



European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions

The role of collective bargaining in development of continuing vocational training (CVT)

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Joint report by Eurofound and Cedefop

- Rationale:
 - ▶ Social dialogue – at the core of both agencies' work
 - ▶ Training and skills development at the top of political agenda
- Methodology
 - ▶ Questionnaire developed jointly by Cedefop and Eurofound
 - ▶ Data collected in EU-27 and Norway through the Eurofound EIRO Network (2007/2008)
 - ▶ Overview report launch at this conference



Renewed Lisbon Strategy (2005)

- New guidelines:
 - ▶ Attract and retain more people in employment and modernise social protection systems
 - ▶ Improve adaptability of workers and enterprises and the flexibility of labour markets
 - ▶ Increase investment in human capital through better education and skills;



Crucial importance of CVT

- CVT strategic domain in LLL: combines economic and social goals
- Mutual benefit for
 - ▶ Employers: modernising business production
 - ▶ Employees: employability
 - ▶ Society at large: economic growth and equity
- Reaching the goal of 12,5% adult participation rate in education and training by 2010: **shared responsibility** (*Copenhagen Process*)



Copenhagen Process

- Copenhagen process (2002): delivering reforms on enhanced European cooperation in VET; emphasised stronger involvement of stakeholders in adult education;
- Continued in Maastricht (2004), Helsinki (2006), and Bordeaux (2008)
- Most significant contributions up to date:
 - ▶ the common European principles for the identification and validation of non-formal and informal learning;
 - ▶ Europass;
 - ▶ European Qualifications Framework (EQF);
 - ▶ and the future European Credit System for VET (ECVET) and European Quality Assurance Reference Framework (EQARF)



Overview of the study

- Legal framework of CVT systems
- Forms of involvement of social partners
- Tools to promote CVT activities
- Views of the social partners
- Impact of social dialogue on CVT participation



The legal framework

- Various timelines and sense of completion of CVT system
- Regulatory level: usually national, implemented at local (regional) level
- Nature of legislative acts:
 - ✓ specific training acts (BG, CY, ES, GR, LT, LU, NL, SE)
 - ✓ part of employment strategy (DK, DE, PT, EE, PL, RO, SI, SK, HU)
 - ✓ part of educational system architecture (CZ, NO)
- Social Partners' involvement follows the design of the country's industrial relations format



Role played by the social partners

- Involvement varies greatly according to national settings of IR and the balance of power between the SP
 - ▶ Implementation of policies at national and local level: autonomously or jointly with co-ordination bodies
 - ▶ Bilateral action – e.g. autonomously setting standards; funding through “bilateral funds”
 - ▶ Tripartite action– actively bargaining on the national design of the system



Level of CVT policy implementation

- Centralised policy implementation:
BG, CY, EE, EL, FI, LU, MT, NO, PL, SI, SK
- Mixed of national- and regional- level implementation:
DK, ES, FR, HU, IE, IT, LT, LV, NL, PT, UK
- Decentralised: AT, BE, DE, RO
- None: CZ, SE



Social partner involvement in policy setting

- Direct consultation on policy setting: LV, MT
- Formal consultative councils or advisory bodies: SP views on a range of policy areas: DK, IT, LT, NL, NO, PL, SK, SI
- Participation in CVT coordination institutions: AT, BE, BG, EE, FI, FR, EL, HU, IE, LU, PT, RO and ES (Tripartite Foundation for Training in Employment)
- Involved ONLY in tripartite or public bodies: CY (tripartite fund) and DE (regional bipartite committees)



The role of public institutions dealing with CVT

- Technical expertise over CVT issues:
 - ▶ Setting training standards
 - ▶ Pilot projects for new training devices
 - ▶ Research and monitoring activities
- Degree of SP involvement varies, depending on the country from none at all, through partial to full;



SP contribution to transparency and efficiency

- Competence certification and validation of learning outcomes (FR, PT, SI)
- Accreditation of public and private training centres (eg. Skillsnet, IE)
- Contribute to development of guidelines for CVT activities (UK)



Role of collective bargaining in promoting CVT

- Degree of centralisation/coordination of the whole CVT system (company/sectoral/inter-sectoral/national collective agreements)
- Organising actions taken at each of the levels
- Implementation measures
- Employee coverage by collective bargaining



Tools to promote CVT

Institutional incentives

- Leave (training, paid, unpaid)
- Training credit and right to training (FR, BE)

Financial Incentives

- Bilateral funds (mostly sectoral level): IT
- Tax incentives
- European Social Fund (especially EU-12)



Policy debate and initiatives

- Financing and cost-sharing of training: bi-lateral training funds (IT, HU)
- AT and DE: social partners call for a centralised body dealing with all LLL matters
- Local and regional partnerships for skills development (*London's Development Agency*)
- Individual training paths (counselling, career guidance): *UK Unionlearn*
- Unions: equality of access; special focus on vulnerable groups



Conclusions

- Increasing implementation of CVT as more attention is turned to training and retraining initiatives in the labour market
- Difficult to say if since 2002 the amount of actual agreements increased; in many countries agreements are at company level and difficult to research;
- However awareness has gone up and with it CVT has gained greater visibility on the policy scene;
- Copenhagen process: new and more flexible learning pathways
- Social partners – key and the process contributed to increasing their responsibility



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Thank you

Study available from
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