive training. In Romania, payback clauses are applicable when training lasts more than 60 days.

Across countries, the contractual retention period varies between three and five years (exceptions are Lithuania with one year, and Austria with eight years). The costs to be reimbursed (in case of earlier employment contract termination) are most often those of the training itself (enrolment and fees), but wages paid during training are sometimes included (Austria, the Netherlands, Romania). Reimbursement of costs is usually based on the number of years that have elapsed. Thus, employees are liable to reimburse a certain share of costs when they leave the company within the first year after training and a smaller share of the amount within the second year, etc.

Payback clauses therefore serve as an insurance mechanism for the employer. They reduce risks of loss of investment in training and help avoid loss of human resources. Hence they can motivate employers not only to invest in employee training, but also to validate more. The point suggested here is that the use of payback clauses could be expanded from the area of training to the more general area of validation.

A limitation to possible impacts of payback clauses on validation however is that they apply only in cases in which training has been paid by the firm. Payback clauses cannot cover learning acquired without specific costs borne by the company (informal learning). So they cannot apply when validated KSCs are not linked to explicit and specific training costs. In these cases, outcomes of a company's efforts to promote learning can still be lost upon validation.

Except this, payback clauses may prove a helpful tool to support development of learning provision and validation in enterprises. Their impact can be still larger if the threshold for their application is sufficiently low. For example, if costs are higher than EUR 3 000 or the duration more than 60 days for the training to be considered for reimbursement, some employers may be reluctant to provide and validate shorter or cheaper trainings. Therefore, policies could consider allowing use of payback clauses for training which may not be particularly expensive or of long duration. But overall,

including other costs of validation not specifically linked to training could also be considered. Of particular interest are costs of assessment, certification and validation-related guidance. Expanding and adapting the principle of payback clauses to the perspective of validation in this way could be further considered in the future.

3.3. Conclusions

Validation certainly has the potential to make CVET more attractive and popular, and consequently support participation in CVET. It is, therefore, a factor of lifelong learning. Validation supports employability and labour mobility, and thus eases labour allocation. Enterprises themselves draw advantage from it as increased visibility of workers' human capital eases the recruitment process. Validation therefore reinforces effectiveness of the labour market. Validation is a tool for development of KSCs and as such a key element in the policy toolbox for innovation, competitiveness and growth strategies. It is also a conveyor of inclusion as it contributes to bridge the gap between qualification holders and others.

Still, validation is not yet as developed in European enterprises as it could be. Many enterprises still do not fully practise it because of a perceived risk of losing their returns on investment. Using payback clauses and adapting them more specifically to the validation perspective could help support its development. Extending coverage of payback clauses to costs of assessment, certification and validation-related guidance could be considered.

Analyses also suggest that many enterprises would – under certain conditions – be interested in joining collective (sectoral) initiatives targeted at defining and using standardised methods for competency-based assessment. These enterprises would appreciate ready-to-use methods that could be cheaper than developing their own, provided the said methods closely fit their specific needs or are easily adaptable to them. Also, standardised methods could help firms bridge gaps in their assessment systems, in particular regarding assessment of social and personal competencies, where assessment is most frequently contested by employees.

Some major conditions to make standardised assessment methods attractive to businesses could be:

(a) standardised methods should be specifically designed for or adapted to specific industries (versus excessively general methods), to meet companies' needs. To be realistic, methods should in particular take size

class (small/medium/large enterprises) into account. The descriptors used should be precise and unambiguous;

(b) standardised methods should be implemented in the enterprise by qualified assessors having received common training. Provision of standardised and informative documentation of assessment results to employees should be planned;

(c) types of jobs to be addressed in priority to raise maximum interest from enterprises are those of managers; sales personnel; care workers; and drivers (Cedefop, 2014d, pp. 66-67);

(d) professional, social and personal competencies should be covered (Cedefop, 2014d, pp. 66-67).

On this basis, policies could encourage standardisation of competency-based assessment methods as a first step towards future developments in validation of CVET in enterprises. Formation of inter-firm initiatives could be promoted by relevant public and semi-public institutions at national and European levels (governments, social partners, public employment services, associations in the human resources area) through awareness-raising, and provision of advice and support.

Another challenge for future developments in validation relates to professional competence of evaluators in enterprises. The competences, experience and proper training of assessors are an issue (Cedefop, 2014d, pp. 68-69). Assessors need to be trained to use instruments correctly and avoid any bias in assessments. In particular, they should be instructed in interpreting behaviour or answers of people. In highly formalised and systematic assessments, evaluators have to follow strict guidelines. To avoid lack of professionalism, guidelines on training competency assessors in companies should be issued where necessary.

Finally, the fact that enterprises' initiatives on competency-based assessment of staff (in addition to being significantly firm-specific) are to a large extent disconnected from validation initiatives taken forward at national level is also a matter of concern. This calls for increased private-public cooperation, and linking in-company practices with public validation systems. Policy action could set the regulatory and institutional frame for stimulating and streamlining coordination of initiatives.

CHAPTER 4

Ensuring quality in CVET

Quality is a transversal dimension of continuing vocational education and training (CVET). Quality of CVET first addresses learning, namely: trainers; learning content, organisation, conditions, access (including financing) and delivery; and suitability of outcomes to meet the requirements for further lifelong learning and labour market needs. But CVET quality also requires quality in guidance and validation. The range of transversal issues in quality reflects the multidimensional, multistakeholder, multilevel nature of CVET, and quality issues need to be addressed in light of these characteristics.

Quality is essential to reinforce attractiveness of and participation in CVET, and make CVET policy effective. In 2009, the European Parliament and the Council of the EU adopted the *Recommendation on the establishment of a European quality assurance reference framework for vocational education and training* (European Parliament and Council of the EU, 2009). This 'EQAVET recommendation' aims to provide Member States with a common reference instrument, quality criteria, indicative descriptors and quality indicators that could be used to develop quality of national VET systems. Core to the recommendation are principles of internal and cross-country transparency, trust and consistency; policy monitoring and evaluation; and continuous improvement. Importance of 'interrelating the relevant levels and actors' is emphasised. Major objectives are to foster mobility of workers and learners, and lifelong learning.

In 2010, 2011 and 2012, the Bruges communiqué, the *Council resolution on a renewed European agenda for adult learning* and the Commission's communication *Rethinking education* ([31]) recalled the importance of quality assurance for excellence in VET – both initial and continuous – and adult learning.

Quality can be defined as characteristics of an entity that bear on its ability to satisfy stated and implied needs, while quality assurance refers to the activities carried out to make sure quality-related expectations of stakeholders will be met (Cedefop, 2011b, pp. 132-134). Approaching CVET as an interface between learning and the labour market leads to highlighting that both sides

([31]) Council of the EU and European Commission, 2010; Council of the European Union, 2011; European Commission, 2012.

are represented in the 'needs' and 'stakeholders' underlying the definition of quality and quality assurance. In its 2013 final report, the European Commission's thematic working group (EC-TWG) on quality in adult learning, an expert group representing 22 European countries ([32]) and key stakeholders ([33]), posed learner's needs as a major reference for quality consideration. Attention is drawn to 'enabling equitable access, in particular for vulnerable groups, through outreach, guidance and other enabling measures; supporting participation and relevant learning through needs analysis, validation of prior learning and individual learning plans; supporting learner "persistence" through flexible provision of appropriate learning opportunities and guidance and support as required; ensuring the effectiveness of the learning experience, including through supporting learners to make efficient and effective use of their time, effort and financial investment (as applicable) and facilitating relevant outcomes; recognising achievement through providing access to flexible assessment and qualifications; facilitating progression through guidance and links to relevant progression opportunities in education and training, in the labour market and/or in the community' (European Commission, 2013b, p. 14). In the EQAVET recommendation, the range of stakeholders to be involved in the quality assurance process was defined in a broader way, including trainers, VET providers, qualification-awarding entities and other VET system participants, employers and unions as well as 'all stakeholders concerned at national and regional levels' and Member States. All these parties have to be taken into account.

This chapter will take stock of progress made on quality in CVET since the EQAVET recommendation. The interest for quality has become prominent in several areas of CVET, not only competence of trainers (Section 4.1) and accreditation of providers (Section 4.2), but also guidance (Section 4.3), and validation (Section 4.4). Reflections on investment in quality are also emerging (Section 4.5). Each section will present a state of play in the specific area addressed. The chapter will show that despite the progress made, there is lack of frameworks and indicators to monitor quality of CVET providers, guidance, and validation, and investment in CVET quality. Challenges for future policies aimed at improving CVET participation through reinforcing quality will be discussed in conclusion.

([32]) BE, CZ, DE, EE, EL, ES, HR, IT, CY, LV, LU, HU, MT, AT, PL, RO, SI, SK, FI, UK as well as TR and NO.

([33]) Cedefop; European Association for the Education of Adults (EAEA); European basic skills network (EBSN); European Trade Union Committee for Education (ETUCE); European lifelong guidance policy network (ELGPN); Eurydice; QALLL-network.

4.1. Quality of CVET trainers

Competence of trainers is a condition for ensuring high quality CVET. The Bruges communiqué invited Member States to improve continuing training for VET trainers, by flexible training provision (modular programmes, online courses and support tools, validation of competencies acquired on the job, etc.) and investment so they have better opportunities to acquire the right set of competencies. This should enable them to take up broader and more complex training-related tasks they face today. In its communication *Rethinking education*, the European Commission pointed to a 'need to establish a competency framework or professional profile for […] trainers in […] continuing VET (European Commission, 2012, p. 11).

CVET trainers are a diverse group. They may belong to institutions or work as freelancers. In companies, two groups of trainers are distinguished: a relatively small group who assume training tasks as a major part of their occupational role (full-time trainers and managers) and a comparatively large group of employees whose occupational role includes a particular training function (skilled workers who train their colleagues). This is specifically true for micro and SMEs where division of labour would hardly allow for a role of in-company trainer to emerge. The group also includes VET teachers/trainers operating in school-based contexts.

Typical common tasks of CVET trainers are: selecting appropriate training methods for developing practical skills in real work situations; planning and implementing training; assessing and providing feedback to trainees. Beyond just conveying vocational knowledge and skills, CVET trainers more and more have to support workers in their practical learning. This requires enriching their role as instructors with dimensions of coaching, mentoring, providing guidance and stimulating learning culture in enterprises.

Previous work (Cedefop, 2011c) noted that in the past, insufficient opportunities and incentives for professional development were open to CVET trainers. Until recently, countries sometimes lacked a unified approach to qualifications and competence requirements for trainers in CVET. What was most often required was simply that CVET trainers be qualified practitioners or skilled workers and have a certain work experience.

Analyses show that several Member States have started addressing CVET trainers' competencies over recent years. As they were developing national strategies for lifelong learning and subsidising mechanisms for continuing training and upgrading workforce skills, countries had to ensure that relevance and quality of training supported by public funding is delivered

by qualified trainers. Countries have addressed the issue through varied approaches, including establishing training programmes; occupational profiles; qualification standards; competence standards; codes of professional practice; certification processes (sometimes based on validation of non-formal and informal learning). Training content can be diverse as well, covering in some cases not only skills for effective training practice (such as pedagogical approaches, blended learning, preparing assignments, conducting research, simulation exercises, psychology, group management, assessment, coaching and mentoring) but also learning and development's role in organisations; learning needs analysis; and management of learning and development information. Examples of such developments could be found in Germany, Ireland, Greece, France, Cyprus, Romania, Finland and the UK (Cedefop, 2013c).

Analysis of these examples reveals that a CVET trainer competence profile is emerging in Member States. Four groups of competences seem to be most demanded and trained for. Competences related to specific technical domains come first, as trainers obviously must master at high level the skills they are supposed to develop in their trainees, and also must have an ability to look forward, identify emerging needs and address future challenges. Next, competences related to serving organisational strategies and improving competitiveness through training are also addressed. Pedagogical and andragogical competences are also more and more required. This tends to be understood in a rather comprehensive way. It includes knowledge in educational theory, the learning outcomes approach, training design and materials development, assessment methods (summative and formative), and evaluation of effectiveness of training programmes. Finally, transversal competences to support the learning process are also part of the profile and no less important. CVET trainers are expected and trained to be able to face heterogeneous groups of learners; have social, interpersonal, networking, teamworking and communication competences; have critical thinking skills; cooperate with other professionals; understand multiculturalism and manage conflicts.

To support development of these trends, guiding principles have been defined (Cedefop and European Commission, 2014). They focus on five major aspects.

Identity recognition, first, matters. All CVET trainers (employees who have either a training role or a training function) should be recognised. In effect, while full-time trainers develop strong trainer identities, such is not the case for part-time trainers (especially in-company colleagues). Yet, all of them are

necessary to assist with CVET. Therefore, work and identity of all CVET trainers should be recognised, and their professional development both in technical competences and in training-related functions should be supported.

Support from employers also counts. Supporting trainers' competence development is not a responsibility of policy-makers, sectoral organisations, and trainers' associations only. Employers'/companies' support is crucial. Companies involved in developing their trainers' competences should receive appropriate assistance when needed, in particular SMEs.

Getting the broad picture is important as well. The approach to better recognition and professionalisation of CVET trainers needs to be comprehensive. Three main aspects have to be integrated: qualification and competence standards should be clearly identified; flexible and relevant training provision should be available; opportunities to get competencies validated and recognised should exist.

Involvement of all parties is necessary. Supporting professional development of CVET trainers is a shared responsibility. The EU, national authorities, sectoral organisations, social partners, VET institutions/providers, companies, as well as trainers themselves, have roles to play. Responsibilities and actions should be clearly distributed among all, using to the maximum their mandates, expertise and roles. Having a coordinating body with a leadership role is essential.

Finally, embedding the issue into national policy agendas is crucial. Competent CVET trainers matter, and support for their professional development should be part of a broader agenda and national priorities for employment, economic growth, lifelong learning, VET and skills development. Available funds should be mobilised.

4.2. Accreditation of CVET providers

Accreditation systems exist in most countries, and were sometimes already in place before the EQAVET framework, for example Germany, France and Hungary (Cedefop, 2011a). Situations are varied however. In formal CVET, accreditation of providers generally follows the same rules as mainstream vocational training. In non-formal CVET, the situation is more diverse. When no State quality policies or frameworks are in place, accreditation systems may exist at sectoral level or at the initiative of providers themselves. Hungary (2001 Act on Adult Education), Norway (2010 Act for Adult Education), Belgium-Flanders (funding under the decree on sociocultural adult work) and

France (Greta-Plus quality labelling system) are examples of national or regional control through regulation, labelling or funding. The quality assurance framework in Ireland, supervised by Aontas, the Irish adult learning organisation, is an example of a sectoral accreditation initiative.

The problem, however, is that no common framework for accreditation of CVET providers in Member States exists. The EQAVET recommendation

Table 11. **Framework for the accreditation of adult learning providers proposed by the EC-TWG on quality in adult learning**

Quality criteria: what are the necessary conditions?	Description in terms of…
The provider has a clear mission	• objectives • target groups • type of provision/services • understanding of the market • principal stakeholders • lifelong learning perspective
The provider is learner/ customer-oriented	• learners are at the centre of provision • provision and methods are adapted to the adult target group and their specific needs • validation of non-formal and informal learning is available • a lifelong learning perspective is encouraged
There is transparency of: • information • offers and methods • learners' rights/protection for learners • financial information and governance	• clear aims • transparent curriculum • process of learning • learning activities, learning outcomes
Staff are competent	competent teachers/facilitators

suggests that VET providers should be accredited but does not contain provisions on the accreditation process. The EC-TWG on quality in adult learning has recently developed a framework for accreditation of adult learning providers (Table 11). This could be considered as a starting point for future developments of policies for quality in accreditation of CVET providers.

Key questions
Are the objectives, target group, type of provision/services, understanding of the market, principal stakeholders and lifelong learning perspective clearly defined and included in the provider's mission statement?
Are the provision and methodology relevant to the target group and do they meet their needs? Does the provider encourage learners to participate in lifelong learning activities?
Have the aims of the provision, the curriculum and the process of the learning been clearly explained and communicated? Are the curriculum, process of learning and learning activities clearly related to the aims? Is information on the outcomes of evaluation of provision made available publicly?
Are there specific requirements for staff describing the relevant competences and skills to teach adults? Does staff have the necessary/relevant competences to teach adults? Does staff have the required skills to teach adults? Does staff have the required attitudes/abilities to teach adults? Are the persons developing the programmes/courses competent? What are the teachers' content-related competences on the one hand (e.g. sufficient knowledge of a foreign language, if that is what s/he teaches) and the methodological competences (actually being able to use adult-oriented methods) on the other hand?

Quality criteria: what are the necessary conditions?	Description in terms of…
Staff are competent	competent guidance practitioners
	competent management
	adult learning methods, didactics
	continuing competence development for staff
The provider has a human resources policy	selection procedures policies, payment and working conditions
Supports are available to learner and facilitators	administrative procedures
	communication
	infrastructure
	practical support
	guidance (information on different possibilities and career management skills)
Infrastructure and resources are relevant to the different courses and students	• learning resources • staff • financial resource • material resources/facilities (ICT, classrooms, library, canteen, on-the-job environments, etc.)
Learning is documented	• fair and open assessment • learning outcomes • learning process
A quality management system exists	quality procedures/guidelines

Source: European Commission, 2013b, pp. 31-33 and 42-45.

Key questions
Do guidance practitioners have appropriate knowledge, attitude and competence?
Does the managerial staff have the right competence sets and expertise (i.e. leadership skills, financial competences)?
Is provision tailor-made, relevant and learner-centred?
Are formal, non-formal, or informal learning facilities and/or support for attending training available? Is the provider stimulating institutional learning?
Is a relevant policy in place for the selection procedure and the payment and working conditions of staff? Does the human resources policy include rules on diversity management and equity issues? Does the human resources policy include procedures for competent management?
Are administrative procedures well-described?
Is the source of information on provision and administrative issues clear to both learners and staff?
Is the infrastructure in place to support the learning process?
Are there additional practical support structures if needed?
Is there a guidance service in place to support the learners in their learning process?
Is the infrastructure in place to ensure adult learning is accessible? Are the learning resources in line with the aims of provision? Is the provision well-supported by relevant/necessary resources?
Are the needed assessment procedures in place? Is the relevant documentation in place?
Are there procedures in place to assess quality of the provision? Is there a clear link between needs, curriculum, resources, methods and learning outcomes? Are the programmes/courses based on needs assessment/needs analysis? Do the developed programmes fit within the broader offer of programmes/courses?

4.3. Quality in guidance

More and better guidance motivates learners to participate, persist and progress in CVET, and enable them to make best use of the CVET offer. Quality in guidance is, therefore, a factor of CVET effectiveness.

The problem is that Member States do not always have quality systems in place for assuring quality of guidance (Panteia, 2013, p. 69). Lack in quality of CVET guidance practitioners has already been outlined in Chapter 2. This quality issue in guidance is also missing from the EQAVET recommendation. Yet, putting in place a common European approach to quality in CVET guidance is a need. In 2013, the EC-TWG on quality in adult learning proposed indicators be further conceptually and technically developed to support monitoring, evaluation and quality improvement in adult learning guidance (Table 12). These indicators could be considered for further developments of policies for quality in CVET guidance.

Table 12. **Indicators to monitor quality in guidance**

Key questions	Indicator	Descriptors
• Does a nationally coordinated system of information and guidance for adult learning exist? • Are schemes in place to promote better access to adult learning?	• Flexible access to information and guidance including the number of access points in the region • Ratio of access points per head of population	• Growing coordination of guidance services • Increasing access to independent information and guidance • Increasing number of users of access points
• Is there an appropriate policy for increasing awareness of adult learning? • Can adults avail of a guidance service to support their persistence in and progression from, adult learning programmes and their career management skills?	• Number of events and activities on national level to promote adult learning annually • Proportion of adults with access to an ongoing guidance service • Retention rates on adult learning programmes	• Innovative promotional campaigns increasingly available and innovative • Growing availability of a guidance service for adults

Source: European Commission, 2013b, pp. 37-38.

4.4. Quality in validation

Quality is a determinant of attractiveness and effectiveness of CVET. As shown in Chapter 3, a lot is still to be done for validation to become common practice in European enterprises. Monitoring progress and ensuring quality is a need in validation, as it was in for trainers, providers and guidance. The EQAVET recommendation views existence of standards and guidelines for validation as an indicator of a VET system's quality, but does not provide any indication on how to monitor validation. In 2013, the EC-TWG on quality in adult learning proposed indicators to monitor validation in the adult learning quality perspective (Table 13).

Table 13. **Indicators to monitor quality in validation**

Key questions	Indicator	Descriptors
• Is there an appropriate system in place to provide adults with the opportunity of having their non-formal and informal learning validated? • Is there a guidance service to support adults seeking validation of non-formal and informal learning?	• Number of adults obtaining validation of non-formal and informal learning • Number of guidance access points/practitioners per head of population	• Increasing number of accredited facilitators of validation over the last five years • Increasing number of qualifications achieved through validation of non-formal and informal learning

Source: European Commission, 2013b, pp. 38-39.

Other analyses (Cedefop, 2014d) have enriched the list of quality criteria that should be considered, at least regarding the assessment side of the validation process in enterprises. The study has shown that credibility of competency-based assessments requires some major quality conditions to be met, such as: competence of assessors; having a person evaluated by more than one assessor; clear definition of assessment criteria; using a mix of methods and instruments to increase reliability; and regular assessments over time (Cedefop, 2014d, pp. 68-69). These approaches, though still to be completed, might serve as a basis for considering future developments of policies for quality in CVET validation.

4.5. Investing in quality

Reflections on this issue were recently started by the EC-TWGs on quality in and financing adult learning. The groups have drawn attention to ensuring that adequate resources are available to strengthen and fulfil quality of adult learning provision. The groups have proposed an indicator for investment in quality (Table 14) that also provides a first step for approaching this issue in CVET.

Table 14. **An indicator for investment in quality**

Criterion	Key questions	Indicators
System development	Is there an adequate investment in quality assurance systems? *Quality assurance systems help ensure efficient use of public and private investment. They also provide reassurance to customers to invest in adult learning activity – consumer protection and risk minimisation*	Proportion of public spending on external and internal quality assurance system Percentage of publicly funded providers meeting national quality standards

Source: European Commission, 2013a, p. 61 and 2013b, pp. 40-41.

4.6. Conclusions

Quality is key for attractiveness of and participation in CVET. Quality supports adult participation in lifelong learning, and consequently supports inclusion, innovation, competitiveness and growth. Five years after adoption of the EQAVET recommendation, all European countries have quality approaches for CVET in place, whether at national, regional, sectoral or provider levels. A first evaluation of implementation of the EQAVET recommendation was carried out by the European Commission, and a report presented to the European Parliament and Council (European Commission, 2014a). Interest in quality is increasing and reflections on further initiatives develop on an ongoing basis. Progress has been made in training of trainers and accreditation of providers. Suggestions for future developments are on the table regarding quality in CVET-related guidance and validation. The issue of

ensuring sufficient resources for investing in CVET quality is emerging. Analyses have identified several factors favouring successful implementation of quality systems across countries, attention to learner needs; clarity of rules and procedures; flexibility and affordability for providers (both in terms of budget and time spent on monitoring quality); strong backing from policy-makers, organisations (including management and employees) and other stakeholders; leadership of the quality-assurance system by an entity with close links to the CVET sector and possesses authority there; and extensive incubation and maturity time to allow for the system to be fully understood, accepted and trusted (Panteia, 2013).

Still, some challenges remain to be addressed by future policies for CVET quality. Limitations in design and use of the EQAVET recommendation require attention. Among these, lack of clauses on quality-assurance processes for work-based learning ([34]), accreditation of providers, guidance and validation need consideration. Also lacking are criteria on adequacy of providers' equipment and infrastructure, proficiency level of outcomes acquired by learners, and learners' feedback regarding their learning experience.

The European Commission's evaluation report also points out that some indicators of the recommendation, in particular those regarding alignment of training with labour market needs ('utilisation of skills at the workplace', 'share of employed learners at a designated point in time after completion of training') are less monitored and used. In addition, while the recommendation promotes a planning – implementation – evaluation – review cycle, two thirds of countries do not devise action plans and do not carry out regular reviews (European Commission, 2014a, p. 4). Finally, it is still to be demonstrated whether efforts made to improve CVET quality have had any impact on permeability between CVET and higher education. These challenges constitute important objectives for future policies of CVET quality and participation.

([34]) The 2014 Commission's evaluation report on EQAVET notes that 'the EQAVET criteria, descriptors and indicators do not provide specific guidance on quality assurance for work-based learning. This relative weakness has been addressed at political level through the Bruges communiqué which invites participating countries to develop by 2015 a common quality assurance framework for VET providers, applicable also to associated workplace learning and compatible with EQAVET. The EQAVET network has set up a working group and is currently developing guidelines in this respect' (European Commission, 2014a, pp. 6-7).

CHATER 5

Financing CVET for social and economic benefits

Investing in continuing vocational education and training (CVET) is not straightforward. For a long time, several surveys have highlighted the barriers to investing from the enterprises' side. According to Eurostat's fourth continuing vocational training survey (CVTS4), 34% of EU enterprises were still not providing any training to their employees in 2010, and the reasons for doing so were many, including in particular inappropriateness of existing training supply, lack of time, costs, and difficulties in assessing training needs.

Potential learners themselves are not always keen to engage in CVET. Though participation in formal and informal CVET is not well known (data on the unemployed and inactive are lacking as pointed out in Chapter 1), the second adult education survey (AES) at least indicates that not more than 33% (30.9% exactly) of Europeans aged 25 to 64 participated in non-formal CVET in 2011. Many reasons for non-participation were cited by learners, including that learning was not needed (whether in relation to job or not); lack of time; costs; lack of support (whether from employers or public services); difficulties in finding what they were looking for within reachable distances; health or age; and lack of appropriate background or equipment (computers or Internet access).

Investing in CVET is both necessary and beneficial. Developing CVET is crucial for improving individuals' lifelong learning, promoting labour productivity and economic competitiveness in enterprises, and fostering economic growth and social inclusion and cohesion in Europe (EU 2020 strategy; Bruges communiqué; *Council resolution on a renewed European agenda for adult learning*; and communication from the Commission *Rethinking education*).

Informing on needs for and benefits of participating in CVET is therefore crucial to motivate learners, attract them to CVET, and encourage them to persist and progress in it. It is also essential for effectiveness of CVET policy. To be credible and helpful to users, the information provided has to be complete, and cover not only the benefits but also the costs and how financing is organised.

This chapter will therefore address three questions: how much CVET costs (Section 5.1); who pays for it and how (Section 5.2); and who benefits from it

and in what (Section 5.3). Taking a multisided approach to CVET as in previous chapters, the spectrum of stakeholders (individuals, organisations, public authorities, society) and their respective positioning at different levels of the costs-financing-benefits area will be scanned. Ensuing challenges for future CVET policies will be outlined in conclusion.

5.1. Costs of CVET

Costs of CVET are very diverse. In its review of costs of adult learning, the EC-TWG on financing adult learning suggested a comprehensive approach to identify the various aspects that could be considered to measure costs of learning (European Commission, 2013a, p. 30).

Delivery costs, first, cover costs of infrastructure (buildings and equipment), training materials and staff. Subsistence costs are financed either by (part of) current wages/compensatory allowances or by learners themselves. Accompanying costs may also exist, when support such as childcare has to be provided to enable learners to participate. Employers' opportunity costs, can also be incurred, insofar as staff engaged in training (whether trainees or in-company trainers) are not (even temporarily) available for work.

Also to be considered are costs for training guidance services provided to learners. Validation costs count as well. They can be direct (including both assessment and certification costs) or indirect (if staff whose competencies have been validated quit for an external job opportunity). Then come transaction costs, which refer to arranging the training action (cost of training managers' information, time and effort put into negotiating and contracting-out activities and going through the funding mechanism, cost of controlling implementation of the contract). Finally, there are quality assurance costs and public policy cost (policy-making, public administration and promotional actions).

In practice, however, data are lacking for measuring this full range of costs. It is even questionable the extent to which, for some of them (such as the transaction cost or public policy cost of CVET), calculations might be operationalised. Data on costs of CVET exist, but with a more restricted scope. Eurostat's CVTS4 provides data on costs of continuing vocational training (CVT) courses per participant and per training hour (Table 15). Costs per participant may be influenced by duration of training. These estimates take into account direct costs (fees, travel and subsistence, infrastructure, and staff) and labour cost of participants (number of training hours multiplied by average hourly wage of all employees). But these data refer to courses only.

Table 15. **Cost of CVT courses per participant and per training hour, all enterprise sizes, 2005 and 2010, in EUR PPS** (purchasing power standard)

	Cost per participant		Cost per training hour	
	2005	2010	2005	2010
EU-28	1 389	1 357	51	54(e)
Belgium	1 709	2 094	55	61
Bulgaria	539	425	18	17
Czech Republic	565	394	24	27
Denmark	2 724	1 726	93	49
Germany	1 640	1 499	55	66
Estonia	874	647	32	25
Ireland	1 404	:	56	:
Greece	1 042	1 299	41	67
Spain	1 109	1 066	43	52
France	1 849	2 057	66	73
Croatia	:	1 084	:	38
Italy	1 459	1 227	57	53
Cyprus	1 072	1 840	49	69
Latvia	753	398	29	27
Lithuania	808	621	25	18
Luxembourg	1 625	1 514	49	40
Hungary	1 904	1 747	52	55
Malta	1 282	1 319	36	33
Netherlands	2 084	2 150	54	61
Austria	1 577	1 916	59	64
Poland	926	656	31	29
Portugal	849	1 196	32	28
Romania	587	999	19	29
Slovenia	1 077	1 188	37	32
Slovakia	680	846	22	30
Finland	1 144	1 154	46	51
Sweden	1 653	1 465	49	62
United Kingdom	1 060	872	53	35

NB: (e) estimated; : not available
Source: Eurostat CVTS4 (indicators trng_cvts56 and trng_cvts58).

5.2. Financing CVET: who pays, who should pay, and how

Several actors are involved in financing CVET. The EU, first, as in many countries, European programmes (mainly the ESF) finance training projects. Governments, next, provide direct and indirect funding for CVET. Direct funding is through subsidies to beneficiaries (enterprises, individuals) and also through operating publicly owned CVET providers. Indirect funding is provided through tax legislation (for example deduction of training costs from income tax; VAT exemption). Companies, as employers or members of chambers or sectoral/umbrella organisations, finance CVET in several forms, either directly (paying training costs or operating training centres) or via training funds. Individuals, finally, whether employed, unemployed or inactive, also contribute, in particular when employees' training is not (or only partly) paid by the employer.

The question then is why these four categories of players are involved in financing, and whether they should be. For individuals, the most evident reason for participating in financing is the 'who benefits, pays' principle. By definition, individuals engage in CVET for their own professional development and career advancement, so the gain expected justifies bearing part of the investment cost.

The same principle holds for employers. Employers finance and should finance CVET insofar as it is an investment from which they expect returns in terms of increased productivity, innovation, competitiveness and growth. The question however is whether employers' participation in funding CVET is a matter of free choice and should be left voluntary, or instead should be compulsory (and then regulated along lines set by public authorities and/or social dialogue). As noted by the European Commission's thematic working group on financing adult learning, the problem with the voluntary approach is that it allows firms to poach trained staff without providing training, which undermines other employers' willingness to provide training, and finally generates risks of skills shortages. This can be avoided when employers' contributions (to sectoral or intersectoral training funds) are compulsory (European Commission – thematic working group on financing adult learning, 2013, p. 35).

Should governments be involved in funding CVET? There is no single response to this. The departure point is that governments' interventions can hardly be neutral and therefore are likely to affect the training market (negatively and/or positively). Effects can be in terms of prices, entry of new

operators, range of providers (wide or limited), profitability of the sector, ability of providers to develop innovative courses and forms of intervention, better access for certain categories of users (such as the disadvantaged), etc. Therefore government intervention in funding makes sense if there is an orienting intention behind it. A classic example of where a government can decide to intervene is when private funding alone does not cover producing and acquiring the training quantity and content that would be most beneficial to society and the economy (the suboptimality argument). In such a case, government can intervene if it is commonly (or at least most often) agreed by society at large that governments have a responsibility in watching, regulating and orienting the economy.

If governments (or more generally public authorities) decide to engage in funding, then the question is to whom the funds should be directed. Apart from operating by themselves through public agencies, public authorities have three major options. First, funding can be directed to the training sector, to lead training providers to shape their supply in accordance with policy priorities. Funding the providers has an advantage of relative simplicity as the counterparts to handle, negotiate and contract with are limited to a certain number of training institutions.

The second option is to fund employers. Employers will cooperate insofar as the opportunity offered to them is in line with their own organisational needs. This can limit orienting power of public authorities, and at the same time generate dead weights in the sense that employers would have financed this training anyway as it corresponds to their business needs.

The third option is to finance individual learners (through grants and vouchers). As for employers, engagement of individuals in offered opportunities and policy priorities will be mitigated by their own learning and career agendas. A deadweight effect is possible there too, though to a lesser extent as individual learners are more likely to lack the necessary financial resources and renounce learning in absence of support (European Commission – thematic working group on financing adult learning, 2013, pp. 34-35).

Finally, should the EU be involved in funding CVET? The approach is similar to that of governments' involvement. EU intervention is grounded insofar as the Union is entitled to orientate countries' CVET policies and practices. An example is the ESF's operational programme 'human resource development' (OP HRD) in Bulgaria, presented in Chapter 1, which illustrates such an intervention with orienting intention. When CVET funding is based on European programmes, then local implementation more strongly reflects European policies (European Commission, 2013a, p. 27).

5.2.1. **An overview of funding methods**

Funding instruments vary across countries. In 2014, Cedefop set up an online database where funding methods in use in each Member State can be monitored ([35]). Some generic categories can be identified. Grants allow beneficiaries (learners or employers) to purchase CVET interventions directly. Tax incentives (such as reduction of personal or corporate income tax base or tax due) alleviate training cost for users. Levy grant (training funds) systems combine a levy paid by all employers in a sector or a geographic area with grants awarded to finance purchase of approved training. Levy grant systems allow training to be financed by all employers in the defined area or sector, not just those who train. Training leave allows workers to go on training during their working time. Vouchers, learning accounts and saving schemes ([36]) entitle individuals to access specified learning activities, possibly from a range of approved providers. Loans enable individuals to access learning activities and repay later on. Box 8 illustrates more extensively one of these funding instruments, training leave.

Broadly speaking, funding approaches are more effective when social partners are actively involved in the designing and implementation process; high-quality and widely accessible guidance and information services are provided to beneficiaries; the legal environment is favourable, stable and flexible; and the administrative burden is kept as light as possible.

Box 8. **Funding CVET through training leave**

Training leave is a unique regulatory instrument which, either by statutory right and/or through collective agreements, sets out the conditions under which employees may be granted time away from work for learning purposes. Accordingly, the instrument has the potential to overcome a major obstacle that prevents adults from participating more in CVET, time constraints, as the AESs show that a frequently cited reason for non-participation in lifelong learning is lack of time because of family responsibilities and conflicting training and work schedules.

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([35]) Cedefop. *Financing adult learning.* http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/FinancingAdultLearning/ [accessed 25.2.2015].(European Commission, 2014a, pp. 6-7).

([36]) A savings account is an 'instrument for promoting individual saving for future education/training costs. The account holder is required to set aside money over time in a savings account. Such individual savings are matched by contributions from the State budget and/or employers' (European Commission, 2013a, p. 63). Originally, individual learning accounts (ILA) were designed as saving accounts but they have evolved over time. Many current instruments called 'learning accounts' involve transfers to individuals (bank accounts) but without a saving requirement.

Training leave is of particular importance during times of economic crisis as it helps to keep people employed and thus contain negative effects of decreased demand. For example, regional governments in Austria introduced additional funding to encourage potential learners to take training leave.

Generally, two types of instrument are distinguished: paid training leave, which entitles employees to receive their salaries in full or in part while on leave; and unpaid training leave where the salary is not paid during the training period but where employees still have the right to return to their employment afterwards.

In terms of coverage, training leave instruments can be targeted at certain types of education and training, or they can be universal, covering any type of education and training. They can also be targeted at a specific group of the working population or instead be universal in terms of covering all employees.

In most cases, training leave instruments are regulated through legislation at national level. However collective agreements, at sectoral and company levels, are also a significant means of regulation. The social partners are generally involved, at least in some way, in management of the instruments used, most often in eligibility checks and application procedures. On the ground, the social partners' role proves essential as they help smooth selecting which employee will benefit from the scheme, reduce cases of disagreements between employers and employees regarding content of training, and may also help in solving work organisation problems.

Training leave is very frequently linked to training funds and payback clauses. These measures allegedly reduce employers' fears that their newly trained employees will be poached by other companies.

Guidance is usually provided to potential users free of charge through websites, brochures and personal consultation.

Source: Cedefop, 2012f.

5.3. Benefits of CVET

Recent works on benefits of CVET have highlighted major areas where CVET has positive effects, whether monetary or not, on individuals, organisations, and society at large.

Extensive research evidence shows that employer-paid CVET does raise wages. Good examples were found in the Netherlands, Sweden and the UK. Some works have estimated an increase between 0.2% to 3% for one week

of training (FiBS and DIE, 2013, p. 10). Cedefop's own analyses suggest that wage increases amount to around 10% for men and 7% for women (Cedefop, 2013a, p. 22). Also, these amounts are in line with wage increases generated by general education (Cedefop, 2011e). Remedial government-paid off-the-job training programmes also proved to have similar effects in some cases.

Effects on health and well-being, civic participation and satisfaction with work could be observed also. Based on data from the European Community household panel for 12 Member States, Cedefop's estimates have evidenced social benefits of CVET for individuals. Analyses showed that people aged 26 to 60 who had undergone CVET had a better average level in health (body mass index, lack of chronic health problems, and self-rated health), civic participation and satisfaction with work or economic activity than similar individuals with no CVET backgrounds (Cedefop, 2011h, p. 80). Regarding satisfaction in particular, Cedefop's estimates across 25 sectors found a positive effect of CVET on employee satisfaction at work (Cedefop, 2012d), which is in line with literature (Cedefop, 2011d, p. 32). Effects of CVET appear to be mediated however through 'high performance work practices' (HPWPs) such as frequent opportunities for employees to use their own ideas, and absence of skills mismatch. In addition, some other conditions are required for CVET to exert its positive effect on satisfaction, namely good relations at work, satisfying job content, and opportunities for career advancement. Another effect of CVET on individual and social well-being could also be observed: bringing 1% of people with no qualification to an entry level of qualification would reduce risks of depression by 6 percentage points among women and young men (FiBS and DIE, 2013, p. 12).

Table 16. **Correlation between the innovation index 2010 and CVET**

Indicators of learning in enterprise	Correlation coefficient
Share of training enterprises as % of total (2005)	0.66***
Employee participation in CVT courses (2005)	0.57***
Employee participation in other forms of learning in enterprises (2005)	0.51**
Costs of CVT as % of total labour cost (2005)	0.45*

* p<0.05 (significant); ** p<0.01 (highly significant); *** p<0.001 (extremely significant)
Source: Cedefop, 2012a, p. 106.

CVET also contributes to innovation. Positive impact of the work-based part of CVET on corporate innovation was analysed in Chapter 1. Research suggests it is CVET more generally that is positively correlated to innovation. Cedefop's estimates show statistically significant links between corporate innovation and percentage of training enterprises, employees' participation in CVET courses and other forms of learning in enterprises, and the costs incurred for CVET (Cedefop, 2012a, p. 106). Table 16 shows some of these results.

Productivity is another impact point of CVET. Research reviewed by Cedefop evidences positive effects of in-company training on enterprises' productivity in several Member States and also Australia, China and the US (Cedefop, 2011f, p. 37). At sectoral level, Cedefop's estimates have shown significant positive relationships between CVET (both courses and other forms) and productivity (Cedefop, 2012d, pp. 89-90). A positive relationship could also be found at country level, based on data from Denmark, Germany, France, the Netherlands, Sweden and the UK (Cedefop, 2014b). Analyses at country level have shown that what matters for the positive relationship between VET and productivity is not a particular category of skills in itself (such as skills acquired through general education versus skills acquired through IVET or CVET), or a particular level of skills (low, intermediate or high). What counts is availability of a complete range of categories and levels of skills in the production system, and their complementarity. For example, intermediate vocational-skilled workers may provide essential support services to high-skilled workers while the former's economic contribution may be improved by working with the latter. Analyses suggest that relying too heavily on expansion of a single type of skill (such as higher education at the expense of vocational education) does not pay off. Positive effects of VET on productivity are stronger in countries where various types of skills exist and complement one another. Productive effects of vocational skills – including skills acquired through CVET – are stronger in countries with a long and well established tradition of apprenticeship, and where the VET system is based on apprenticeship (compared to countries where the VET system is school-based). The effect is even stronger in production sectors of apprenticeship-oriented countries. But overall, most important is that in all cases, whatever the context, introducing CVET increases the positive effect that IVET or higher education taken separately exert on productivity.

Labour retention also is an impact point of CVET. A Cedefop literature review (Cedefop, 2011d, p. 28) gathered evidence on effects of training provision on labour retention. Provided training is firm-specific, trained

employees have no interest in leaving, nor have employers in terminating contracts, which reduces labour turnover. In contrast, non-employer-financed training and general training increase job search and outward mobility among employees. Research suggests that when general training is offered it has to be associated with higher wages to offer incentives to employees to stay.

Research also highlights CVET's role as a strategic management tool for targeting organisational objectives, disseminating corporate culture and developing required competencies among employees. It appears that CVET can serve to improve output quality and customer satisfaction; carry out knowledge transfer from skilled or older employees to colleagues; create a pool of employees from which to select future managers; develop a learning culture in the organisation; increase commitment and reduce absenteeism (Cedefop, 2013a, pp. 27-28), which are all examples of organisational objectives. Another example is CVET's positive effect on increasing employee job satisfaction which can in turn create room for developing cooperation and corporate citizenship in the workforce (Cedefop, 2013a, p. 34).

Finally, CVET may compensate for earlier skills deficits, and reduce social inequity. In this respect, it particularly helps mitigate intergenerational inequity (Cedefop, 2011g). A condition for this however is that provision does not go along with stigmatisation (Cedefop, 2013a, p. 29). This potential of CVET appears to be of particular importance in a context where the technology-rich nature of work environments puts the lower-qualified at greater risk of professional and social exclusion (OECD, 2013).

5.4. Conclusions

Comprehensive and multisided scrutiny shows that not only learners and employers but also public authorities and society at large have to commit to CVET and contribute to financing its costs, and in turn can draw both monetary and non-monetary benefits from it. Informing on these issues is essential to involve stakeholders, attract potential CVET users, help all parties make informed investment decisions, and motivate and retain users, thus finally promoting CVET participation and effectiveness.

Investing in CVET is not only beneficial, it is an imperative as CVET is a source of a specific category of skills without which enterprises' and countries' productivity and economic growth cannot be maximised. Research shows that what is crucial for productivity is existence of a mix of types and levels of skills, which allows for complementarity and synergy between skills. While IVET and

higher education taken separately are important sources of labour productivity, their effectiveness is in all cases reinforced when skills developed through CVET are added to them in the production system. Consequently, policies should not rely too heavily on expansion of one single source of skills, for example higher education at the expense of intermediate or vocational skills development. The more vocational skills are developed through continuing training for adult workers, the greater the contribution of vocational skills to macroeconomic performance will be.

Investing in CVET is also a priority. As several analyses have highlighted, the returns to CVET for people in employment accrue faster than those to initial education. Investing in CVET is, therefore, a priority in the sense that quickly obtained returns from CVET could then finance increased investments in other educational sectors.

In its 2011 *Resolution on a renewed European agenda for adult learning*, the Council of the EU had called for 'a viable and transparent system for the funding of adult learning, based on shared responsibility with a high level of public commitment to the sector and support for those who cannot pay, balanced distribution of funds across the lifelong-learning continuum, appropriate contribution to funding from all stakeholders and the exploration of innovative means for more effective and efficient financing' (Council of the European Union, 2011, p. 5).

This applies to CVET as well. It is a fact that the funding system that exists for CVET in particular is characterised by shared responsibility, public commitment and support to those in need, and reflections to explore ways for more effectiveness and efficiency have been undertaken. These reflections have highlighted guidelines for roles of key stakeholders in supporting efficient investment in CVET. They have also outlined importance of an appropriate policy environment, legal frameworks and incentives to encourage and enable employers and individuals to contribute to financing CVET.

But sufficient data and analyses are still lacking regarding how balanced respective contributions of stakeholders are, and how adapted to various stages of lifespan these contributions are. Also, further promoting investment in CVET and improving complete support from all parties requires availability of better information on rates of return on investment in CVET, and more systematic and tangible figures on both direct and wider benefits of CVET. Putting in place this whole transparent information system is still an objective to reach the quality funding system aimed at by the EU.

General conclusion

This publication has adopted a comprehensive multisided 360-degree approach to analyse the current state of and future challenges for continuing vocational education and training (CVET) in Europe. The analysis has scanned CVET from a multidimensional, multistakeholder and multilevel perspective, taking into account views and needs of individuals, social groups, organisations and public authorities with respect to learning, guidance, validation and quality dimensions of CVET.

Results show that progress has been made in several aspects of CVET policies and practices. Work-based CVET programmes have been put in place or updated in several countries, and comprehensive policies and governance systems of work-based CVET are emerging. More and more enterprises have developed guidance activities for older workers, and countries have taken steps to develop general provision of career management skills, widen access to guidance, implement guidance for integration of migrant workers, and increase overall quality of guidance. Countries have also completed and updated their legislation on validation of non-formal and informal learning. They have put in place frameworks and indicators to ensure quality of CVET trainers and accreditation of CVET providers. They have also extended their ranges of instruments for funding CVET.

Analysis confirms CVET as a sector of major importance for achievement of EU policy objectives. A major component of lifelong learning, its learning programmes – whether employer-sponsored or not – make up the bulk of adult learning. Through work-based learning mechanisms, CVET in addition attracts learning groups that had stayed away due to prior poor learning experiences. CVET guidance, validation and quality reinforce this impact of CVET on lifelong learning.

Through learning and guidance, CVET provides adults with tools for handling labour market uncertainty and flexibility, escaping unemployment and managing their careers and professional development. CVET thus proves an important factor of integration and inclusion, employability and employment, mobility and better allocation of labour, competitiveness and growth.

CVET validation also appears an important determinant of inclusion, as it contributes to bridge the gap between qualification holders and others. It increases visibility of workers' human capital, thus contributing to improve

transparency and smooth functioning of the labour market. As such, validation contributes to making labour supply available to enterprises, thus supporting competitiveness and growth.

Analyses also show that CVET has a positive impact on individuals' wages, satisfaction with work, health and well-being. It is a strategic management tool for enterprises and improves labour retention. CVET also has a positive impact on innovation and productivity at enterprise and country levels. Finally, it is a factor of social equity and civic participation at society level.

All this potential explains why participation in CVET should be further encouraged, supported and improved.

Challenges remain, however, that should be addressed by future policies to further develop participation in CVET. Several areas could be considered in this respect.

More could be done on visibility, image and recognition of CVET. Integration of CVET qualifications into national qualification frameworks, and involvement of social partners in CVET to ensure recognition and value from them, are examples of possible actions. Promotion actions are of interest as well: adult learning awards, CVET days, multimedia campaigns and fairs are possible types of action that could be further developed. Most countries have already taken steps to improve visibility, image and recognition of CVET, so, where necessary, further developments could rely on all accumulated experience.

Lacks in information and guidance could be filled as well. Where necessary, more guidance initiatives to make learning offers clearer, assist career choice and better cover the range of users' needs should be taken. Developing dedicated websites that propose information on labour market and financial support, and provide diagnostic tools and vacancy services, should be further explored. Experience from countries such as Greece, Spain, France, Cyprus, Hungary, Austria, Slovenia and Slovakia are inspiring in this respect. Also, better information on rates of return on investment in CVET, and more systematic and tangible figures on both direct and wider benefits of CVET would certainly help reinforce guidance in its motivational role. Better documenting outcomes of guidance is also necessary to motivate guidance providers and institutional stakeholders to commit further and invest in it. Improving quality of guidance is important too: lack of both labour market information and multicultural preparedness observed in practitioners' training should be addressed, and related qualifications requirements revised accordingly. Tailoring approaches to specificities of target groups and improving coordination between guidance stakeholders is crucial too. On migrant workers' integration, starting the integration guidance process ahead

of migrating, enabling employers to make better use of the migrant labour force, and connecting with migrant communities should also be considered.

Learners should be supported in their efforts to participate in CVET. Where necessary, work organisation should be adapted, using for example, flexible working time, reduced working hours or allocation of time off work. Accessibility must be ensured, for example through increasing as necessary numbers of places available, and opening access to the unemployed (as for example in Bulgaria, Denmark, Estonia, Ireland France and Latvia). Adapted training organisation and pedagogy should be encouraged as well, for example through favouring modularisation (with certificates for completed modules) and taking more advantage of potential work-based learning and andragogy. Additional support in a form of care services offered to family members might also help.

Financial incentives also matter. These can be provided to learners, but also to employers and training providers or other CVET stakeholders such as local authorities in charge of adult learning or CVET. Analysis shows that making funding available is not enough: funding must also be practicably accessible to its potential beneficiaries. Where necessary, funding application procedures should be simplified, especially for smaller firms. These should be given (more) access to funding support services (information and administrative assistance).

In-company validation of CVET is certainly an area with the largest room for improvement. Future policies could consider promoting identification and use of adapted standardised methods for assessment of competencies in enterprises; ensuring competence of in-company evaluators; extending coverage of payback clauses to costs of assessment, certification and validation-related guidance; supporting mechanisms of validation of experience-based learning; issuing certifications of CVET. Whatever the future steps, they should certainly be taken following coordination between public and private stakeholders.

Improving CVET quality should remain high on the agenda. Where necessary, professional development of trainers should be supported by setting qualification and competence standards, providing flexible and relevant training solutions and creating opportunities for trainers to get their competencies validated and recognised. Backing from all parties involved in professional development of trainers (policy-makers, sectoral organisations, trainers' associations, employers) should be ensured. Frameworks and indicators for accreditation of trainers, guidance, validation, and investment in quality should be developed.

Last but not least, improving statistical coverage of participation in CVET is crucial. Monitoring and evaluating progress requires suitable indicators. Harmonisation of existing indicators on participation in non-formal CVET and CVET participation of the population in employment is a priority. Setting indicators on participation of the unemployed and inactive in formal and informal CVET, and participation in work-based CVET, would be a useful step towards better coverage.

List of abbreviations

ACI	*Ateliers et chantiers d'insertion* integration workshops and worksites programme
AES	adult education survey
CVET	continuing vocational education and training
CVT	continuing vocational training
CVTS	continuing vocational training survey
DIE	Deutsches Institut für Erwachsenenbildung German Institute for Adult Learning
EC-TWG	European Commission's thematic working group
EU-28	28 EU Member States
Eurofound	European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions
EWCS	European working conditions survey
FiBS	Forschungsinstitut für Bildungs- und Sozialökonomie Institute for Education and Socioeconomic Research and Consulting
KSC	knowledge, skills and competence
LFS	labour force survey
NVQ	national vocational qualifications
OP HRD	operational programme 'human resource development'
OPCA	*organisme paritaire collecteur agréé* accredited joint collecting bodies
QCF	qualification and credit framework
R&D&I	research development innovation
SME	small and medium-sized enterprise
VAE	*validation des acquis de l'expérience* validation of experience
WBL	work-based learning

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CVET IN EUROPE the way ahead

This publication takes stock of recent Cedefop research on CVET. It analyses how CVET contributes to reaching economic and social policy objectives of the European Union regarding inclusion, employment, innovation, productivity, competitiveness and growth. CVET is approached as a multidimensional, multistakeholder and multilevel interface between learning and the labour market. The analysis outlines recent achievements in practices and policies of work-based learning, guidance, validation and quality. The publication also highlights gaps and challenges for future CVET policies, in particular improving information and guidance, making participation easier for learners and small enterprises, securing validation mechanisms, and reinforcing quality and monitoring.

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