



## Cedefop Newsletter no. 16 - October 2011

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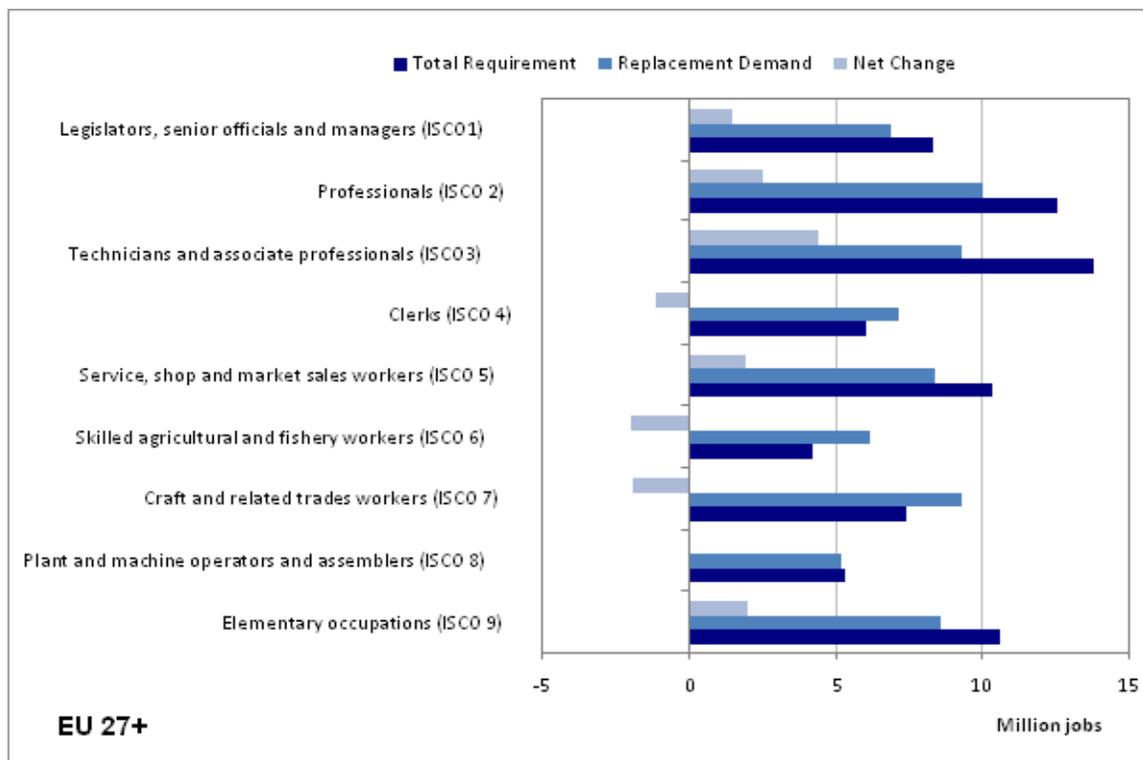
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### Main story

#### Learning while working: how skills development can be supported through workplace learning

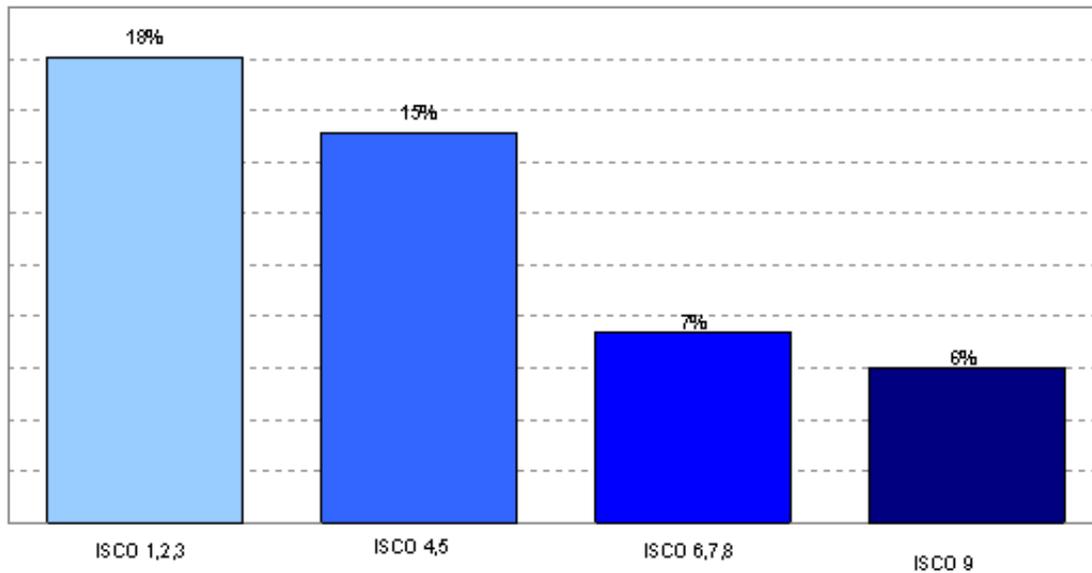
The more highly qualified people are, the more likely they are to participate in learning activities. However, people also tend to do less lifelong learning as they grow older, irrespective of their qualification levels. This is especially true in countries where overall participation in lifelong learning is low. This general pattern emerges from various surveys, even though the Continuing training and Adult education surveys suggest that participation is higher than the lifelong learning indicator shows (1). Older low qualified workers are especially difficult to reach, even though they need lifelong learning most. Almost 60 % of Europe's 74 million low-qualified citizens are over 45 years old. This is a matter of concern, as most of the 2020 workforce is already on the labour market and qualification demands are rising even in elementary occupations.

Towards knowledge- and skills-intensive jobs – future job opportunities and lifelong learning by occupation.



Source: Cedefop. Country workbooks (2011)

### Lifelong learning participation by occupation People in employment EU-27 average 2005-10



Source: Eurostat LFS 2010

Overall figures mask disparities in training provision, not only across economic sectors but also across different occupational groups and types of contracts. Employees in the services sector, for instance, receive more training than those working in industry. Permanent staff benefit more from employer-paid training than employees on fixed-term contracts do. Given that transition is now a routine part of working life, continuing learning should be viewed as a necessity for which everyone bears responsibility. Employers tend to focus on the most highly qualified employees, and governments target low-skilled and other workers at disadvantage in the labour market, so medium-level skilled workers, who also need to plan their careers and learning to meet future skill demands, risk losing out.

The need to develop one's skills and manage transitions between jobs will increase in line with the growing demand for care and household services, Europe's environmental targets, changing technologies and work organisation and the trend towards longer working lives. According to the Adult education survey (2007), people participate in non-formal education and training mainly so that they can do their jobs better or advance their careers (43%), or both.

Hence, EU Member States have agreed that they will encourage workers to participate in continuing vocational training (CVET) to help meet the adult learning target. By 2020, 15 % of the population between 25 and 64 should participate in lifelong learning – a highly ambitious target for countries like Bulgaria, Greece, Hungary, Lithuania and Romania.

#### Incentives to invest in skills development

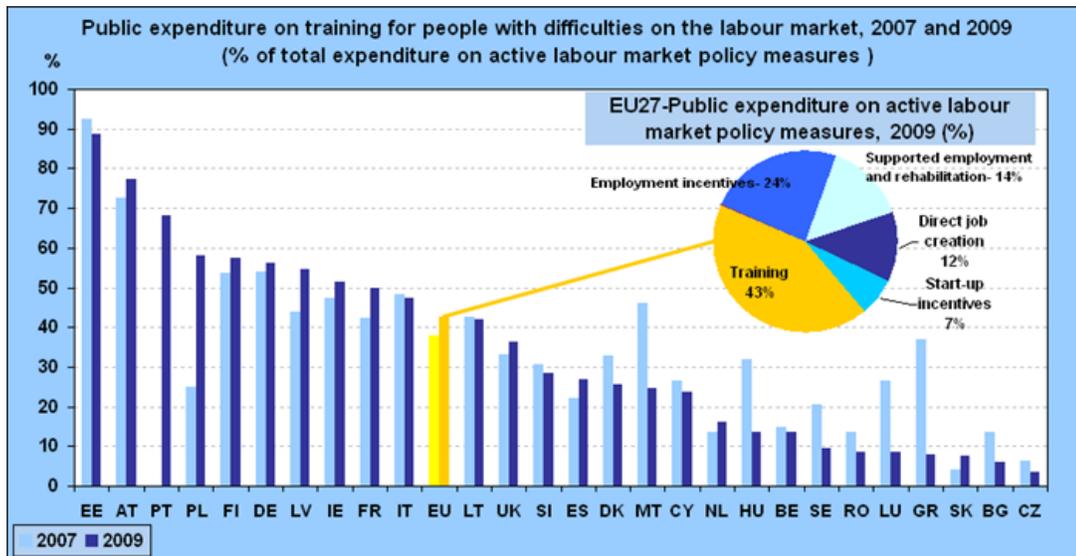
All countries provide incentives for continuing education and training, for instance by granting paid or unpaid temporary leave from work. The most common financial incentives for individuals are vouchers/individual learning accounts, loans and tax incentives. While loans are less popular in adult learning, vouchers/individual learning accounts are used more widely, reflecting the trend towards a demand-led approach. They are used either universally or they target specific groups. In more than half of the Member States tax incentives encourage individuals and enterprises or both to invest in education and training. Tax incentives and training funds are the most common means of encouraging enterprises to increase investment. Such schemes, which are levy-based, come about through voluntary arrangements between the social partners at sector level, or between governments and the social partners, and they secure a certain level of investment (ranging from 0.1 to 2.5% of the payroll). Incentives appear to have more effect on large and medium-sized enterprises than on small ones. Inequalities in access to training persist, especially for the low skilled. Collective bargaining at sectoral and company levels can address this issue by including principles of equal access.

#### CVET– a heterogeneous landscape

In response to the crisis, social dialogue helped to bring about measures to keep people in work and invest in skills, for instance by combining short-time work and training. These efforts were supported by dedicated public support, shared

funding schemes and EU funds. Between 2009 and 2011, the Swedish government helped create a substantial number of adult VET training places through earmarked funding. To obtain this funding, municipalities were required to cooperate with the public employment service, social partners and other relevant parties to ensure synergy and coherence with other programmes.

In 2009, governments in the EU invested about EUR 27.6 billion, or 27 % more than in 2007, in training individuals with difficulties on the labour market (2). Fourteen countries increased public expenditure on training as part of an active labour market policy, giving it the highest share of all labour market measures (about 43% of the 2009 EU total; compared to 2007, an increase by 4.6 percentage points).



Source: Cedefop's calculation, based on Eurostat, labour market policy database.

While in Denmark, for instance, labour market training comes under the same roof as other forms of continuing vocational training (3), most countries draw a clear line between responsibilities and governance in training as part of active labour market measures and responsibilities and governance in the continuing vocational education and training (CVET) sector.

In fact, CVET in the EU varies considerably in terms of governance, regulations, status, financing, quality assurance, providers and types of qualifications that can be acquired. CVET depends, even more so than IVET, on the country context: economic sectors, company size and the diversity of jobs denoted by the same occupational code; how occupations and qualifications are designed or whether access to occupations or functions is regulated, and if so to what degree. In the UK, where licenses to exercise jobs are less common than in countries like Austria or Germany, vocational qualifications are not necessarily seen as an entry requirement. This does not only influence the role of initial VET but also that of CVET, or rather VET for adults. The need to train newly recruited people depends on the learning outcomes of initial education. Evidence suggests that there is less need in countries with traditional apprenticeships. It is also worth noting that there are different definitions of the term 'continuing (vocational education and) training' (4) and of its boundaries with initial vocational education and training. Some countries – like Sweden – prefer to refer to the target groups, i.e. whether the training addresses young people or adults.

Most countries offer formal adult education and training programmes that lead either to the same qualifications as those offered in initial VET or to specially designed ones. Programmes are either open to young and mature learners or explicitly designed for adult learners or people in employment. In higher education, the workload is adjusted (ECTS credits) to 'part-time' students, or programmes are organised differently to suit people in employment: for instance as evening or weekend classes, block studies or blended learning (modern forms of distance and residential learning). In some countries, higher education institutions have cooperated with enterprises to develop 'professional Bachelor programmes' that include work-based learning elements. Generally, however, formal education and training accounts for only a small share of CVET.

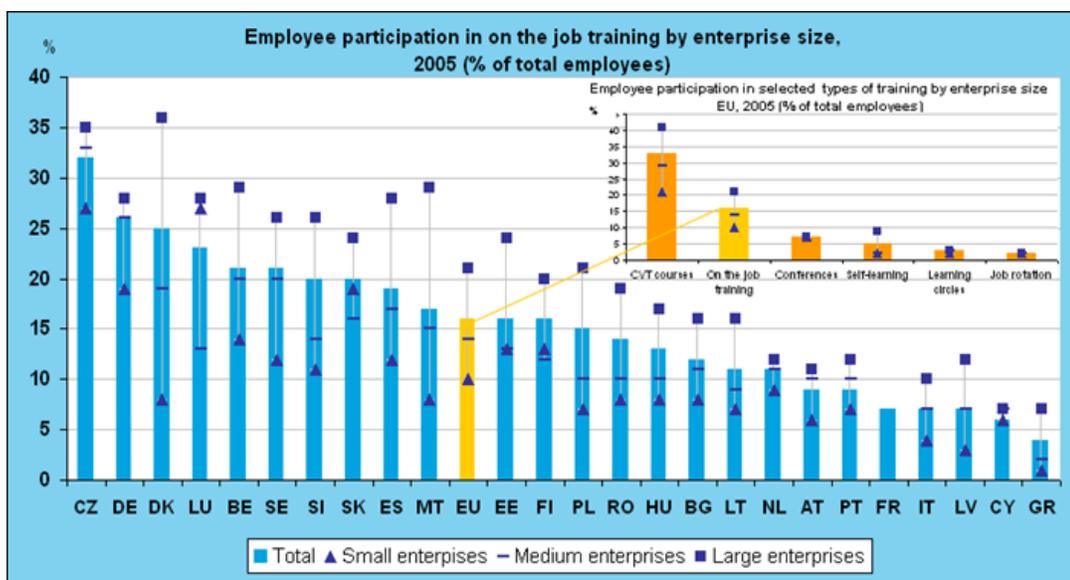
Different types of CVET may be distinguished according to the purpose of the training (5). The objectives of CVET depend on countries' general educational attainment level, their shares of low qualified people, their attitudes towards lifelong learning and their targets. Portugal, for instance, aims at raising the minimum attainment levels of its population to upper secondary education and training. The recently agreed Austrian lifelong learning strategy, for instance, includes several objectives that relate to CVET: generally, it aims at increasing LLL participation from 13.7 % in 2010 to 20 % by 2020; more specifically, it intends to increase the share of the low-qualified who participate in CVET during working hours from 5.6 % in 2007 to 15 % in 2020 and has set a target to reduce disparities in CVET participation between densely and less densely populated areas.

The social partners play a major role in CVET, which is characterised by a wide variety of different actors and responsibilities at different levels. They co-shape and help implement strategies and policies and (co)manage training funds or support enterprises or employees, as union learning representatives do in the UK. They also act as training providers, as is the case in Austria, for example, where the largest CVET providers are social partner institutions.

Employers are the most important providers of non-formal learning in many countries. Sixty per cent of Europe's enterprises provide training for their employees. The commitment of businesses to training appears to reflect other trends: high shares in Denmark (85%), Austria (81%), Sweden (78%), Finland (77%), the Netherlands (75%) and France (74%) and low shares in a number of southern European countries and also in other countries where participation in LLL is low and/or expenditure on training for people with difficulties on the labour market is high.

Training provision also varies by company size. While large enterprises tend to have human resource units and systematically pursue training policies, SMEs have more limited capacities and resources for developing a training strategy. However, this link between size and training propensity does not apply in all countries.

While much of CVET organised by companies takes place in form of courses, the workplace itself plays a fundamental role as learning provider, and as a stimulus for further learning. With 16 % employee participation, on-the-job training is the second most attended form of continuing vocational training in EU enterprises (after CVT courses – 33%). On-the-job training contributes to upgrading skills that are particularly important for specific jobs or specific work environments, emphasising a learning-by-doing approach.



Source: Eurostat, Continuing Vocational Training Survey (CVTS3)

## Learning at the workplace

The learning potential of a company depends on a number of related factors: human resources policies and training; the company's participation in innovation processes; workers' motivation to learn; and the opportunities that the working environment offers to learn on-the-job and apply knowledge, skills and competence. A work organisation that embeds learning in tasks helps to create a learning culture in the enterprise.

Challenging tasks, which involve decision-making, problem solving, judgement, peer learning and applying new knowledge, reflect the breadth and diversity of learning in the workplace. Reiterative work patterns not only inhibit learning but, in the long run, have a deskilling effect.

However, enterprises may lack the expertise to transform their work organisation into one that stimulates learning, and may require external support. National and sectoral skills development strategies would need to address this issue. To enable employees to become much more proficient in a particular field, work-based learning needs to be combined with more structured and systematic learning.

Adults need to have an adequate mix of knowledge, skills and competence, which will help them to remain in employment. Special attention should be paid to skills that are common to a wide range of jobs, lay the foundations for further learning and improve employability. Yet company training tends to focus on job-specific skills and not on improving employability

through competences that can be transferred between different working environments and even occupations. However, a number of national programmes and sectoral initiatives are encouraging enterprises to provide their staff with the key competences that help them adjust to changes in work organisation and open the way to further learning. An example of such a scheme is like the Flemish Competence Agenda 2007, jointly approved by the government and the social partners.

### **Linking innovation policies and skills development**

A lack of awareness of training needs is a fundamental barrier to skill development in enterprises. As the Continuing training survey revealed, most enterprises that do not provide training do not see the need to do so and believe that staff is adequately skilled for work.

To be more effective, financial incentives and training provision will need to be accompanied by adequate support for the assessment of skills needs at the enterprise and sector levels. In a number of countries, different support initiatives have been established to help enterprises identify their training needs, develop a working environment that stimulates learning and design and deliver learning opportunities (example of 'Skillnets' in Ireland, industry-led partnership). Businesses will also need to be made aware of the returns on their investment in training. Increasing employees' skills makes it easier for companies to adapt to change and to compete in new markets. Employees might be more likely to stimulate and implement innovation. As the evidence shows, employer-provided training enhances process and product innovation and growth and productivity. Raising the proportion of employees trained by one percentage point increases productivity by around 0.8 %. Although this 'model' cannot be automatically applied to all enterprises, the results indicate a clear correlation between training provided by enterprises and returns in terms of productivity.

Narrow business strategies and routine in work organisation lead to limited demand for further learning. Often, the need for training arises when enterprises deliver new products or services, adopt new technology, production methods and working processes or transform their work organisation. Policy actions and incentives need to encourage employers to raise their game in terms of technology, innovation in goods and services, market strategies and work organisation, and as a result, increase awareness of skill needs and the demand for training. Training policies and strategies that promote innovation in enterprises should be brought together. The report on 'Ambition 2020: World Class Skills and jobs for the UK' establishes a close relationship between innovation in enterprises and the professional development of staff (UK Commission for employment and skills, 2009). Hence, training policies and strategies that promote innovation in enterprises need to be brought together. The economic downturn reinforces the need for synergies between policy measures.

### **Joint commitment for workplace learning**

Transferring knowledge, skills and competence acquired in training to daily working practice may be a challenge. Companies, particularly SMEs, do not always consider training relevant to their specific business needs and work organisation. Training providers would need to adopt a customer-led approach that matches the needs of enterprises and employers, overcomes constraints linked to size and work organisation, and responds to emerging skill demands and sectoral changes.

Any policy on skill development, if it is to be successful, needs to address the quality and relevance of the training provided to enterprises as well as the competences of trainers. An in-company trainer is a changing role that might require a new set of knowledge, skills and competence. At the sector and national levels, a number of initiatives have defined minimum competence requirements for trainers and aim at providing professional development opportunities. This is challenging because training and coaching tasks in enterprises are often performed by employees who are not professional 'trainers' but rather skilled workers.

Employers may need support to develop strategies for skill and business development and to adapt their work organisations so that they promote innovation and skills. This is especially true of SMEs. Training strategies need to consider company size and the regional or local context in which companies operate and the actual employment they create. Given that small firms face the challenge of keeping up with large firms, they could benefit from public policy, consultancy and cooperation with, for instance, training providers from the formal system. Encouraging cooperation among companies to help SMEs develop joint training systems could be another option.

To make continuing training more relevant and responsive, diverse policy measures, sources of expertise, financial incentives and learning services need to be combined and responsibilities shared. Better coordination of existing resources would be necessary to tailor skill development initiatives to employers' needs, while personalising services according to the needs and circumstances of individuals. Social dialogue has an important role in ensuring access to guidance and continuing training at key transition points during working life and to create the appropriate conditions for work-based learning. Employers, trade unions and public authorities have a major responsibility for creating the conditions

in the workplace that allow workers to broaden their competences. Denmark's lifelong strategy, for instance, builds on the consensus that lifelong learning is the shared responsibility of employers, employees and public authorities, as the Danish VET in Europe report states. All players accept joint responsibility for maintaining high levels of participation in adult education and continuing training and sustained competence development at work. Part of this strategy is upgrading key competences and job-related skills.

Overall, the commitment of a wide range of players at the national, regional, local and sectoral levels is needed to address imbalances in the social, educational and age profiles of those benefiting from learning opportunities in the workplace.

## Valuing workplace learning

Seen from the perspective of individuals, flexible routes and recognition are key to encouraging them to take up learning. They need to see clear benefits. The knowledge, skills and competence they acquire need to have a real value: a better or a new job, the opportunity to pursue further learning without having to start from scratch, the chance to combine their qualifications with complementary skills within a similar or different study field.

So far, the value of these qualifications is often limited, as countries may have several VET qualification subsystems in parallel: for instance, the qualifications that young people acquire in formal education; specifically designed qualifications for adults, those acquired through validation and those through labour market measures. Recent policy developments, however, indicate that qualification frameworks are opening up and integrating qualifications that people acquire in CVET and through validation. The take-up of Finland's competence-based qualifications system, for instance, and developments in Portugal, where qualifications acquired through validation are being integrated in the NQF are interesting examples of a more flexible system. Another interesting example is the Danish lifelong strategy. It aims at creating a more flexible and individualised education and training system which also covers non-formal and informal learning and pays particular attention to transfer between pathways, guidance and counselling and validation of prior learning.

But whether or not the education and training system is flexible, there is little value for a company in having a better skilled workforce or for employees in having developed their skills, if no use is made of those skills.

## For further reading:

- [Cedefop \(2011\). Learning while working. Success stories on workplace learning in Europe.](#) Luxembourg: Publications Office. (Cedefop Reference series).
- [Cedefop \(2011\). The anatomy of wider benefits of VET in the workplace. Research paper No 12.](#) Luxembourg: Publications Office. (Cedefop Reference series).
- [Cedefop \(2011\). The benefits of vocational education and training. Research paper No 10.](#) Luxembourg: Publications Office. (Cedefop Reference series).
- Cedefop. Financing training in Europe (forthcoming).
- Cedefop. The development of national qualifications frameworks in Europe (forthcoming).
- [Cedefop. Statistics of the month.](#)
- [VET in Europe country reports prepared by Cedefop's Refernet.](#)

(1) This is mainly due to the different reference periods: four weeks prior to the EU Labour force survey used for the LLL benchmark; 12 months for the adult education and the continuing training survey.

(2) Unemployed, employed at risk of job loss and inactive who would like to enter the labour market but are disadvantaged in some way.

(3) [VET in Europe country report Germany.](#)

(4) Continuing training: Education or training after initial education and training or after 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. Terminology of European education and training policy. A selection of 100 key terms. Luxembourg, 2008.

(5) see for instance, [Germany's VET in Europe report](#).

## News from Cedefop

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### Study visits – a beneficial learning experience for all

Study visits are rewarding not only for participants but also for the organisers. A study visit is an opportunity for an organisation to boost staff motivation, become more international, raise its profile in the local community, demonstrate its achievements, and much else besides.

These dual benefits of study visits were highlighted at a knowledge-sharing seminar for the organisers of 2011/12 visits which Cedefop held on 22 and 23 September 2011 in Thessaloniki. Here, organisers who had already hosted study visits met others who plan to do so. Participants exchanged experiences and also addressed potential challenges.

It was noted that study visits are a very effective tool for establishing cross-border cooperation schemes and networks, for raising awareness of the European Union's priorities in education and training and for learning about examples of good practice in other countries. This confirms the outcomes of surveys Cedefop has conducted over the past two years.



The Study visits programme is part of the EU Lifelong learning programme that provides decision-makers and practitioners in the field of education and training an opportunity to exchange expertise and experience on issues of common interest. Every year around 2600 specialists take part in 240 study visits covering a wide range of themes of common European interest in education and training.



For the (shared) benefits of recent study visits, read Cedefop's publication '**Major benefits in education and training follow study visits. Impact on 2008/09 Study visits participants**'.

For a short overview of the study visits 2008-2010 see Cedefop's briefing note '**Crossing frontiers to share expertise**'.

For more information on study visits in general see the dedicated **study visits website**.

## Links

- [Cedefop publication: Major benefits in education and training follow study visits.](#)
- [Briefing note: Crossing frontiers to share expertise](#)
- [Study visits website](#)



## Investing in an ageing workforce – why and how?

Demographic change in Europe will have a major impact on its society and economy, but few companies are actually adapting their human resource practices to the ageing of the workforce. Despite encouraging results from initiatives that show the value of investing in ageing workers, better access to and more participation in lifelong learning remain major challenges. What can policy-makers do to encourage workers, employers and educators to take action? What are the key factors in successful active ageing policies? Where are barriers to investment in an ageing workforce, and what is its potential?

These highly relevant issues were addressed at the international seminar **Learning later in life – Uncovering the potential of investing in an ageing workforce**, jointly organised by Cedefop and the European Commission in Brussels on 21 and 22 September 2011.

One clear message from the seminar was that prevailing attitudes – particularly those of employers – about training for ageing workers need to change. Human resource departments tend to see training as a ‘retention strategy’ for older workers rather than as a means to improve skills, productivity and job satisfaction. This approach is unlikely to lead to better use of the skills of an ageing workforce.

Companies need to develop a new ‘demographic literacy’ to:

- understand that demographic change is imminent;
- be able to analyse their own workforce’s age structure; and
- ensure that their efficiency, productivity and capacity for innovation are not affected by the rise in the average working age.

To do this successfully, they should incorporate the age factor into all aspects of human resource management. Firms that have analysed their workforce’s age structure are already adopting age-friendly HR practices. Above all companies should not underestimate the value of training. Employers consider training less important than product development, marketing and work organisation – yet all of these depend on well-trained, creative employees of all ages. SMEs in particular need a strategy to identify training needs, implement training, and evaluate its results.

Older workers do have specific training requirements. They want their own experience and knowledge to be taken seriously, and to be integrated into the learning experience. But they enjoy being part of an intergenerational learning environment. Training programmes for entrepreneurship also tend to focus too narrowly on young people. As seminar participants heard, Europe lags behind Latin America in entrepreneurship training for this age group. In fact, ‘grey’ entrepreneurs, with their greater human and social capital, tend to be more successful.

Cedefop will publish the outcomes of the event in its publication series Working and Ageing to complement previous work on ageing and adult learning. The seminar was part of the preparation of the European Year for Active Ageing and Intergenerational Solidarity 2012.

For further information, please contact Cedefop experts Jasper van Loo [jasper.van-loo@cedefop.europa.eu](mailto:jasper.van-loo@cedefop.europa.eu) or Alexandra Dehmel [alexandra.dehmel@cedefop.europa.eu](mailto:alexandra.dehmel@cedefop.europa.eu)

## Relevant Cedefop publications

- [The right skills for silver workers: an empirical analysis](#)
- [Working and ageing: emerging theories and empirical perspectives](#)

## Links

- [Seminar programme](#)
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### Forecasting skills supply and demand: work in progress on new sets of data

A recent Skillsnet workshop has helped improve skills forecasting methodology by introducing new parameters for the break-down of results.

The workshop discussed improvements in analysis of the impact of migration on the qualification mix in different countries; in linking rising skills levels with productivity gains; and in the development of detailed occupation-skills profiles. There has been a shift of dimension to more qualitative policy scenarios and their translation into quantitative terms. Also, the underlying data have been refined to include such parameters as wage structure and fields of study, allowing for better and more disaggregated results.



Though current macroeconomic results provide grounds for slight optimism, a second recession or at least a lengthy recovery are to be expected. The skillsnet team will need to reconsider the baseline and alternative scenarios in the light of current developments in the EU and elsewhere.

Following the workshop – which was organised in cooperation with the Institute for Employment Research of the University of Warwick and the Greek National Institute of Labour and Human Resources – Cedefop will hold an international seminar on **‘Skills anticipation and matching: Common and complementary research strategies’** on 14 and 15 November 2011 in Athens.

Cedefop will announce the new full set of forecasts in March 2012. At the same time it will launch an online tool to provide easy access to the results.

Photo credits: Cedefop

## Links

- [International seminar - Skills anticipation and matching: Common and complementary research strategies](#)
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**Green skills and environmental awareness – how will it affect jobs and vocational**

## education and training?

In recent years, Cedefop has been investigating the skills and training needs generated by the development of the green economy. Now, a workshop held in London on 5 October 2011 has validated the first results of a study of the current and future skills and training needs of nine selected occupations affected by the development of a more resource-efficient economy.

The study was conducted in eight European countries (Finland, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, the Netherlands, Slovakia and the UK) and looked at the following occupations: nanotechnologist, engineering technologist and environmental engineer as examples of high skilled occupations; energy auditor, transport vehicle emissions inspector, insulation worker, electrician, solar photovoltaic installer and sheet metal worker as examples of intermediate skilled occupations; refuse/recycling collector as an example of a low skilled occupation.

The main messages emerging from the study can be summarised as follows:

**Employment trends.** Male workers dominate the vast majority of the occupations under study, particularly in construction, while female workers are slightly more numerous in new technologies and occupations providing clear, direct environmental benefits. Some of these occupations seem to have little appeal to younger workers, put off by practical, technical work or a perception that the work is 'dirty'.

**Recruitment.** At present, multiple entry routes and varied levels of qualification lead to the occupations in question. This raises questions about how far learning provisions match skill requirements and how far effective recognition, and hence mobility, is ensured. This may be important in the future for location-specific occupations such as installers of photovoltaic panels. Difficulties also persist in recognising or assessing practical skills and informal and on-the-job learning.

**Current and future skill needs.** At present the skills supply seems to be adequate. This is probably due to the economic slow-down and there may be problems in store in the event of an economic upturn. Skill shortages are already evident in Germany and the Netherlands. Tasks in certain occupations in the study are undergoing adaptation and reorientation as a result of environmental and technological change. Forecasts suggest that, as economies recover, there will be a growing demand for electricians, sheet metal workers and insulation workers in wide range of countries. Future changes are expected in the type and level of skill required to perform tasks in the occupations.

**Training.** Effective training can be seen as an indicator of an enterprise's ability to adapt to occupational change and is reportedly more readily available to employees in Finland, the Netherlands and the UK. Understandably, training occurs more frequently when licences or certification are important for the occupations under analysis. Regulatory updates and standard-setting as well as more general health and safety requirements are typical components of much of the training provision. Funding gaps and new, not yet recognised occupations may be factors leading to mismatches in training provisions. The main challenge for learning providers is the uncertainty surrounding employers' needs. Moreover, while current demand for green skills is low, over half of providers anticipate strong growth in demand from both workers and employers and anticipate that training will be needed primarily for existing workers.

## Links

- [Workshop agenda](#)
- [Workshop presentations](#)

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## OECD-Cedefop green skills forum - Call for papers

Following our [pre-announcement of July 2011](#), we are pleased to inform you that Cedefop, the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training and the OECD Local Economic and Employment Development Programme (LEED) are organising a joint Green Skills Forum to be held at OECD Headquarters in Paris on 27th February 2012.

The forum aims to draw on lessons from work conducted by the OECD, Cedefop, and other organisations on the implications of the green economy for skills development and training policies. These insights will contribute to the OECD's Green Growth Strategy studies such as the LEED project on Measuring the Potential of Green Growth and to Cedefop's Green Skills activities, which contribute

to the European Commission's initiative on New Skills for New Jobs.

We invite contributors to submit proposals of a maximum 500 words to the conference organisers by 1 December 2011. For more information, please refer to the enclosed call for papers.

People who would like to attend the forum without presenting a paper are highly welcome too. The website containing more information as well as registration will be available soon.

For more information: [GreenSkills-Forum2012@cedefop.europa.eu](mailto:GreenSkills-Forum2012@cedefop.europa.eu)

## Attachments

 [EN Call for papers](#) (PDF 68.33 Kb 13/10/2011)

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### Multicultural Europe – Migrants in working life

How can we develop guidance policy, practice and research to help migrants throughout Europe enter the labour market? To find answers to this question, Cedefop organised a peer learning event on Labour market integration of immigrants in Europe – Implications for guidance policy, practice and research in Thessaloniki, Greece, on 29-30 September 2011.

#### Migrants: a resource for the ageing European labour market?

The Europe 2020 strategy – the foundation for tackling the employment and skills challenges of the next decade – takes a positive stand on labour migration as a key to increasing growth and competitiveness in the European Union. Removing obstacles to increased labour market participation of migrant and ethnic minorities is important for improving the overall employment level in the Member States as these groups tend to have lower employment rates than host country nationals.

Cedefop reports reveal that migrant and ethnic minorities in Europe are more likely than the indigenous people to experience skill mismatch, unemployment, inactivity and adverse working and living conditions. Their competences are in many cases undervalued and their skills may remain under-utilised in the national labour markets. Therefore, Europe – if it is to remain successful in the global economy – should actively work towards facilitating access to learning and working for its migrant and ethnic minorities.

All this calls for good policy-strategy level cooperation and well-targeted measures from EU institutions and the Member States in the areas of lifelong learning, employment and guidance in the coming years. Moreover, employers' active involvement in creating culturally diverse work places is vital. They are in a key position to decide whether to open – or to close – the door to the labour market for migrants.

#### Guidance support for migrants' labour market integration

The Cedefop event identified several areas where concrete action should be stimulated to improve migrants' access to employment in Europe. One of the conclusions was that more **effective integration strategies** should be put in place on the local, regional, national and European levels, and interaction and cooperation between all these levels and among all key stakeholders should be further facilitated in the Member States. Also the **voice of the migrant and ethnic communities** should be taken more systematically into consideration in the design, development, delivery, management and evaluation of integration measures and related services.

Furthermore, when guidance practitioners support migrants' access to employment, they should not only give them labour market and/or employer-related information, but be knowledgeable and resourceful enough to provide support for their **personal, social, cultural, educational and vocational adjustment and growth** at the same time. Ideally information about learning, job and career opportunities should be available to migrant/ethnic groups in their native languages.

The event also concluded that sufficient professional counselling competences form the basis for developing an effective counsellor-counselee relationship, for providing ethically correct services and for implementing guidance interventions that will be useful to the culturally diverse service users.

Consequently, improved opportunities for continuing **professional development for guidance practitioners** should be made available so as to equip them with proper multicultural competences as well as raise their awareness of topics closely linked to social inclusion of migrants, such as human rights issues.

Finally, guidance service delivery is rarely evaluated in a formal way, and specifically this concerns the information, advice and guidance services available to migrant and ethnic people. Therefore, more research attention should be given to the **evaluation of guidance services** targeting the given clientele. Currently the evidence base is often far too limited for the national/regional/local policy- and decision-makers to understand which guidance measures are effective and why.

### Cedefop's future action

These event-based findings will be taken onboard in the study that Cedefop aims at carrying out in 2012 to map out how the national policies and strategies of the Member States address the information and guidance needs of adult migrants (25-64 years) as well as how they support the labour market integration of migrant workers. This EU-wide study will also identify good guidance practices that contribute to raising qualification levels and improving the employability of adult migrants in order to facilitate their (re)entry to the labour market.

All event materials are available at the event website.

### Links

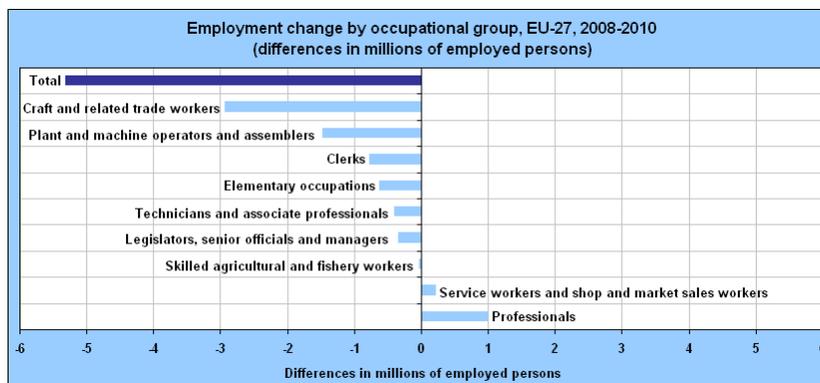
- [Event website](#)



### More job openings for high-skilled workers

Employment in high-skilled occupations is not only resisting the crisis but on the increase since 2008

Cedefop's forecasts indicate a remarkable employment increase in high-skilled occupations until 2020. In short-term perspective, as well, EU labour force data (2008-10) show that employment in high-skilled occupations is more likely to resist the crisis.



Source: Cedefop calculations, based on Eurostat, labour force survey.

- In the period 2008-10, the crisis affected two occupational groups in particular at EU level: craft and related trade workers (about 2.9 million fewer employed or a decrease by 9.6%) and plant and machine operators, including assemblers (down 1.5 million or a 7.9% drop). Nevertheless, in 2010, these groups still accounted for 21% of total employment in the EU.
- Negative trends of employment at EU level from 2008 to 2010 also concern elementary occupations (down by 0.6 million or 2.9%) and clerks (down by 0.8 million or 3.3%)
- For service workers, together with shop and market sales workers, employment continued to rise (by 0.2 million or a 0.7% increase).
- Employment in high-skilled occupations resisted the crisis. Employment of professionals even continued growing during the crisis (by 1.0 million employed or a 3.3% increase). Other high-

skilled occupational groups only suffered limited job losses. In particular, technicians and associate professionals decreased by 0.4 million (a drop by 1.1%), and legislators, senior officials and managers by 0.3 million (1.9 %). Overall, between 2008 and 2010, employment in high-skilled occupations increased by 0.2 million (0.3%).

### Notes

The indicator presented here is the difference between employment levels in 2010 and in 2008. The chart only considers absolute differences, complemented in the text by information on percentage changes. The indicator is broken down by occupational group (ISCO-88 Classification). Employment refers to annual averages of employed persons aged 15-64. Data originate from the European labour force survey and are subject to its methodology.

### Links

- [Cedefop Statistics and indicators section](#)
- [More statistics of the month](#)
- [Labour force survey](#)
- [Related methodology to labour force survey](#)
- [Cedefop's skills supply and demand in Europe](#)
- [Cedefop research paper: labour-market polarisation and elementary occupations in Europe](#)

## EU Policy

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### Attitudes towards vocational education and training

This Eurobarometer survey sets out to gauge the opinion of European citizens about vocational education and training in 2011 to help inform the work of the European Commission and Member States as they begin to implement the new VET strategy.

It sets out to assess the image of vocational education and training, and people's impression of VET's potential benefits within the EU. It evaluates the impact of VET on society and on the economy, and looks at the factors that influence young people as they choose between VET and other forms of education.

26,840 European citizens aged 15 and above were interviewed across all the Member States.

### Links

- [Attitudes towards vocational education and training - Full report](#)
- [Attitudes towards vocational education and training - Summary](#)
- [Press Release](#)

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### Transferability of Skills across Economic Sectors

Economic restructuring requires a flexible workforce with a range of transferable skills.

This publication analyses the role of such skills in career pathways and the labour market, and levels of skill transferability across sectors in the current context and during the years leading up to 2020.

It also looks at the roles of actors involved in promoting transferability and methods for enhancing job mobility, before making final recommendations.

### Links

- [Transversal analysis on the evolution of skills needs](#)
- 

## **Report: Study in the EU difficult for foreign students**

According to a report issued by the Commission, foreign students still experience difficulties coming to the EU to study, due to an uneven implementation of the relevant EU legislation.

The first report on how Member States have implemented EU rules on the entry and residence of students, pupils, unremunerated trainees and volunteers from third countries suggests that the use of these forms of temporary migration could be improved further.

### **Links**

- [Report on the conditions of admission of third country nationals for the purposes of studies](#)
- 

## **Internationalisation of education in the EU and its member countries: developments, trends and opportunities**

The European Commission's DG EAC has just published this mapping study on the internationalisation of education.

It examines the external education policies, instruments and tools in the EU countries, with particular attention to policies towards:

- EU candidate countries
- European neighbourhood countries
- emerging countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa, Mexico and Argentina)
- high-income countries (Canada, Japan, New Zealand, South Korea, Switzerland and USA)

### **Links**

- [Internationalisation of education in the EU](#)
- 

## **Communication on EU Policies and Volunteering**

The European Commission has just published a Communication to further improve the recognition and promotion of volunteering in the EU.

In the context of European Year of Volunteering 2011, the Commission's Communication on EU Policies and Volunteering outlines a range of measures that will help foster voluntary activities in the EU, including the creation of a European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps and the development of a 'European Skills Passport'.

Reference: COM(2011) 568 final, 20.9.2011

### **Links**

- [Communication on EU Policies and Volunteering](#)
- [European Year of Volunteering 2011](#)

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## **Supporting growth and jobs – an agenda for the modernisation of Europe's higher education systems**

The main responsibility for delivering reforms in higher education rests with Member States and education institutions themselves.

This Communication identifies key policy issues for Member States and higher education institutions seeking to maximise their contribution to Europe's growth and jobs. The specific actions that the EU will take, bringing its added value to support the modernisation efforts of public authorities and institutions are also presented.

The Staff Working Document accompanying this Communication discusses the analytical evidence underpinning these policy issues and actions.

Reference: COM(2011) 567 final 20.9.2011

### **Links**

- [An agenda for the modernisation of Europe's higher](#)
- [Commission Staff Working Document SEC\(2011\) 1063](#)

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## **The role of voluntary activities in social policy – Council conclusions**

The Council adopted conclusions on the role of voluntary work in social policy, taking account of the activities and discussions in the context of 2011, European year of voluntary activities promoting active citizenship.

The conclusions stress that voluntary activity is an expression of active citizenship in all areas of social life.

Volunteering strengthens common European values like solidarity and social cohesion. It is crucial to the development of democratic values, human dignity, equality and subsidiarity, which are among the founding principles of the EU.

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## **Managing demographic challenges through better reconciliation of work and family life - Council Conclusions**

The Council adopted conclusions on demography and reconciliation of work and family life.

The population of the EU is ageing considerably and the resulting change in the composition of the population is expected to have a great impact on the structure of Europe's social and economic life.

The conclusions aim in particular at strengthening institutional cooperation in this field and at facilitating information exchange between various bodies and initiatives at both European and national level.

### **Links**

- [Managing demographic challenges through better reconciliation of work and family life](#)

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## **Social partners in vocational education and training**

The ETF Yearbook 2011 focuses on the role of the social partners in the fields of vocational education

and training, lifelong learning and active labour market policies.

The social partners have a particularly important function in policy making in the fields of VET and employment.

This yearbook analyses the actual role played by the social partners in selected EU countries, at the European level and in different ETF partner country contexts and discusses possible ways to develop their capacities

## Links

- [ETF Yearbook 2011](#)

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## Energy Education Resources - ManagEnergy Education Corner

ManagEnergy Vocational Training Corner aims to provide an easy-to-search, central portal with quick links to vocational training resources at both the EU and national level.

The database allows a more detailed search, e.g. training courses for heat pump installers in Sweden, or a more general search to provide a snapshot of all resources under a certain sector, e.g. wind power or energy management, a certain country, e.g. Spain or Czech Republic, or a certain job type, e.g. architect or electrician.

## Links

- [ManagEnergy website](#)

## Agenda

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### Innovation and learning in enterprises

■ Dates: 10/11/2011 - 11/11/2011 ■ Venue: Mediterranean Palace Hotel, Thessaloniki ■ Country: Greece ■ Cedefop involvement: Organiser  
Cedefop is currently conducting a study on "Adult learning in the workplace: skill development to promote innovation in enterprises". This study examines the links between workplace learning and innovation. It identifies and reviews policy frameworks and programmes that foster innovation in enterprises by linking business development and skill development. The study covers EU 27 and Norway. Special attention is paid to the introduction of work organisation and work processes in enterprises that can best stimulate business performance and innovation, while enabling employees to develop their skills on-the-job and contribute to innovation. The general review of policy initiatives and programmes coupling innovation and skill development in enterprises is completed by an in-depth analysis of 10 examples of policies and programmes (case studies).

The aim of this workshop is to discuss and open new perspectives on innovation and learning in enterprises, and to validate and complement the results of Cedefop's above-mentioned, ongoing study "Adult learning in the workplace: Skill development to promote innovation in enterprises" within this broader context. In particular, the event aims to:

- gain a better understanding of the relationship between innovation in enterprises and participation in lifelong learning/continuing training and of how human resources policies, skill development and innovation in enterprises are linked; how can change management and the creation of learning organisations contribute to (or inhibit) skills development and innovation? What works, how, and why? What are the potentials of workplace learning in this respect?;
- gain a better understanding in how far policy initiatives and programmes coupling innovation in enterprises and skill development are used in Europe and how they operate. How do the approaches in the member states differ? Which role does learning play in this context in the national systems of innovation?
- provide input for future policy recommendations and identify issues for further research.

The workshop aims at bringing together representatives of governments, enterprises, social partners and research to

encompass all points of view and perspectives in the debates.

For further details of the event, see the attached documents.

## Attachments

 **EN** [Draft Agenda](#) (PDF 27.85 Kb 25/10/2011)

 **EN** [Background paper](#) (PDF 29.42 Kb 15/09/2011)

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## Skills anticipation and matching:

■ Dates:14/11/2011 - 15/11/2011 ■ Venue: Athens ■ Country: Greece ■ Cedefop involvement: Organiser

Cedefop is organising an international seminar on skills anticipation and matching. This seminar will focus on exchanging experience among high level experts working at international level or key national organisations to develop common and complementary research strategies for skills anticipation and matching. The topics to be discussed in the seminar are:

- skills strategies: linking skills analysis to education and training provision;
- linking employment effects to skill needs;
- pulling together forces on international skills surveys, enterprise surveys and other data sources;
- short-term vs. long-term anticipation approaches – trade-offs and usefulness;
- reflection on mega and sectoral trends impacting on skill needs;
- development of international policy scenarios;
- migration, demographic changes and skills.

The participation in this seminar is restricted and requires an invitation from Cedefop.

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## Effective policies for the development of competencies of youth in Europe

■ Dates:16/11/2011 - 18/11/2011 ■ Venue: Warsaw ■ Country: Poland ■ Cedefop involvement: Not applicable

The conference will be a forum with the possibility for participants to share the experiences and suggest directions for cooperation in the area of competencies of youth, in particular the basic skills in reading, mathematics and science. The discussion will be based on the evidence-based presentations of policy experiences, mostly on the basis of large-scale assessment data.

It is foreseen that the exchange of views during the conference will be an important contribution to the debate on the results of the first cycle of the European cooperation in education training (ET 2020) and to the discussion on the priorities of the European cooperation in education training in its second cycle. The aim of the conference is also to increase cooperation between Member States and international organizations in sharing the expertise on effective evidence-based policies in the area of competences of youth.

## Links

- [More information about this event](#)

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## European Employment Forum - a perspective on the new labour market reality

■ Dates:22/11/2011 - 23/11/2011 ■ Venue: Brussels ■ Country: Belgium ■ Cedefop involvement: Participant

The 2011 conference will look at the labour market in the light of the significant changes that have taken place over the past few years to the global economy. Despite the often gloomy outlook, there are reasons for optimism, and many examples of excellent practice in some of our major organisations which can only have a beneficial effect on

employment levels.

Key issues to be discussed over the 2 days:

- Youth employment
- The Agenda for new skills and jobs
- The importance of SMEs in the labour market
- Opportunities for the ageing population
- Using employment as a route out of poverty
- Structural reform
- Flexicurity – a new momentum
- Innovation Union

Cedefop expert **Steve Bainbridge** will give a presentation on "The European year of Active Ageing and lifelong learning".

## Links

- [More information about this event](#)
- [Conference programme](#)

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## The role of the Social Partners in implementing European tools and principles

■ Dates: 24/11/2011 - 25/11/2011 ■ Venue: European Parliament, Brussels ■ Country: Belgium ■ Cedefop involvement: Organiser  
To be held at the European Parliament in Brussels on 24 and 25 November 2011.

Cedefop and the social partners have jointly organised this conference to provide an opportunity to present and discuss the short- and long-term challenges facing European cooperation on education and training. The conference will focus on the European tools and principles introduced in recent years - qualifications frameworks, credit and validation systems and common quality assurance arrangements - and the role of the social partners in implementing them.

The event will bring together representatives of the social partners, governments and other stakeholders from all over Europe to discuss how European instruments and principles can help to make education and training more relevant to the needs of the labour market. The conference provides an opportunity for the social partners to get an overview of current developments, express their expectations of future developments and debate their own roles and responsibilities.

Further information and an on-line registration form will be available on Cedefop's web site in early November.

We would be delighted to welcome you to our conference.

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## Online Educa Berlin 2011

■ Dates: 30/11/2011 - 02/12/2011 ■ Venue: Berlin ■ Country: Germany ■ Cedefop involvement: Not applicable

ONLINE EDUCA BERLIN is the largest global e-learning conference for the corporate, education and public service sectors. The annual event offers a forum for e-learning experts and users from all over the world to exchange ideas and make contacts.

Over 2000 delegates from more than 100 countries attend the conference, making ONLINE EDUCA BERLIN the most comprehensive annual meeting place for e-learning and distance education professionals. Participants of the conference are high-level decision makers from education, business and government sectors, the three areas driving e-learning adoption and innovation. The accompanying exhibition gives international providers the opportunity to

demonstrate their products, tools and services.

## Links

- [Online Educa Berlin 2011](#)

## News from the Member States

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

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