



## Cedefop Newsletter no. 10 – March 2011

ISSN 1831-5259

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### Main story

#### Preparing young people for a successful working life: a challenge for Europe



The aim of the 2011 Study Visits Seminar, held in Thessaloniki on 28 February-1 March, was to raise awareness and foster debate on how best to integrate young people into the European labour market. The seminar was inspired by the findings of 53 study visits conducted during the past year. These centered on supporting flexible learning pathways; transitioning from education and training to the world of work; and developing entrepreneurship. The event gathered about 90 study visit organisers and participants; representatives of initiatives that had been identified as examples of good practice during these study visits; and representatives of the national agencies, many of whom presented their own projects and initiatives.

On their way to independence and meaningful adulthood, young people need to take several important steps:

- choose the right learning path;
- find and stay in a job;
- keep abreast of the rapidly changing world as it affects their life and career.

Some young people take traditional paths, while others combine schooling with part-time work, or alternate periods of inactivity with work. Clearly, good guidance and career counselling can be very useful in helping young people make the right decisions.



Discussions revealed the need for:

- multiprofessional networks for lifelong guidance;
- public-private partnerships to ensure more apprenticeships for young people;
- cooperation between schools and businesses for entrepreneurship education, including opportunities for teachers and trainers to upgrade their skills.

The latter is a crucial point: support to young people is most effective when provided by highly dedicated professionals who are equipped to address the diversity of challenges and circumstances.

But the seminar also showed that accurate and accessible information is equally important to all those who shape education and training pathways, including employers. Such information should cover options for further learning, labour market needs and requirements, available support, and facts about education and qualification systems in the Member States. The aim of providing this information is to achieve a better match between learners' interests, educational options and career paths, and to contribute to social cohesion.

Young people particularly stand to profit from the new common instruments such as the European qualifications framework (EQF) and relevant national qualifications frameworks (NQFs), the European credit system for vocational education and training (ECVET) and Europass. These have all been developed to make learning transparent and thus improve the mobility of learners and workers throughout the European Union.

The Study Visits Programme will continue to explore the issues discussed during the seminar in future study visits, which focus on encouraging cooperation between the worlds of education, training and work; developing strategies for lifelong learning and mobility; and acquisition of key competences.

The outcomes and examples of good practice presented during the seminar will be included in a publication to be disseminated in the second half of 2011.

### **Some examples of good practice presented at the Study Visits seminar**

In **Denmark**, the individual educational plan for all youngsters aged 13-25 aim to **raise the number of graduates from youth education programmes** to 95% by 2015. A counsellor decides on classroom activities that provide information about the educational system, and on individual and group activities where pupils can reflect on who they are and what interests them. If a pupil wishes to go on to higher education, the counsellor assesses their chances of succeeding and whether they will need extra help. In Copenhagen, the same counsellor follows young people after they leave compulsory education. The result of the programme, which is predicated on creating strong ties between counsellors and pupils, has been an increase in the percentage of young people graduating from youth education programmes.

In 2005 **Slovenia launched "Guidance for young people on parallel pathways"**, to **prevent the social exclusion** of 15-27 year-olds who have left school without a qualification but have not joined the labour market. Counselling services are offered for as long as it takes the young person to get ready to join the labour market, re-enter the education or training system or receive other institutionalised help. The "total counselling" method takes into consideration the individual's life situation and personal goals. Counselling is short term, one to five hours, or long term, about 40 hours. About a tenth of the young people who participated in 2005-2006 took part in long-term counselling; out of a total of 262, 132 were successfully integrated.

The Start-Up Café at the University College of Leuven, **Belgium, encourages entrepreneurship** - using a method originally pioneered in Switzerland - through courses, lectures, informal lunches with entrepreneurs, and company visits. Since 2008, the programme operates a real as well as a virtual café, where students can meet entrepreneurs and set up networks. The Start-up Café has proven to be a very successful way to encourage entrepreneurial thinking and action.

## **Links**

- [Seminar website](#)

## **News from Cedefop**

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### **Always a good time to learn: Cedefop's work on adult learning featured in Presidency Conference**

To mark three years of intensive European cooperation in adult learning policy, in which Cedefop has been actively involved, and to review the results achieved through the implementation of the Adult Learning Action Plan, the European Commission organised a conference in Budapest which discussed future needs and options. The event was held on 7-9 March 2011 under the first Hungarian Presidency of the European Union.

Speaking at the conference, Acting Director Christian Lettmayr pointed out that securing employment does not necessarily mean updating skills – it may require developing a completely new range of skills.

Adult learning providers and systems need to provide appropriate support for such transitions: to broaden access to learning opportunities for adult learners, develop outreach strategies, provide lifelong career guidance, and recognise prior learning. More generally, we need to move from a remedial to a preventive approach to training and guidance for adults.

Cedefop's involvement in the preparation of the plan, and its contribution over the years to the issues of adult education and training, were recognised in last December's Bruges Communiqué on policy development in VET, which mandated the agency to work further on adult learning.

The Action Plan on Adult Learning *It's always a good time to learn* (2008-2010) provided for the first time a set of common priorities for the adult learning sector. In addition, it introduced the sector to the Open Method of Coordination and thus initiated intense European-wide cooperation among its diverse actors. The Plan also defined what action the European Commission and Member States should take in order to improve the quality of adult learning, and develop systems that reach all adults and involve all relevant stakeholders.

In December 2010, the Action Plan on Adult Learning came to the end of its lifecycle, having accomplished its initial tasks. This was the final conference relating to the Action Plan, providing an opportunity to assess the results achieved during the three years and inspire ideas for the next phase, up to 2020.

## Links

- [Cedefop's adult learning project page](#)
- [HU conference website](#)



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## Researchers debate uses and implications of skill forecasts

An international group of research and labour market experts found that Cedefop's skill forecasts are a reliable and useful indicator of how the EU labour market is developing.

The group met at a technical conference organised by Cedefop (Thessaloniki 17-18 February 2011) which was focused on the relevance, uses and possible improvements to the agency's medium-term skill forecasts. The experts also discussed how forecasting results have been used in their own countries, and shared their experiences of skill forecasting at national level.

Cedefop's work on skills has contributed significantly to the Agenda for New Skills and Jobs, one of the flagship initiatives of the European Union's new strategy for sustainable growth and jobs, Europe 2020. The purpose of this initiative is to increase labour market participation and ensure a better match between the demand and supply of skills across Europe.

Cedefop called on the experts to help improve its methods and tools for skills forecasting, and report on national or sectoral uses of the forecast studies. All conference participants agreed that further improvements were needed to ensure quality and relevance. The invited experts examined the consistency of Cedefop's methods and tools and compared them with various national approaches. They also proposed adjustments and suggested ideas for the future development of the forecasts. The existence of reliable national data is the most important variable in achieving accurate and detailed projections for the future.

At the conference, Cedefop announced its latest update of the 2010 forecast. Labour market statistics have proved this forecast to be fairly accurate; minor discrepancies were due to the impact of the economic crisis on the labour market which turned out to be less harsh than had been anticipated at the beginning of 2010.

The next Cedefop forecast is due in spring 2012.

## Links

- [Conference Website](#)
  - [Cedefop Briefing note: What next for skills on the European labour market?](#)
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## Study visits programme 2011/12

Study visits programme 2011/12 for education and vocational training specialists and decision-makers. Short version, in four languages (DE, EN, ES, FR)

## Links

- [Download the publication: Study visits programme 2011/12](#)
- 



## Workplace learning: Success stories from across Europe

Companies wish to improve their employees' skills for a specific job; employees have an interest in developing skills that can raise their career and employment prospects. But can these potentially conflicting goals be balanced? Can workplaces become learning places where workers of all levels are encouraged to improve their knowledge, skills and competence? Clearly, encouraging a company culture that make it easier for citizens to keep learning, and promotes corporate responsibility and social cohesion, is a smart strategy for government. The success stories collected in this paper illustrate some of the ingenious solutions that have been devised by social partners working together with national, regional and local authorities.

## Links

- [Download the publication: Learning while working](#)
- 



## The benefits of vocational education and training

Research on the benefits of education has a long history in the economics of education, but the same cannot be said about research on the specific benefits of vocational education and training (VET). Yet policy decisions need to be based on sound evidence if they are to succeed at their goals. Cedefop's review gathers evidence on the economic and social benefits of vocational education and training from across Europe. While the review shows that the links between research and policy are still weak in Europe, it confirms the widespread economic and social benefits of vocational education and training. These benefits depend on the development level of countries and partly reflect national traditions in VET and VET research.

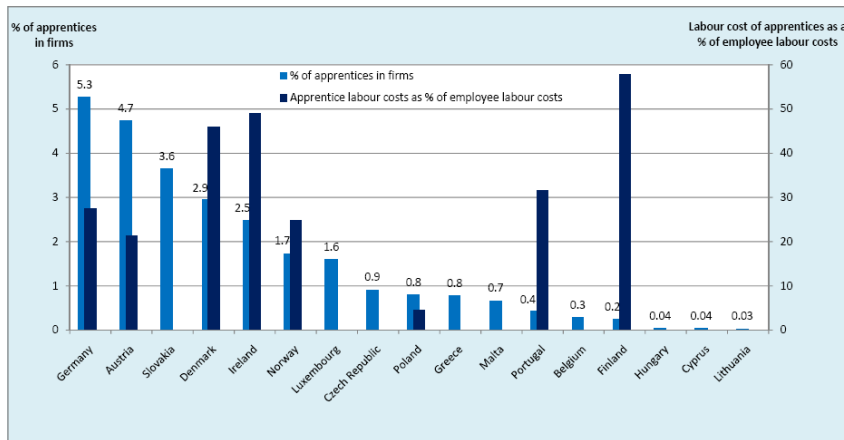
## Links

- [Download the publication: The benefits of vocational education and training](#)
- 



## Bridging learning and work: apprenticeships

One in 20 staff is an apprentice in Germany and Austria, compared with less than one in every hundred in many other countries.



Source: Cedefop calculations based on Eurostat's Labour cost survey, 2008 data.

With apprentices helping to fill skills gaps at a reduced cost to employers, policy makers see apprenticeships as an effective means of encouraging relevant employment.

In particular, the recent Bruges Communiqué, which sets out the strategic approach and priorities for the development of vocational education and training in Europe in the next 10 years, calls:

- to 'support the development of apprenticeship-type training'
- for 'Governments, social partners and VET providers to make the necessary arrangements to maximise work-based learning, including apprenticeships, in order to contribute to increasing the number of apprentices in Europe by 2012'

#### Key points

- In dual-system countries like Germany and Austria as many as one in every 20 staff are apprentices. These countries also show some of the lowest relative costs to employers of taking on apprentices.
- The number of apprentices tends to be far lower than this in most other European countries, with less than one in every hundred staff being an apprentice in 10 of the 17 countries for which data are available.
- Apprentice labour costs differ significantly across countries. In Austria, costs represent just a fraction of employee costs. At just over 20% of the equivalent labour costs for employees, they are among the lowest relative costs in Europe for which data available. In Austria, apprenticeships are strongly anchored in the crafts and trade sector (see [VET in Europe country report](#)).
- Although many other factors affect the incidence of apprenticeship in countries, and not least regulation, the relative cost for employers of taking on apprentices seems to be higher in countries with fewer apprentices. In Finland the cost of an apprentice is as much as 60% of the cost of an employee.

Note: Data presented here refer to firms of 10 people or more in industry, construction and service sectors (excluding public administration, defence and compulsory social security). In the left axis, apprentices are calculated as a % of employees and apprentices combined. In the right axis, the labour cost for employers of apprentices is compared against that of employees. Data originate from Eurostat's Labour Cost Survey and are subject to its methodology.

#### Links

- [Cedefop's statistics and indicators section](#)
- [More statistics of the month](#)
- [Apprenticeship systems in European countries](#)
- [Eurostat's Labour cost survey](#)
- [The Bruges Communiqué](#)

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## VETAlert – March 2011 – Focus on transition from school to work

The March issue of VETAlert provides access to **VET in Europe - country reports**. These reports provide an overview of the vocational education and training systems existing in EU Member States, plus Iceland and Norway. They are prepared and updated by [ReferNet](#), according to a common structure provided by Cedefop.

This time we also included a "**Focus On**" section, which provides a thematic bibliography on "**transition from school to work**".

Have a look!

### Impressum and how to subscribe

VETAlert is a monthly selection of publications on vocational education and training available from Cedefop's bibliographic database [VET-Bib](#).

VET-Alert is a collaborative product of ReferNet and Cedefop's Library.

Please [subscribe](#) to VET-Alert and you will receive this monthly review in your mailbox.

### Links

- [VETAlert - no 3 - March 2011](#)



### New project manager in Adult Learning, Careers and Transitions.

Antje Barabasch joined Cedefop in March 2011 after a three-year stint as an Assistant Professor at the University of Magdeburg. She holds Master's degrees in Applied Geography/Tourism from the University of Trier and in Adult Education from the University of Erfurt. After obtaining her PhD in 2006 in Educational Policy Studies/Social Foundations from Georgia State University in Atlanta, USA, she also worked as a senior researcher or visiting scholar at the University of Bremen, Ohio State University and the universities of Toronto, York and British Columbia. At Cedefop, where she has a four-year contract, she will conduct research on career transitions, teacher training in VET and lifelong learning.

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## EU Policy

### Annual Growth Survey: Advancing the EU's comprehensive response to the crisis

Europe has a comprehensive plan to respond to the crisis and to speed up Europe's economic growth. It now needs to focus its efforts in a coordinated manner and with an eye on priorities.

The Annual Growth Survey charts a clear direction on where Europe should be heading in the next year and is the start of the first "European Semester" which changes the way governments shape their economic and fiscal policies.

A more detailed analysis underpinning the Commission's assessment is set out in 3 reports that accompany this Communication and include an assessment of the initial setting up of the Europe 2020 strategy at Member State level.

1. Progress report on Europe 2020
2. Macroeconomic report
3. Draft Joint Employment report

Reference: COM (2011) 11, 12.1.2011

### Links

- [Annual Growth Survey](#)
- [1. Progress report on Europe 2020](#)

- [2. Macro-economic report](#)
  - [3. Draft Joint Employment Report](#)
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## **Council conclusions on the role of education and training in the implementation of the Europe 2020 strategy**

Education and training have a fundamental role to play in achieving the Europe 2020 objectives of smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, notably by equipping citizens with the skills and competences which the European economy and European society need in order to remain competitive and innovative, but also by helping to promote social cohesion and inclusion.

The key role of education and training should therefore be fully reflected in the Council's work during the new 'European Semester' established from the beginning of 2011. In particular, and with the support of the Commission, the Council should ensure that issues such as policy measures and reforms in the field of education and training, their contribution to the European targets and the exchange of good policy and practice are fully addressed.

3066th Education, Youth, Culture and Sport Council meeting, Brussels, 14 February 2011

### **Links**

- [Council conclusions on the role of education and training in the implementation of the Europe 2020 strategy](#)
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## **Main results of the Education, Youth, Culture and Sport Council Meeting 14 February 2011**

In public deliberation, the Council held a policy debate on its contribution to the European Semester, in the framework of the 2011 Annual Growth Survey.

The Council adopted conclusions on the role of education and training in the implementation of the Europe 2020 Strategy. In this context, ministers also took note of a presentation by the Commission of its communication: "An agenda for new skills and jobs: A European contribution towards full employment".

The Council also adopted without debate a regulation which establishes the procedures and conditions applicable to the practical functioning of the European citizens' initiative.

### **Links**

- [Main results of the Council](#)
- 

## **Towards a greener labour market**

This report by the EMCO Temporary Working Group on Employment and Climate Change, aims to improve the evaluation and monitoring of climate change policies on the labour market.

It animates the ongoing debate on the implications of the greening of the economy for the formulation of European and national employment policies.

The report embodies a broad policy-based approach on employment and environmental change, while acknowledging the complex inter-linkages between environmental sustainability on the one hand, and labour markets on the other. In particular it answers to a number of green questions, such as:

How to define the scope of green jobs?

Which are the green policies affecting labour markets?  
What are the expected labour market impacts?  
How to quantify green jobs  
What about the international dimension?  
Any impact on quality in work?  
What are the implications for policy formation?

## Links

- [EMCO goes green](#)
- 

## Report on the progress on equality between women and men 2010

This report takes stock of the situation for gender equality in the European Union in five significant areas in the first year of the Strategy for Equality between Women and Men (2010- 2015).

It points out that despite a general trend towards more equality in society and on the labour market, progress in eliminating gender inequalities remains slow.

Meeting the employment targets in the Europe 2020 Strategy will be a challenge, and this report highlights the importance of gender equality for reaching those targets.

## Links

- [Commission Staff Working Document SEC\(2011\) 193](#)
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## New member to Cedefop's Governing Board

The Council has approved the Decision of 14 February 2011 for appointing a new member of Cedefop's Governing Board of for the remainder of the term of office, which runs until 17 September 2012.

**Mr Aleksi KALENIUS.**  
Finnish Confederation of Professionals STTK  
Representative of Employees's organisations, Finland.

*Reference: Official Journal of the European Union, C56, 22.2.2011, p. 8*

## Links

- [Council Decision in Finnish](#)
- [Council Decision in English](#)

## Agenda

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### Agora conference on policy

■ Dates: 17/03/2011 - 17/03/2011 ■ Venue: Brussels ■ Country: Belgium ■ Cedefop involvement: Organiser  
A bridge to the future: European vocational education and training policy 2002 to 2010.

## Links



- [Event website](#)
- 

## European TalentDay

■ Dates:25/03/2011 - 25/03/2011 ■ Venue: Budapest ■ Country: Hungary ■ Cedefop involvement:

The first European Day of Talented and Gifted (in short: European TalentDay) will be held during the Hungarian EU Presidency, in Spring 2011.

All EU and non-EU countries are welcome to join the movement.

TalentDays are interesting and colourful events to prove that talent is a treasure, worth managing more and more consciously. Some TalentDays are still organized on or around the anniversary of Béla Bartók, whereas others are held any time throughout the year.

### Links

- [European Talent Day](#)
- 

## 9th Transformative Learning Conference

■ Dates:28/05/2011 - 29/05/2011 ■ Venue: Athens ■ Country: Greece ■ Cedefop involvement: Not applicable

The theme for the conference is Transformative Learning in Time of Crisis: Individual and Collective Challenges. The emergence of crisis represents both an opportunity and a challenge for professionals in the field of education. The aim of this conference is to provide an opportunity to reinterpret through the lens of transformative learning theories the nature of contemporary political, economic, social, psychological, cultural or environmental crisis, as experienced individually and collectively.

### Links

- [9th Transformative Learning Conference](#)
- 

## The 2011 Annual ECVET Forum

■ Dates:09/06/2011 - 10/06/2011 ■ Venue: Madrid ■ Country: Spain ■ Cedefop involvement: Participant

The ECVET Forum is the annual highlight of the [ECVET Network](#).

It is the place to be if you belong to the ECVET Network, as long runner as well as a new comer ...

It is the place to invite your colleagues and partners for their first involvement in the ECVET Network. If you're not yet a member, it worths apply to the ECVET Network in order to be part of it ...

Actually, the ECVET annual Forum gives you the opportunity:

- to be updated on the new developments and progress which are going on in Europe for the implementation of the ECVET Recommendation,
- to meet each other and plan together,
- to work on your partnerships,
- to be exposed to the projects currently going on in Europe,
- to make things changed and happened on the European level

### Links

- [ECVET Forum 2011](#)
- [ECVET Network](#)
- [website of the European Credit system for Vocational Education and Training \(ECVET\)](#)

## News from the Member States

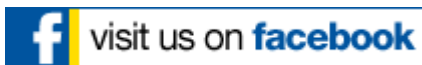
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Items submitted by ReferNet, Cedefop's European network for VET

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