

# **BUSINESS INPUT TO THE EU CONSULTATION ON LIFELONG LEARNING<sup>1</sup>**

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<sup>1</sup> This is a draft report and does not engage the responsibility of any companies member of CSR Europe. CSR Europe will release a final document for the September Conference on Lifelong Learning.

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### **RESPONSE CSR EUROPE TO CONSULTATION OF THE EU ON THE MEMORANDUM ON LIFELONG LEARNING**

#### **Introduction**

The response is built on several elements: the replies to a questionnaire sent out to all CSR Europe members, the analysis of good practice in the CSR Europe resource centre and examples of Leonardo da Vinci projects in which companies are involved.

The report is composed of three parts. The first part summarises the replies to the questionnaire, offering the inputs of the business community to the consultation on the Memorandum on Lifelong Learning, The second part makes Proposals For Action to be carried out by the Commission, National Governments and the business community. These first two sections follow the order of the six key messages given in the Memorandum of lifelong learning itself.), the third part adds examples of good practices that support the responses of the business community.

#### **The six key messages of the Memorandum of lifelong learning**

**The acquisition of basic skills** is a major concern to all those in education and business.

Greater co-operation and partnerships are needed between school and industry to improve the level and quality of basic skills. Companies are of course involved in a range of activities improving the skills of their own employees, but many also have major programmes adding value within the wider community. These programme are developed in consultation with schools and other education organizations setting joint agendas, often with a particular focus on entrepreneurial, risk-taking and communications skills.

The acquisition of basic skills by disadvantaged groups, groups at risk or older workers is a particular problem that has often been addressed successfully by CSR Europe members. It is also important to pay attention to the re-training of part-time and of temporary employees. The role of employment agencies and the link with adult education bodies are key elements when discussing basic skills for disadvantaged groups. Special initiatives are taken by several companies to promote ICT skills for those groups. Acquisition of basic skills is important in terms of contributing to active citizenship.

**More investment in Human resources** is done in a variety of ways. Many companies are now establishing their own Academy or University to develop their employees' skills. Employees are also offered other possibilities including career breaks, individual learning accounts, flexible working schedules and mentoring schemes.

As well as investing in their own resources companies can also improve external human resources, through local community involvement or EU mobility programmes. These activities often focus on specific disadvantaged groups and are set up in co-operation with local authorities, ministries or through EU funding.

**Innovation in teaching and learning** Companies have traditionally shown considerable innovation in teaching and learning through a wide range of initiatives for employees. A Most recently a focus for business has been to integrate ICT (Information and Communication Technologies) into learning and develop virtual collaborative learning environments enabling employees to become more autonomous and responsible learners. More web based training packages developed through co-operation between companies and universities or other training bodies are also an urgent need.

Companies are also concerned about the quality and the offer of training courses and managers have to be trained to select quality in training and use it in the best possible way. Benchmarking best practice in training is a key challenge.

Business also has a role – as hinted earlier - to do what it can to enrich teaching and learning in schools and other organisations. Companies often second employees to local organisations. Many employees act as mentors, to students, teachers and also heads of schools. Employees are also involved in curriculum development and in drafting profiles for new professions. Sometimes, they are members of school boards.

Job rotation systems, dual learning systems and sandwich course training create learning opportunities for people outside companies, often within disadvantaged groups.

**Valuing learning** is said to be a vital element of lifelong learning. Learning is rewarded and valued in different ways, ranging from a financial support to career development and advancement. Training is valued within companies as a part of the benefits package of the company. Training also increases the employability and adaptability of the workforce.

If value is to be given to learning, it should be documented through systems such as portfolios or competence files. Valuing learning also means that specific training may lead to recognised certificates or diplomas by ministries of education.

Certification, validation, and recognition of learning are some of the key issues to enhance European mobility, transparency and transferability of degrees, certificates and diplomas.

**Rethinking guidance and counselling** is an important element in optimising learning. Companies focus on counselling employees for career opportunities but also provide help to potential employees outside the company, (specifically disadvantaged groups\_ - i.e. long term unemployed, school drops out, disabled). Large companies also offer guidance to SMEs (small and medium enterprises) or to individuals wanting to set up SMEs.

Companies of all sizes make very little use of the possibilities within EU programmes such as the Socrates, Leonardo and the Youth programme. The lack of information and complex procedures to apply to these programmes are major reasons for this.

The lack of assessment tools to measure the impact and the return of involvement in such projects is another hindrance. The development of the CSR Europe self-assessment “On-line business roadmap to lifelong learning” tool is seen as very valid and useful. CSR Europe is also invited to play a key role in spreading information and good practice of partnership models across Europe, building upon the best practices already existing in its on-line resource centre.

**Bringing learning closer to home** is perceived in different ways. The major focus is on bringing the learning as close as possible to the learner, be it at home or at work. The development of local or regional learning communities are believed to have major potential to bring the learning to the learner and to bring learners close to one another. The use of ICT in these communities is very important. In such learning communities businesses work with a variety of stakeholders such as national, regional or local authorities, schools, universities, and other associations to raise education and training standards, especially addressing disadvantaged groups. Learning communities enable companies to make their corporate responsibility tangible.

## Proposals for Action

### *For the business community and CSR Europe:*

1. Better dissemination of good practice in lifelong learning projects particularly for disadvantaged groups. Further developing the rich database in the CSR Europe on-line resource centre can support this.
2. Increased participation of companies in European Programmes, putting their expertise and resources at the disposal of these projects to increase innovation in education and training.
3. CSR Europe can encourage the development of specific transnational projects on key areas of lifelong learning, building on the national projects its member companies are already developing. The possible Joint Actions within the EU programmes hold great potential to this effect.
4. More attention could be given to recognition, accreditation and validation of learning on the job either in new or existing projects.
5. More focus could be given to the potential of community involvement activities and other non-formal and informal learning activities for the personal and professional development of employees, and on how to integrate the newly acquired skills through these new forms of learning into their jobs.
6. More attention can be given to new forms of teaching, particularly linked to the use of new technologies (i.e. open and distance learning) and taking into account the changes in workplace organisation.
7. CSR Europe to play a major and pro-active role in encouraging the implementation of the Commission Action Plan on Lifelong Learning.
8. CSR Europe to further develop the self-assessment tool 'On-line business roadmap to lifelong learning'.

### *For the Commission:*

1. The Commission is **invited to establish a Forum at European level to promote the establishment of partnerships between Business and Education, how such activities can add value to teaching and learning, raise the skills levels of both individuals and communities, improve local economic development and ultimately the competitiveness of countries and Europe as a whole.**
2. The Commission is further invited to promote **at European level** the exchange of practices and experiences on issues related to lifelong learning between companies, public authorities, and representatives of the civil society (professional organisations, training centres, universities, research institutes, etc.). In view of that, the Commission should encourage and support the organisation of seminars and conferences gathering actors linked to lifelong learning. The Commission is invited to promote further research on the ways in which learning is enhanced through company activities, both within or outside the company and on the analysis and measurement (through the development of both

quantitative and qualitative indicators) of the impact of education and training policies and activities.

3. The Commission is invited to stimulate the **active participation of companies – both large companies and SMEs – in European projects** within the three main programmes in the field of education (Socrates), training (Leonardo da Vinci) and Youth. For that, it should seek at simplifying both the language and the application procedures of European programmes and improve their transparency and communication.
4. The Commission is invited to look into the possibility to develop a system of recognition by which initiatives of companies in the field of education and training, implemented with schools, universities and other educational bodies, can be given for instance **a European good practice label**.
5. The Commission is invited **to tap systematically into the richness and diversity of lifelong learning initiatives and projects set up by CSR Europe, its members and other companies**. Creating synergy between the EU initiatives and many of the European-wide initiatives of companies will be beneficial to all the communities involved.
6. The Commission is invited to set **up within the Commission an inter-service working group** which would facilitate the co-ordination of all activities involving companies in the field of education, training and research related to them. It seems to CSR EUROPE that too often one DG is not aware of initiatives and actions supported and developed by another DG involving companies.
7. In the framework of the European Business Campaign for Sustainable Growth and Human Progress, the Commission is invited to support the activities around lifelong learning that will promoted as well as the European year on Corporate Social Responsibility in 2004, of which lifelong learning will be a key issue.

#### ***For Governments***

1. Governments can act as a catalyst to promote the debate between the different stakeholders on the developments of education and training policies.
2. In particular, governments can stimulate the debate between public authorities and the private sector on the developments of incentives for those companies that invest more in education activities.
3. National, regional or local authorities are invited to support the creation and development of local or regional learning communities.
4. Governments could include in the annual National Action Plan (NAPS) examples of projects supporting employability and adaptability of the workforce.

#### **Conclusion**

New partnership models between public authorities, companies, school, universities and training centres are key elements to the further development of lifelong learning.

A partnership approach focusing on raising the skills level of individuals and the local community can have a key influence in promoting local economic development and ultimately fostering competitiveness of European countries.

## **PART I: CONSULTATION ON THE MEMORANDUM ON LIFELONG LEARNING INPUT BY CSR EUROPE**

### **1. Introduction**

In the knowledge society human capital has become one of the most important assets of companies' competitiveness. Moreover, learning and lifelong learning are seen as ways to build a productive and satisfying life within which people can use their full potential as professionals and active citizens.

Education is a top priority for CSR Europe. In its **Proposals for Action for and Entrepreneurial and Inclusive Europe**, i.e. the business input to the European Lisbon Summit of March 2000, CSR Europe companies' leaders stated their strong belief in business-education partnerships as key to the promotion of personal and social development, economic growth and productivity. Specifically, they stressed the importance of defining how business can contribute to the development of students' basic capabilities, identifying how it can make the transition from education to employment more efficient, and developing models of partnerships for continuous learning<sup>2</sup>.

The Lisbon conclusions referred to education and lifelong learning as crucial elements of the new European 2010 strategic goal, that is *to develop the most dynamic and knowledge-driven economy, with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion*. To achieve this, a special role was given to the private sector, as well as to public-private partnership approaches.

In this context, CSR Europe has established a **European Programme on "Education, Training and Lifelong Learning: the role of Business towards a knowledge society for all"**. **The mission of the programme is to engage Business in innovative education and training partnerships in order to promote a wider access to knowledge and lifelong learning, as key driver of social inclusion and economic competitiveness.**

The 2001 programme of CSR EUROPE has three objectives:

- a) to mobilise the business community to take action on education by collecting and sharing business' best practices across Europe, organising benchmarking seminars and projects site visits and developing business tools;
- b) to promote partnerships and pilot projects on specific themes at local, national and transnational level through CSR Europe members and National Partner Organisations and
- c) to develop stakeholders' dialogue between Business, Educational Institutions and Public Authorities.

The programme promotes specific activities around different age groups covering the whole continuum of lifelong learning. There are activities for the 6 to 18 year olds, with special focus on the development of students' basic skills (e.g. literacy, numeracy, ICT skills and active citizenship) and of school teachers and head-teachers' competencies. The activities for the 18 to 24-year olds aim at stimulating efficient transition from education to employment, closing the gap between the skills needed in the labour market and qualifications developed at school (e.g. providing vocational guidance, apprenticeship opportunities and international job experience). Finally, the activities for the 24 + year-olds focus on developing models of partnerships for continuous learning to increase employability, adaptability and entrepreneurial skills both for companies' employees and individual external to the company, mainly focusing on disadvantaged or at risk groups (e.g. training of women after career-break,

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<sup>2</sup> See third proposal in the EBNSC –TCC Document: *For an Entrepreneurial and Inclusive Europe*

re-insertion of long-term adult unemployed or disabled, re-training of workers for professional development).

The development of ICT and entrepreneurial skills, as well as a core basic skills that allow individuals to live and work in modern Europe, is also another focus of the programme.

The programme mission and activities are thus fully in line with recent developments on lifelong learning in the European Union: **the report will show that CSR Europe members are already contributing through their activities and projects to the six key messages highlighted in the Memorandum.**

## **2. Methodology used to draft this report**

The present report is built on several elements:

- a questionnaire on the memorandum of lifelong learning has been sent out to all CSR Europe members and National Partner Organisations in the different EU member countries. This questionnaire reworded the questions related to the 6 key messages so as to facilitate answers to be drafted by industry and companies. It provided information, ideas and recommendations.
- CSR Europe member companies were invited to describe a best practice model in the field of lifelong learning which takes on board several of the key elements of lifelong learning contributing to the development of a democratic knowledge-based society.
- A detailed analysis was made of some 250 education and training projects supported by CSR Europe member companies to find out in which way these initiatives contribute to improving lifelong learning and active citizenship. All these initiatives are available in the CSR Europe resource centre ([www.csreurope.org](http://www.csreurope.org)).

## **3. The contents and the structure of the report**

The present report is composed of three major parts:

**The first part composed of reflections and suggestions of CSR Europe members in relation with the memorandum.** This part also builds on the state of the art of and the reflection on what already exists to promote lifelong learning in the many projects set up by CSR Europe members across Europe. The Memorandum on lifelong learning has been taken as a mirror to see which elements of it are already reflected in tangible concrete projects across Europe. It is the tangible reality that has to be the starting point for further concrete action towards the future. Many interesting and innovative things are happening in lifelong learning already. It is by evaluating and analysing already existing activities, strengthening and developing innovative approaches that lifelong learning can be further developed and improved.

**The second part is composed of recommendations to the European Commission, the national governments and the business community.** The recommendations are on purpose very concrete action points that can or should be put into account to further develop lifelong learning across Europe over the years to come.

**The third part gives information on 22 CSR Europe examples of good practice containing innovative elements of lifelong learning.**

**All the recommendations are drafted taking in mind the present possibilities which exist within the framework of the major EU programmes in the field of education, training and youth.** The Socrates programme for education, the Leonardo da Vinci programme for training and the Youth programme are the three main vehicles to set up projects and to take initiatives in the field of lifelong learning over the next 5 to 6 years.

#### **4. Reflections on the 6 key messages based on the Memorandum and existing practice**

##### **Key message 1: New basic skills for all**

###### *Basic skills, the key to lifelong learning, employability and competitiveness*

**The acquisition of basic skills is a major concern both to all those involved in education and to business community.** Many initiatives are set up to discuss how the educational systems can respond more swiftly to the needs of the knowledge society and how the education and the business world can be brought closer together. Meetings and discussion forums between educational people and representatives from companies are one possibility. Involvement of companies in curriculum development is another. Placements of teachers and other staff in industry or placement of people from industry in schools is yet another. As far as pupils or students are concerned, companies organise all sorts of projects, like sight visits or internship programmes. To respond efficiently and effectively to skills shortages schools and teachers themselves need to develop specific skills that allow pupils to be better prepared to live and work in the knowledge society.

**There is general and widespread agreement that stronger co-operation between school and industry** should enable to see which basic skills are required, where there are lacks in the acquisition of those basic skills and which joint initiatives can be taken to do something about this. Stronger co-operation could lead to a more thorough and systematic reflection, an earlier identification of problem areas and to more synergetic action between companies and schools. Steering groups composed of representatives of education and business, contribute to make sure that education is informed about trends in skills needs and developments.

**Schools have to be clearly informed about the basic skills companies require.** Companies are hence invited to build skills' forecasts into their recruitment plans and share those with schools in meetings involving representatives from schools and industry. This will enable the schools to integrate the basic skills better into the initial school curricula.

**Basic skills are generally referred to as the minimum knowledge and skills that are required for active participation in the knowledge society and the economy.**

**Many of the initiatives on education and training taken by CSR Europe members focus on developing the following basic skills:** IT skills, foreign languages, numeracy, literacy (reading and writing), entrepreneurship, willingness to learn, self-confidence, capability to manage information, understanding of technological culture. **Initiatives taken by CSR Europe members promote both general vocational and professional skills and social and personal skills.** Social skills are not limited to skills such as the ability to work in teams, to manage conflicts, to communicate, to exchange with others but also include willingness to commit and invest oneself in the local community through the initiatives set up by companies in co-operation with local community members. Companies believe that most of those skills can be learned on the job through projects which contribute to strengthen the company as **a learning organisation.** The topics of such a project may be the promotion of healthy or a positive psychosocial work environment or an investment in and commitment to the local community. This is the case in the MAHIS project of ABB described in the examples of good practice.

**Basic skills can be acquired in a variety of ways;** either through formal education or through non-formal and informal education, through on the job training or by investing oneself into all sorts of community activities.

**Companies' activities to improve basic skills** take different forms, and include for instance running writing workshops or maths competitions or tutoring children to improve their reading skills. The involvement of company staff members in schools as mentors or counsellors, to assist heads, teachers or pupils with difficulties, is an excellent way of transferring to schools the expertise the companies have in training for these skills and competencies.

**By promoting the involvement of employees into the local community** in different ways companies promote more integrated policies of lifelong learning that combine social, vocational and professional and cultural objectives with the economic rationale for lifelong learning. It also promotes the community role and the social responsibility taking of the companies.

In some cases companies apply **job rotation**, which gives the opportunity to members of personnel to acquire different and new competencies and skills. Job rotation promotes the acquisition of new basic skills but also enables employees to discover and put into practice particular potential they were not aware of. Job rotation is also linked to training projects enabling unemployed to learn some basic skills while replacing other employees involved in job rotation.

**Some companies stress the importance to develop a clear and well-defined competence management process**, as this is a key part of the overall vision or mission of a company. The first element of such a process is the definition of core competencies through customers' interviews that can help to identify the needs for certain skills and promote the development of competence evaluation systems and tools. From that, a competence development plan can be implemented at individual or departmental (or company) level. The competence management process has to be linked to the value and to the leadership development process so as to have a large impact on the company.

Next to meetings between schools and companies it is suggested by some of the companies to set up **regular meetings between employers and governmental bodies (ministries of education, employment or labour) to assess skills shortages and the measures to be taken by education and training ministries.**

These meetings could lead to **joint and complementary action of the three key players: the schools, the employers and the government** - and more specifically the ministries of education, employment or labour. Such regular meetings and subsequent joint actions between those partners would definitely help to match qualifications with emerging skills needs.

**International or European school projects allowing pupils' exchange are important to promote a variety of basic skills.** Students indeed acquire through these exchanges a range of competencies, like linguistic and communication skills, knowledge of other culture, ability to work in teams, social and intercultural skills, etc.

#### *Flexible learning or education systems to acquire basic skills*

**Flexibility in the provision of education**, especially through **dual learning system** is said to be a good way to ensure that young people complete their compulsory education successfully. The more flexible the education system is in responding to the individual needs of the

youngsters, the more chances there are to promote or maintain a positive lifelong learning attitude. Flexible systems based on strong interaction and support by industry have great advantages both for the school and for the employers.

**Many CSR Europe member companies are involved in dual learning systems** within which youngsters are given the opportunity to spend a part of their training in companies in complement to schools. According to the country this can vary from a small part of their training to a larger part. In many cases youngsters who prove to be successful and active are given a job in the company in which they have taken their training. Dual learning systems require the companies to appoint mentors in the company and to liaise with the vocational and technical schools the youngsters have contacts with. This has a positive impact on the co-operation with vocational schools. Companies have the opportunity to give feedback on the curriculum and on placements in industry; teachers have the opportunity to see how companies operate and they have also the chance to update their skills and knowledge through the contacts with companies. Bull S.A., Glaverbel, BT, Lepage Frères, Volvo, Bobst S.A. are just a few examples of companies developing such schemes which rival in diversity, usefulness and efficiency.

Developing **flexible learning and educational systems** to facilitate completion of compulsory education for certain groups of youngsters will also require specific skills from the teachers and the trainers involved. On the one hand teachers should be better trained to work with those youngsters who very often are also groups at risk or tired of learning. On the other hand employers will have to train trainers able to help and support those youngsters within the companies in their learning and acquisition of basic skills.

To ensure that young people complete their education, this has to be made interesting, involving pupils more actively and providing education relevant to their immediate concerns and needs. Curricula have to be updated and teaching methods adapted so as to focus more on learning. The administrative workload of the teachers has to be reduced and more means have to be given to the schools to develop more flexible learning systems. These are topics that are reflected upon and in relation with which action is taken in the framework of the IBM project "Reinventing education".

### *The key role of teachers*

As to **teachers, the key learning facilitators within all lifelong learning**, a few companies stress the need to invest much more in teachers and in their training and initial education. The status of the teachers should be raised so that children are more willing to learn from them. Particular attention should be given to teachers of maths, physics and chemistry. Teachers should be given the opportunity to be involved in shared lessons, to have interactive contacts with other teachers, to participate in simulation exercises etc. They should also have many more opportunities to get to grips with recent developments in the pedagogical use of ICT. Urgent changes are needed if teachers are to be true learning facilitators and not mere dispensers of knowledge.

### *Basic skills for specific and disadvantaged groups*

Specific measures have to be taken and/or are sometimes taken through several projects run by CSR Europe members for **disadvantaged groups** (disabled, long term unemployed, youth at risk, school drop outs, former prisoners) are given the possibility to acquire basic skills.

It is interesting to note that in many cases the activities set up by companies to support basic skills with disadvantaged groups are simultaneously a learning experience for those members of the company who invest their skills into those activities. Employers act as mentors or

monitors or they are coaches in a variety of ways. More information will be given about this when the innovative learning and teaching strategies are focused upon.

Particular attention should be given to **older workers** who should be given opportunities to acquire, in a flexible way and with support of their company, new skills and competencies and/or a basic compulsory school qualification certificate or diploma if they still don't have it. It is suggested that schools should be much more accessible to the local adult population to continue their basic learning. Getting older workers back into learning should take place in a risk free and enjoyable environment that boosts their self-confidence. Specific incentives should be thought of to motivate older workers to re-skill. Part of the motivation will have to be built on the expertise acquired over the years and this can be combined with new skills. For older workers coming back to work specific introduction training methods should be applied such as assigning an individual tutor when an older worker starts working again.

It is mentioned by BT that it is also important to invest in **retraining part-time and temporary employees**, as they are as critical to a company's business as full timers. In the retail company it is very often the part-time and temporary employee that is the up-front face of the company and he is the one with the direct contacts with the customer. Hence there is a strong need to properly train and retrain them.

The crucial role of the **temporary agencies** is also emphasised by Randstad to be one of the best ways to ensure lifelong learning through work experience. These agencies enable people to keep in touch with the employment market. Employment agencies have taken special initiatives towards the older workers in co-operation with government programmes.

**The integration of adult education into schools is thus an important development widening the responsibilities of the traditional schools but also requiring teachers to be trained to work with adults in the classroom.** Several companies have experience in training adults to acquire basic skills and qualifications. Specific exchange of information between schools and companies and the teaching and learning of adults may prove to be very beneficial for both.

### *Promotion of Entrepreneurial and ICT skills*

**Many companies stress very strongly the entrepreneurial and risk-taking skills youngsters should have.** ABB organises an apprenticeship for young people with a clear focus to develop their ability to act and think in an entrepreneurial way. The Hertfordshire Young Enterprise scheme supported by the Dixons Group intends to give to students first hand experience of running a company.

Several big companies have set up initiatives to help young graduates acquire entrepreneurial skills to show young graduates other possible career pathways to undertake. These are very often initiatives on the spot during which managers and key people of big companies support young entrepreneurs in the creation and development of their start-up by providing counselling, credits and access to useful networks.

**Several suggestions are made that more initiatives should be launched within companies or through co-operation between schools and companies to promote ICT basic skills for those who are at the wrong side of the emerging digital divide.** Governments should look into all sorts of incentives (such as tax incentives) which could be given to employers and/or schools who take initiatives to train or re-train people in this particular area. IT awareness-raising programmes should also be simplified as sometimes they are too complex and thus threatening for those who should benefit from them.

The education of children towards the use of ICT is a main priority area. Many companies believe that is fundamental to provide pupils in every school with computers and on-line educational packages. More investments in ICT pedagogical tools should be given particular attention.

If the education of children towards the use of ICT is a priority, so is the education of the teachers in general and of the **ICT teachers or ICT co-ordinators** in particular. According to some respondents stress will have to be put on the use of ICT learning environments which can promote lifelong learning and enhance European and international co-operation.

**There are several activities to promote basic ICT skills**, such as competitions, training of teachers or even the EU Netd@ys initiatives. Projects such as the European Education Partnership (EEP) in which some member companies of CSR Europe are involved contribute greatly to the promotion of basic ICT skills in learning.

Several CSR Europe projects show that ICT can contribute to enhance the acquisition of basic skills for disadvantaged groups. This is for instance the case with the “Training for work” project of IBM using ICTs to enhance the competencies and skills of long-term unemployed people.

### *Basic skills and active citizenship*

Enhancing basic skills is definitely a way to ‘educate’ more responsible and more active citizens. Furthermore making sure that all members of the local community have basic skills is the best way to avoid social exclusion and to make people feel part of that social fabric. The involvement of employees into the activities promoting basic skills in the local community has to be seen as **a major contribution to active citizenship**. It shows the willingness of the companies to take their social responsibility and to contribute actively to the development of our democratic societies. It enables employees of companies investing themselves in such initiatives to take their social responsibility and to become active citizens.

### **Key message 2: More investment in human resources**

**Major efforts are made by CSR Europe members to invest more and more strategically in human resources.** Training and lifelong learning is part of the mission statement and of the strategy developed by the companies. Learning is seen as a key feature of career development and is integrated into personal, departmental or company development plans that are regularly reviewed and updated. The progress made by the employees is part of the discussions or interviews linked to the individual development plans.

### *Companies investing in their own human resources*

**The learning in which companies invest may take different shapes and structures**, from learning outside or inside the company.

**Most large companies have their own training “school”, “university” or “academy” (in some cases virtual) or co-operate with key schools, universities or training centres** (cf. ABB Academy, BT Academy, Randstad Institute of Staffing Management). Possibilities for personal training and further learning are also often part of the negotiations during employment interviews. Some companies have an education awards and refund schemes, which staff can use to acquire additional degrees, diplomas or certificates. These funds enable employees to acquire for instance **MBA degrees** or a **master level course (M.Sc.)** as with BT

and ABB. In some cases companies develop courses, which are later accredited by universities.

In some cases companies give financial support to universities for the development of **European Master's degrees**, which can be useful to their personnel. Companies tend to give support to the development of master degree course or to facilitate access to those courses especially in areas with specific shortages such as computer science and multimedia. Examples of these are the European Master's degree for Business management and multimedia, which has been funded within the framework of the Leonardo da Vinci programme.

Other co-operation forms between industry and universities, such as **the Career-Space Initiative** (cf. [www.care-space.com](http://www.care-space.com)) are developing jointly new degree curricula and are better defining industry's ICT needs at both role profile and forecast number levels.

In some cases **employees are encouraged to follow an Open and Distance Learning course from home, given a private home PC paid for by the company.**

Some companies allow employees to take **career breaks** to continue their learning for specific periods of time. Some companies use indeed **individual learning accounts** or **learning budgets** (I.e. ABN AMRO) by which employees are encouraged to invest time in learning and the company contributes, possibly together with the learner, to the cost of the learning. In most cases the company pays also fully the employees during the time invested in lifelong learning activities. In some cases **flexible working schedules** are also allowed with variable periods of work. In many cases workers are given time off for learning and study. The time off is part of the discussions with national governments, the employers and the trade unions.

Some companies have **mentoring schemes** for their employees, usually with more experienced colleagues mentoring younger colleagues. Many companies, if not all, have a **large library with major reference books and journals** in their specific field of work that can be consulted at any moment by the employees to facilitate their learning. Other companies have what they call a **learning room** where all sorts of pedagogical support, plus possible a tutor, are present.

### *Investing in external human resources*

Specific attention is also given to investment in **local** human resources, external to the company, who are potential future employees. Many companies in fact strongly believe that investment in the local community is a major contribution to their own development and to that of the community, and to building up solid relations with the community.

Companies often invest **the human resources of local SMEs whose activities maybe important or vital for them.**

For instance, managers of big companies are helping small entrepreneurs through several support and training schemes. Sometimes, larger companies help setting up co-operative SMEs or social economy firms to solve unemployment problems in the local community (enterprises d'insertion or services de proximité). One of the very successful projects in this area is the Strategic Plan Kempen (B) with the PLATO programme within which fifty large companies have helped small and medium-sized enterprises to expand.

**Investment in HR is also promoted through the co-operation of companies in EU mobility programmes** such as the one implemented within the Leonardo da Vinci programme of the EU. Mobility of students, especially in their final year, enables companies

to get for short periods students who bring with them the knowledge of most recent developments and research. On the other hand the students are given the opportunity to make the link between theoretical knowledge and practice. They furthermore get in touch with their potential future employer.

### *Investment in human resources for specific groups*

**Some Human Resources investment projects run by CSR Europe members focus on job training for late developers, or on specific problems such as school drop-out, burn-out or illness of employees.** Employees with health problems are in some companies given the opportunity to work in special departments where there is less stress. Employees with some of those difficulties or who are at risk of being laid off, are retrained towards jobs in the crafts business. These are good examples of lifelong learning focusing on the respect of the potential of every human being at different stages of his or her professional career. They show the variety of **learning pathways** developed by companies linked to the development of the career of some of their employees.

Several projects are about **investing in the transition from school to work** so as to have a workforce that is better prepared and better motivated for the job. Other projects focus on investments in people who are about to retire. Such **pre-retirement learning projects** do not only have an impact on the retired employee once he has left the company but it also strengthens his or her involvement in the company during the final stage of his/her career.

**Investment in human resources projects for disadvantaged groups is in many cases done in co-operation with ministries of employment or labour and/or regional or local authorities** when the objective is to promote the creation of new jobs in certain disadvantaged areas or for groups at risk. In other cases initiatives are set up within the framework of **EU funded initiatives**. In many cases this is done in co-operation with local associations, youth organisations, chambers of commerce, etc.

**Specific projects are those developing human resources initiatives within the local community based on funding which is partly provided by the employees through fund-raising activities and partly through matched giving; the company adding as much as the employees have collected. Employees are invited to help in collecting funds that are used to set up training programmes for disadvantaged groups, like the FAPE initiative (Fondation agir pour l'emploi) promoted by EDF. A good example of an initiative that has a strong active citizenship element in it and which also promotes active involvement in the local community.**

### **Key message 3: Innovation in teaching and learning**

Many methods have been developed across educational and training projects set up by CSR Europe members to innovate teaching and learning. .

An innovative learning or teaching method is every method that promotes active lifelong and learning of both those who provide the learning or the teaching and those who benefit from it.

### *Innovation in learning and teaching inside the companies*

The development of **individual learning within departmental or company learning plans** are an important innovative approach. It enables the employee or the learner to decide in co-operation with his superior on the **individual learning pathway** he/she will follow. The

starting point is the idea that each employee is responsible for his or her development. Objectives and target of the learning are set. Agreements are made on the impact of the learning on one's professional career in all its aspects such as promotion, access to further learning and salary. Assessment tools are also developed and made available so as to assess progress in learning. The development of such individual and departmental learning plans in schools both for pupils, teachers and other staff, would definitely be a major innovation in school education. In some cases compensation measures for the time invested in learning are discussed with the trade unions as with ABN AMRO.

**Mobility of employees** within large international companies is important to enhance learning and the understanding of business practice in the different countries. It promotes intercultural skills and linguistic skills; and favours flexibility, open-mindedness and general personal development.

Companies also mention that they apply innovative methods of learning such as **peer learning and work shadowing**. In peer learning employers are put in small subgroups with colleagues performing a similar job and within which they learn from one another with the support of a mentor. In the case of shadowing young employees are invited to shadow more experienced employers during a limited period of time. Shadowing is often used during introduction periods when young inexperienced staff has just joined the company.

A few companies refer to **the acquisition of a degree or a qualification on the job** while simultaneously working. With the BUPA company a graduate training programme is in place that enables 8 to 10 people each year to learn various aspects of business so as to become successful junior managers on the completion of the programme.

BUPA has also developed a health Executive Management Programme within which every year 30 senior and middle managers work together over the course of six learning modules, plus the assigned fieldwork. At the final module of the year the group presents projects to main board executives in a competitive atmosphere. Many of the participants have been promoted into senior management posts. Accreditation with the University of Leeds was used to establish credentials.

Some companies have developed "bridging" schemes enabling young people to gain **recognition and accreditation for their non-formal experiences and competencies**, as is the case with the Cadbury Schweppes project "A bridge into work". In this way work, acquisition of new knowledge and accreditation of prior experiential learning (APEL) are combined into an innovative learning method and environment.

Some companies refer to the use of **or learning circles (learning teams)** or so-called **self-managing groups** based on quality management and teamwork. Other concepts that are used are **mixed-age learning groups and intergenerational learning groups** linked sometimes to activities in schools and involving also retired experienced employees. BITC (Business in the Community, Ireland) refers to encouraging young people to help in the education of older citizens in what is new as part of the transition programmes in the Irish educational system. The School adopts a monument project of the Pegasus Foundation involves retired employees into schools to promote learning.

### *Companies promoting learning in schools and other organisations*

Innovative teaching or learning activities carried out by employees may be integrated into the individual learning plan and may be an overall strategic learning objective of the company itself. In some companies employees are invited to become **members of the board of governors of schools** (within the framework of a so-called school adoption), **of other educational bodies or non-profit making organisations** that are part of the local community.

Some companies **second employees** to trusts or foundations (often dealing with disadvantaged groups) for limited periods of time. Other companies invite their employees to work as **volunteers** during their free time for groups in the local community. Some employees join projects in schools, i.e. doing some teaching or mentoring to pupils and teachers.

Members of staff of companies may act as **mentors (tutors) for teachers** to upgrade their skills in particular areas. Managers or senior management people are sometimes invited to become **mentors of heads of schools** and assist them in the management of their school. Mentoring may also take the form of the managers of large companies giving help, advice and support to the managers of SMEs as in the PLATO project.

Several cases are reported where employees are **involved in curriculum development work** or in thinking **about new professions or drafting new professional profiles** and implementing them once they have been defined. The development of the programme Banking and Insurance within Dutch higher Education Institutions (HBO) was done in co-operation between the Federation of Employers (including ABN AMRO) and higher education. More involvement in drafting professional profiles is a key element to be stressed towards the future as it promotes a closer co-operation between initial education and the needs of companies.

**Curriculum development may either in development of new content or the creation of tools**, in specific disciplines or cross-curricular activities in schools. Several companies have indeed created, very often jointly with teachers, specific tools and kits that are greatly appreciated by teachers and schools. In some cases model **miniature companies** are developed within the schools in which employees play a crucial role. Employees are in some projects even acting as **mediators** between different actors involved in education to solve particular problems. 3M has developed **simulated companies or practice firms** to provide all aspects of business training to the unemployed.

In all those cases the employees or managers of companies act **as learning facilitators or learning advisors**. They are able to put their expertise at the disposal of the organisation concerned. Simultaneously they strengthen the involvement of the company in the local community, they acquire new skills, competencies themselves and make new contacts that can be beneficial for their further professional activities and for the company.

In many cases employees are **mentors (tutors or coaches) of students or teachers who do a placement in industry** within one or other mobility scheme. In some cases undergraduate students at university are matched with specific experts to help them with their final thesis. **Trainees in companies** can be seen as a unique opportunity for companies to contribute to improve the quality of the training. In some cases companies even train their people to be mentors. A project run by Suez, focuses on double coaching: a social coach and a professional coach for the integration of disadvantaged youngsters

This kind of **mentorship within student mobility** is an effective way of enhancing learning as the student or the teacher profits from the learning experience in the company and the mentor (and the company) can be inspired by innovative ideas brought in by the students or the teachers.

Sometimes students are assigned a **research subject or a final thesis subject** while they are involved in a mobility project towards a company. A member of the personnel supervises the student's works, advises and helps him in his or her activities.

Some companies use **job rotation schemes** whereby unemployed people are given the opportunity to replace, on a temporary basis, employees who are following training. In

several cases this leads to permanent employment. Others refer to **sandwich course training** within which work is alternated with periods of study.

Innovation in teaching and learning is definitely present in all the **different dual learning systems**. The dual systems may differ from 1–4 days in school or 1–4 days in industry combined with one another. This flexibility is important, as it is a key element in motivating young people who are tired of traditional learning.

Several companies are putting their **ICT expertise and knowledge** at the disposal of schools and other educational institutions together with employees who can help and guide teachers acquire the necessary skills to use ICT more effectively and efficiently. Next to the expertise and knowledge companies very often donate ICT equipment and logistical support to schools.

Companies sometimes put at the disposal of schools their **videoconferencing centres** (and their expertise in this field) to enable schools to set up videoconferences with their European partners. Some companies support the European school net initiative EUNET that intends to promote the pedagogical use of ICT in the classroom.

**Companies also train tutor involved in local community counselling of disadvantaged groups.** Johnson & Johnson is involved in Cork (IE) in training people of the local community to become tutors in family communication and self-esteem or to run courses in personal development. These courses are often addressed to disadvantaged groups. In a second stage these tutors may even become trainers of new tutors.

### *Quality and offer of training courses*

**Quality and offer of training courses** can be enhanced through the development of tools that enable to identify concrete needs of a company. The Training Centre of the Banking Profession has developed software to check the competencies and skills acquired by people working in the banking sector through the training they have received at the bank. The results of the tests serve as the basis for the development of better and more adequate training programmes.

**Large companies work extensively with training providers** to get them understand the needs of industry so that they tailor their products and services to the specific needs of the companies. Large corporations have the leverage of sufficient spending power. Some of them are involved in initiatives such as the *Career Space Consortium*. They work together with national training organisations and related bodies on the development of industry wide qualifications but are very interested in a more coherent European approach for those qualifications. Through the standardisation of qualifications and the quality of their provision it will be easier for learners to choose the right course and have confidence in the quality of its provision.

**Some companies try to benchmark best practice in training and learning and disseminate it on a systematic and regular basis to their employees.** Many companies offer the possibility that their employees have access to education opportunities (and funding for them) through company channels such as their website. In some cases learning opportunities take the form of visit to other companies programmes to get inspired by other good practices.

### *ICT tools in learning and training*

**ICT tools can be integrated in education and training** to meet the different learning needs and learning styles of individuals.

The development of **collaborative learning environments** holds great potential to promote the integration of ICT in education and training.

**Local partnerships involving companies, educational institutions and training providers** contribute to guarantee the delivery of the best quality training in the most appropriate way. Outstanding educational institutions in co-operation with industries have developed several web based training packages. Such partnerships very often result in reciprocal gains. Industry inputs educational content and encourages learners to study or develop skills based on short supply projections while educational institutions can bring in the most recent developments in specific fields based on research and the pedagogical expertise to adapt the learning to the needs of every learner.

#### **Key message 4: Value learning**

**Learning should be valued in order to motivate individuals to keep on up dating and up-grading their skills.** Learning is part of the normal professional career and is thus the responsibility of every employee to contribute to his or her professional development and to the quality of his or her work.

#### ***The reward for learning***

Learning can be valued in different ways; some companies stress **the tangible rewards** which can result from learning such as a better salary, possibilities for promotion or priority when it comes to job rotation or the possibility to transfer to a position with higher responsibility. Others stress the fact that employees learn a lot through their personal investment in local community (school, associations etc.) initiatives and the satisfaction they get out of this commitment and investment. This also has a major impact on how people perceive the company in the local community.

Some companies stress that investment in education has to be seen as **part of the benefits programme** a company offers to its members of personnel.

#### ***Documenting learning: i.e. the competence portfolio***

Learning is said to be valued more and better if it is clearly documented. The use of **portfolios or competence maps is a means of doing this.** Competence maps should show all the employees work related skills as well as the training programmes on group level and on individual level which the employee has been involved in. Such a portfolio should also stress the involvement of employees in the local community in general or in school education activities in particular. International working experience, willingness and ability to be relocated and (inter) cultural awareness should also be included in this competence portfolio.

In some cases the portfolio or competence map is said to be complemented by a **conceptual map** inviting students to get to grips with new concepts and approaches, which they come across during periods of mobility abroad.

#### ***Recognition, certification, validation, accreditation***

**Valuing learning also means integrating the training and education developed for and by companies into the formal school education and training curricula.** For instance, when

training developed jointly by companies and schools is integrated either into the formal education system or in the formal training systems of the companies involved. This is also the case when training leads to a recognised certificate, diploma, and degree by official governmental bodies.

Portugal Telecom started a training called “Qualificant training, intended for employees having low standard qualification. The main purpose of this programme is to allow these employees to succeed inside the company and, at the same time, to develop staff mobility. The retraining programme runs after working time and on a voluntary basis but is organised by the company. This programme follows recurrent training laws established by the Portuguese Ministry of Education. The workers who successfully finish the programme are offered a **certificate showing the equivalence of official education**.

Similar to this initiative is the one by the Danish Pressalit that has developed a job rotation project in co-operation with a job centre and local labour market training centres. A group of 12 employees went on a long-term training course, while 12 unemployed people were taken on board in the company. The unemployed trainees had attended a three-month qualification course before receiving training in various divisions of the company. As a result of the job rotation most unemployed got a job in the company but on top of that, the training had equipped them with a **one-year qualifying industrial workers’ certificate recognised by the national authorities**.

In some cases so-called **certification pathways** have been developed by companies, which can be taken by employees. The ‘student’ follows an interactive training which is concluded by an examination leading to a certificate. Such initiatives have been developed amongst others by Microsoft and Cisco.

Several respondents stress the importance of **certification, validation or accreditation instruments for training**, possibly based on co-operation between universities and companies, or professional organisations as this may strengthen the confidence and favour joint quality control systems of the degrees or certificates developed jointly. One company stressed the need to look into the accreditation of prior experiential learning as towards the future industry will have to face more and more people returning at a later age to a job. Recognising their non-formal and informal learning will be a major element of motivation to come back to work.

### *The role of social partners and professional organisations*

**Co-operation between social partners and companies or professional organisations** of companies can enhance the valuing of learning and the accreditation. Some companies have emphasised the importance of favouring the transferability of qualifications through more co-operation between industry, professional (sectorial) organisations and the trade unions. For instance, BT has developed jointly with the trade unions a web based computer science degree.

A company has stressed (which one?) the importance of including learning participation and involvement in training activities as an item **in the collective bargaining discussions and agreements** that are held between unions, employers and governments. He also suggests that governments should give **grants or give tax incentives** (reductions) to companies doing this. The opportunity to learn while working (on the job) is thus seen as an important contribution to the professional and personal development of every employee or worker.

### *Creating a European Education Space for secondary education*

Some companies suggested the opportunity of **creating a common and transparent educational space for secondary education** - like some sort of harmonisation of 'baccalaureates' - to favour youth mobility across Europe. Surprisingly, the companies which replied to the questionnaire did not mention the issue of transparency of vocational qualifications and training

### *The contribution of specific EU initiatives to valuing education: EUROPASS, ECDL (European Computer Driving Licence), the European CV*

**EUROPASS** is a European initiative whose objectives are a) to define the content as well as the general and common quality principles underpinning European pathways whenever such training periods are incorporated into the training followed in the country of origin and b) to boost the transparency and visibility of these European pathways, by means of an official Europass training certificate attesting to the training and/or work experience acquired by the beneficiary in another country.

Therefore it is a useful tool to improve the transparency on the level of qualifications of the candidates applying for a job across Europe.

Reference is made to the fact that the EUROPASS should be combined with the **language portfolio** showing the linguistic skills acquired at school but also in placements in industry and in other mobility activities.

The **ECDL, the European Computer Driving Licence**, is a Leonardo da Vinci Initiative run by a Foundation to promote European and international certification of industry-standard computing skills. Some of the companies who have been using the ECDL state that it is useful driver to raise skills level.

Companies often require certification when recruiting but don't value it as much once the employees are already working in the company. Some companies are shifting the importance from initial certification that linked to on-the-job training. Generally recognised pan-European qualifications are said to be welcome provided their quality and relevance are clear.

The opinions on the usefulness of **a common format for a European CV** differ greatly. Those in favour think that a format can be agreed upon and that it will facilitate the readability of CVs. Those who are not in favour think it will be difficult, if not impossible, to get a common agreement on what such a European CV format should include or not include. Some state that a European CV format could be useful but that it should only be used for the formal education.

### *Valuing VET or Vocational and Technical education across Europe*

**Some general reflections are made by some respondent on how vocational and technical education is valued (or not valued) in general across Europe.** It is regretted that VET is still too much regarded as a second choice for pupils. The role of the parents and of the guidance and counselling services is said to be crucial in the selection of secondary education.

It is suggested that efforts should be made to value better and more VET education and to enhance the attraction of VET schools.

## **Key message 5: Rethinking guidance and counselling**

Companies organise counselling and guidance for their own workers but also to the benefit of people and groups outside the company. Overall it should be stressed that most, if not all, initiatives, in the field of education, training, re-training of workers and/or employees contain an element of counselling and guidance.

### ***Counselling of employees in the company***

In most companies counselling and guidance to learning is given through the **personnel department or through the human resource managers**. This is mainly done within the individual development plan and/or the departmental or company development plan.

### ***Counselling of learners outside the company***

Companies are also involved in counselling and **guidance for people outside the company**. Employees can be involved in sessions to counsel youngsters who have to make a choice about their future in terms of work or studies. Employees are also involved in counselling given to disadvantaged groups to enable them to upgrade their skills. The Grandmet Trust (Diageo Plc.) gives guidance and support to unemployed not only to learn skills and qualifications but also to take charge of their lives by giving them motivation and self-esteem.

A Spanish member of CSR Europe has a project “Infoempleo: matching job vacancies and demands to address unemployment” which provides help and advice in job searching. Next to information about jobs for university graduates is information about every training programme, course or grant existing in Spain that can contribute to improve the qualifications of young people.

A major UK member of CSR Europe, BT, offers career guidance advice and skills training to unemployed people. Having found out that the most urgent needs of unemployed youngsters are not necessarily skills and qualifications but motivation and self-esteem, this organisation has developed training sessions to help in those areas.

It has already been mentioned that many large companies **give counselling and guidance to SME or to employees or other individuals who intend to set up an SME**, often in the framework of downsizing plans or within a project of regenerating the local economy of the community where the company operates. In this way, the learning acquired over several years by employees and workers doesn't get lost in periods of economic difficulties but can be made use of to regenerate new business and innovation. The counselling to individuals external to the company to encourage their entrepreneurial spirit bring a clear added value to the community by trying to stimulate so far untapped potential and resources.

### ***Companies and the EU programmes in education and training***

**Companies do not seem to make extensive use of the information on and the possibilities of European co-operation programmes in the field of education and training.** The impression prevails that these EU projects are the concern of universities, schools and other educational bodies but not really of companies.

Some CSR Europe members suggest to develop the role of CSR Europe general secretariat **to spread information** on applications procedures and other useful details concerning the EU programmes.

### *Assessment tools*

**On-line tools for self-assessment** are very useful tools to measure personal knowledge and skills and aptitudes developed through learning or training. Self-assessment tools should be freely available for anybody interested in assessing their preferences and abilities for career choices and for broadening their knowledge and career base. Moreover, it is important that these tools are complemented by follow-up procedures and are integrated into professional development plans.

Some respondents stress that particular attention should also be given to self-assessment tools for employees to **assess their language skills** and to develop a learning path to improve those skills.

### **The CSR Europe self-assessment tool ‘On-line Business Roadmap to Lifelong Learning’**

CSR Europe is presently developing a tool called “On-line business roadmap on lifelong learning” which is a self-assessment tool for companies to evaluate their education projects. The objectives of the tool are to: a) enable companies to map their educational activities, b) assess their performance in those activities, c) measure the performance in comparison with best practice and d) to improve and extend their educational policies making use of tailor-made guidelines. The companies that apply this tool will be able to find how they perform in their educational activities in comparison to other similar companies in Europe. The Guidelines will give advice as to the development and improvement of projects at national level on the one hand and on the other hand it will inform about the possibilities in the framework of the EU policies in the field of education and training. Companies that wish to do so could thus gradually develop European co-operation projects.

### *Spreading information about CSR Europe initiatives to the large educational community*

The CSR Europe on-line resource centre containing more than 500 best practices is a powerful tool to spread information about innovative educational partnerships and inspire new actions in the field.

### **Key message 6: Bringing learning closer to home**

#### *Local and regional initiatives*

Several of the initiatives set up by CSR Europe members over the past years focus on providing **lifelong learning opportunities as close to learners as possible**, both in their homes and or in their local communities. In most cases this is supported through ICT-based facilities. In many of these initiatives companies co-operate with local authorities and local associations to have a direct impact on education and training.

Several CSR Europe members are involved in projects at local level to combat racism and xenophobia in the company in co-operation in with anti-racist groups. In other cases companies co-operate on environmental issues with major NGO's -this is the case for instance of the Body Shop co-operating with Greenpeace on a major environmental project “Use your power” in the Netherlands.

**Companies often put computers at the disposal of their employees** to practices Open and Distance Learning (ODL) programmes. In some cases, employees have access into the company competencies database from home. For instance, the ITN “Integrated Training Network” developed by ABN AMRO, which can be accessed from home, includes information on a number of training programmes to be distributed via the ITN itself.

The vast majority of BT employees have an on-line access to learning and training courses through the BT Academy (web based learning portal), many of which can be accessible from home.

Companies sometimes **organise local audits of employees’ learning needs and documented skills (cf. ABB)**. These prove to be very positive tools that give a real competitive advantage during the bidding phase for large contracts at local or regional level. The audits are the basis for the development of training programmes and/or training packages, which are made available to all employees in the company.

A CSR Europe member has developed **a community programme** within which a close co-operation with trade unions and educational bodies on joint lifelong learning initiatives takes place to support schools and colleges in disadvantaged communities. Part of the role of the company is to make sure that better use is being made of school and other educational infrastructure including local libraries, resource centres, museums etc. This kind of company involvement has a positive impact on the whole local community and indirectly to the company itself, benefiting from the regeneration of the area where its customers and potential employees live.

Some companies stress the importance to place **teachers for a limited period of time in local industry** to become aware of-the industry specific needs. Some also suggest the same experience to be done by professional counsellors linked to ministries of education in order to better understand the needs and requirements of companies.

### *The innovative power of the local / regional learning communities*

Some CSR Europe members are involved in **regional networks** or partnerships building a dialogue between authorities and companies on educational issues.

**Local / regional learning communities are a major innovative learning** models of partnerships between companies, public authorities and associations promoting active learning and specifically targeting inequalities in schools, colleges and adult education and training.

The creation of learning communities is seen as a mature phase in the development of building bridges between business and education.

**Partnerships between business and education** focus on developing a constructive dialogue and exchange on curriculum and qualifications, and joint projects and actions to tackle challenges related to education, such as combating exclusion of different groups. .

Such partnerships are based on the recognition of mutual needs to raise standards, modernise the curriculum, widen the access to excluded groups and improve their employability skills. This leads to increased levels of business investment in national education and training systems, transferring expertise, equipment, joint action programmes and access to business sites and facilities.

Learning communities try to integrate public governmental policy, private sector social investments, professional skills of teachers and trainers and voluntary sector initiatives of associations.

**The creation of learning communities is an important feature taking across Europe and the world a variety of shapes and contents.** Learning communities are also at the core of the Universal Forum of Cultures, which will be organised in Barcelona in 2004. The learning communities to be set up within this framework have at their core the school and focus on peace education, sustainable development and intercultural education. They also stress the importance of co-operation with industry to reach their objectives.

Learning communities are excellent opportunities to bring lifelong learning close to all the members of the local community, creating synergies and disseminating benefits amongst them.

All the initiatives to enhance learning in the local or regional community have a major impact on the quality of learning through education and training but they also on **community building and on active citizenship**. The projects developed by CSR EUROPE members at local level are excellent examples of how concrete active citizenship can be promoted in close co-operation with companies fully aware of their corporate social responsibility.

## PART II: PROPOSALS FOR ACTION AROUND THE KEY MESSAGES

### Recommendations for key message 1

#### *Overall recommendations for key message 1*

*Companies are invited to pool their expertise in the field of acquisition of basic skills and make it available to schools and other educational bodies, possibly through in-service training activities in the framework of the EU programmes in education and training. This should be based on stronger co-operation between schools and industry.*

*The Commission is invited to involve CSR Europe and representatives of companies and industry much more in all discussions and initiatives concerning the acquisition of basic skills in general and the development of quality indicators for lifelong learning skills in particular.*

*CSR Europe members and other companies are invited to participate in European projects in the framework of Socrates and Leonardo to develop new flexible learning pathways, to enhance learning of ICT skills by weaker groups and to create stronger links with teacher education.*

- **Companies are invited to, pool their experience and knowledge on how to promote the acquisition of new basic skills.** Particular attention should be paid to initiatives promoting IT basic skills, especially of teachers and trainers. This could be done through associations like CSR Europe, which favour the exchange of best practice between companies. In particular, the CSR Europe on-line resource centre should be further developed and kept up-to-date. Best practice should be analysed and evaluated, in order to assess their impact of education policies and initiatives, promote their transferability and inspire new projects
- Companies are encouraged to become more active in European Programmes such as Leonardo or Socrates, putting at the disposal of these projects their expertise to increase innovation in education and learning. CSR Europe could play a catalyst role of specific transnational projects on key areas of lifelong learning, building on the projects its member companies are already developing. .
- **Companies are invited to discuss with schools and other educational institutions how they develop their competence management process.** Developing competence matrixes, profiles, evaluation tools and competence development plans could prove to be very useful for educational institutions to better understand and to co-operate much more proactively with industry.
- **Adult access to learning should be promoted through European co-operation projects, mainly** within the framework of the Grundtvig initiative of the Socrates programme and focusing in particular on access to learning for older people. .
- **Mobility of teachers and heads towards industry should be further promoted to increase their knowledge of the functioning of industry and enhance the introduction and strengthening of lifelong learning skills in schools.**
- **The possibility could be looked into by CSR Europe to develop a Comenius 3 project – a Comenius Network - focusing on the topic of school – industry co-operation.** Such a Comenius network could focus on most of the topics addressed within the present memorandum on lifelong learning in relation with schools and initial and in-service

teacher education. It could also give specific support to all Comenius 1 school partnerships and Comenius 2 staff development projects focusing on school industry co-operation.

- **The Commission is developing activities in the field of benchmarking and quality indicators in school education.** As some of the quality indicators concern lifelong learning skills, it would be good to involve representatives of companies and industry in the development of these indicators.
- **ICT projects for disadvantaged groups could be set up by companies in co-operation with educational bodies** within the framework of the Minerva action of the Socrates programme or the pilot projects of Leonardo da Vinci. This can make an effective contribution towards closing any digital divide within Europe.

## **Recommendations for key message 2**

### *Overall recommendation for key message 2*

*National governments are invited to consider (more) corporate tax reductions for companies re-training their staff regularly especially in areas of skills' shortages such as ICT. Personal tax reductions could be granted to staff involved in such training activities.*

*The Commission is invited to enhance more co-operations between companies, universities and institutions of higher education in order to develop common degrees or diplomas. The Commission could also look into the development of a European quality label for excellence in HR management. An overview of best practice and of the return of training would be useful to this respect.*

- The Commission is invited to **promote more co-operation between companies, schools, universities, learning or training centres and research institutes to develop common diplomas or degrees.** The joint development of common European Master's degrees in the framework of either the ERASMUS action (of the Socrates programme) and in the framework of the pilot projects of Leonardo da Vinci could be promoted.
- **It is recommended that the EU supports initiatives to set up (European) award systems** which can give some kind of **European quality label** to learning and training organisations that achieve excellence within different aspects of lifelong learning. Thus a special award could be given to those training organisations promoting basic skills and the acquisition of the diploma of compulsory secondary education while working in a company. Such a label could be similar to the Lingua label, which is given to excellent projects to promote language learning.
- It is suggested that **a full overview be made at European level** of the best practices in companies in raising levels of investment in human resources and highlight the return on investment of such resources. This overview would also highlight existing examples of tax deduction that already exist in a few countries for investment in training. The *taxe d'apprentissage* in France is a good example of this.
- **(It is recommended that the Commission funds "study visits" for representatives of companies who want to get involved in lifelong learning projects at European level.** It should also be possible to use such "study visits" for companies to have someone attend an existing European project focusing on lifelong learning to find out how the company could support and strengthen the initiative.

- Companies are invited to look into **the development of Master's degrees or other diplomas that are taking into account** Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL). Through such schemes employers can obtain certificates or degrees that take into account the competencies, skills and knowledge acquired within the company. The examples of good practice of CSR Europe mention cases where disadvantaged employees were able to obtain their compulsory school education certificate while working in the company combining work and some study.
- Companies and groups of companies are invited to play a major **role in the development and the implementation of the learning centres** that are proposed as part of the e-learning initiative of the Commission of the EU. The same applies to the role of the learning communities, (see key message 6.) The learning centres should create free access to learning materials and databases that can promote learning.
- National governments are invited to reward companies retraining their staff regularly by **reducing the corporate taxes** they have to pay. This should definitely be the case if companies do extra efforts to cope with the challenges of the introduction of New Information and Communication Technology (NICT) into the company and with the introduction of e-learning. National governments should **reduce personal taxation** for staff involved in education related to skills shortages. If staff invests themselves in their training, especially in areas of skills shortage, the cost of their investment in learning should be made tax-deductible.
- Institutions of higher education and universities setting up in cooperation with companies initiatives promoting the development of human resources in the local community – and especially for disadvantaged groups should be encouraged - as a major contribution to combat social exclusion.
- More studies **evaluating the involvement of staff in training activities in order to show companies the return** from the money invested in training should be made both at national and European level. It could be equally useful to make in parallel studies on the return students get from investing in mobility in other European countries.

### **Recommendations for key message 3**

#### ***Overall recommendations for key message 3***

*Companies are invited to set up initiatives to transfer their innovative learning and teaching methodologies to schools and educational organisations. Joint in-service training activities involving people from industry and education would contribute to this.*

*The Commission is invited to support the development of a European grading system for training initiatives and/or training providers. The first step could be a comparative study describing the diverse innovative teaching and learning methodologies.*

*The Commission is invited to take different measures to support the use of ICT based innovative learning tools. ICT based learning environments, web-based education packages, multimedia offerings of training could result from partnerships between companies and education as a contribution to lifelong learning.*

*Research into the effects of innovative learning and teaching techniques and methodologies should be promoted.*

- **The Commission should consider developing a system by which training could be designed and provided to a set standard ISO9001.**  
Efforts towards a standardisation of certain professional qualifications and of their provision should be undertaken EU standards for training providers with a **star system** assigning more stars if the training is more aligned with the urgent and basic needs of the companies could be set up and implemented by national governments.
- **A European pilot project of local partnerships** could be set up focusing on co-operation between companies and education or training institutes (schools, universities, training providers) in specific areas of lifelong learning, such as the creation of multimedia learning environment. (see also ‘learning communities’ at key message 6).
- **An overview could be produced of web-based packages** produced by outstanding educational institutions to address urgent training needs in key areas, such as quality of learning or the teaching of foreign languages.
- **The Commission could provide free access to ICT based learning environments,** which hold great potential for teachers and for initial and in-service teacher education but also for schools involved in partnerships.  
Examples of good practice in the field of collaborative learning environments have to be collected and disseminated. Particular attention should be given to collaborative learning environments that enable participants to get supplementary degrees and qualifications.
- It is suggested that **a closer co-operation be organised between training providers and companies** when urgent responses are required to specific skills’ needs. This kind of co-operation will help to tailor products and services much more to the needs of the users, the companies. This could be achieved by setting clear priorities for certain skills within some of the actions of the large EU programmes. The Commission should consult on a regular basis with European representative bodies of industry to be aware of needs of the business community in training and education.
- **New partnerships should be encouraged between the educational and business world to focus on a better use of ICT tools in education and training.**
- **More research should be carried out by research institutes and universities in the impact, the cost and the return of innovative learning and teaching methods.** Joint projects in which CSR Europe members are involved could be the basis for research.

#### **Recommendations for key message 4**

##### *Overall recommendations for key message 4*

*CSR Europe could help promote joint projects (curriculum development, mobility, pilot projects ...) enhancing co-operation between industry, education and the social partners in valuing education.*

*The Commission is invited to promote a comparative study on how education and training is valued in companies across Europe. This could include examples of or Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning*

- **Comparative studies on the different ways in which training is valued by companies across Europe,** particularly for on-the-job training, and both and informal training, **could be undertaken.** Such studies could also look at the ways in which these forms of training are certified, validated or accredited. Similar comparative studies showing how learning

is valued in school education and higher education, and for teachers training, could also take place. This could shed some light on the link between the in-service training and lifelong learning activities of staff members and their chances for promotion in education. Useful lessons could be learnt by education from companies and industry.

- More encouragement should be given to the joint development of part of the curriculum by companies and schools, especially for vocational and technical education.
- Companies are invited to **describe the APEL projects** (Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning) which they are involved in and which are possibly developed in co-operation with universities or higher education institutions. It will be interesting to see how non-formal and informal learning can be valued by companies and how it can be taken into account in the development of other learning pathways.

### **Recommendations for key message 5**

#### ***Overall recommendations for key message 5***

*The Commission is invited to promote co-operation between guidance and counselling services linked to ministries of education and those in companies involved in the same activities towards pupils.*

*CSR Europe is invited to further develop the “On-line business roadmap on lifelong learning” and to continue disseminating good practice in European projects in the field of lifelong learning together with this tool. This should be linked with the organisation of seminars to exchange and inspire potential partners to develop new projects.*

*Many projects, which have a national basis, could be turned into European and transnational projects involving other companies and education partners in other countries.*

- **It is recommended that the Commission enhances co-operation between the guidance and counselling services linked to the ministry of education, the employment agencies and the services in industry that are involved in counselling employees or students.**
- **Information seminars gathering companies’** representatives could take place to present EU programmes in which companies can participate. Such sessions should give particular attention to Minerva (new technologies), Grundtvig (adult education and other educational pathways), and Comenius 2 in the Socrates programme, this last focusing on the in-service training of teachers to enable them to co-operate with companies. Major attention should also be given to the Leonardo da Vinci projects, such as the pilot projects and the mobility projects, in which companies can play a major role.
- Seminars gathering representatives of companies and educational bodies or institutions (schools, universities, adult education providers, educational associations working with disadvantaged groups etc.) to explore ways of cooperating should also be encouraged.
- **Two of the key problems that many European projects have, are the sustainability of their activities and the dissemination and commercialisation of their outcomes once the EU funding is over.** The Commission is invited to examine the support companies can give in these two areas. This could result in a meeting where interested companies could meet successful projects in the final stage of their activities and looking for support to disseminate and commercialise their outcomes. It is suggested that along the lines of the CSR Europe report “Education for all: business-education partnerships”, a **similar**

**publication be produced focusing on helping transition from academic to professional life and promoting adult education.**

- The Commission is invited to pay particular attention to the **involvement of SMEs in EU projects** also trying to simplify and make more transparent application procedures
- It is to be recommended that CSR Europe takes particular steps **to disseminate good practice models to schools, universities and other members of the educational community** through the further development of its on-line resource centre.
- Most of projects analysed are local or national projects. **Many of them could become European and transnational projects** by developing synergies and linking them up and with similar initiatives in other EU countries, therefore increasing their impact.
- It is advised to discuss the CSR Europe self-assessment tool with experts in the field of European education projects.

### **Recommendations for key message 6**

#### *Overall recommendations for key message 6*

*CSR Europe is invited to disseminate good practice on existing learning communities involving industry and other local partners as to inspire transfer of successful models across Europe.*

*The Commission is invited to support the creation of local and regional support structures that can bring education and training closer to home. It is also invited to support learning communities in which industry can play an active role.*

- **Dissemination of good practice** can be done through workshops and seminars bringing together all the potential players of an education-business partnership.
- **It is suggested that local and/or regional structures be created** to bring learning and lifelong learning closer to home, **or that existing regional co-operation structures between companies and/or professional organisations take initiatives in this field.** Examples of good practice at local or regional level should first be pinpointed through benchmarking. These should be made available, not only at national and European level. EU funding and regional funding as well as regional, national or EU awards should contribute to the dissemination of this good practice.
- , It is recommended that **CSR Europe develop regular contacts with the Committee of the Regions** and its Educational committee. **Regional initiatives could be set up in disadvantaged regions** to enhance the quality of education and training and lifelong learning. Such projects could be **industry driven** but in close co-operation with the local authorities, the schools, universities and other educational institutions.
- CSR Europe is invited to encourage the development of learning communities that focus on specific problems in lifelong learning.

### **Lessons to be taken into account towards the future**

The present analysis of the replies to the Memorandum by CSR Europe members and of the many examples of good practice of CSR Europe members show that companies play a major

role in the concrete development and implementation of lifelong learning across Europe. This is demonstrated both in their actions towards and support of their own employees, but also to a significant degree in their partnership and community investment programmes in the communities they serve across Europe and the rest of the world. For this reason a main overarching recommendation of this response, relevant to all the Key Messages, is the establishment of a Business-Education Forum.

**The basis to building a European-wide lifelong learning community is there.** Synergies between initiatives such as those of the CSR Europe members and of other groups and organisations should be encouraged. Such initiatives will also have to be evaluated and research will have to be carried out to see the impact on the quality of education and learning, on employability and on competitiveness. Particular attention will have to be given to develop skills of teachers and trainers and employees who can become advisors or counsellors for other individuals.

The Action Plan, which will hopefully result from the present consultation, should assign clear roles and responsibilities to all players and help creating a learning community, which is working on the implementation of lifelong learning on a daily basis. It is a major challenge but it is and will be very rewarding as it has to do both with people improving and fulfilling their own potential and the economic and competitive advantages that should help lead us to a better society.

## **PART III: EXAMPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE CSR EUROPE**

### **Introduction**

Analysing the many CSR EUROPE publications in which examples of good practice have been compiled, several innovative and creative projects can be pinpointed. The present selection of examples of good practice is based both on the description of projects sent in together with the questionnaire and on a selection of projects taken from other CSR EUROPE good practices.

Most of the examples of good practice could be put under more than one of the headings of the six key messages as they focus on several elements simultaneously. Most, if not all projects have to do with acquisition of basic skills. The acquisition of those skills is particularly present in the projects focusing on disadvantaged groups, like the unemployed, disabled and youngsters at risk. In all projects human resources are invested into learning activities in general or in the acquisition of basic or particular skills in particular. Many of the projects are developing and implementing innovative learning and teaching.

**All of the projects value education and training but only few of them result in a recognised accreditation or validation process of the results of the learning.** Most of the projects have an element of guidance and counselling in them, as this is very often the starting point of concrete learning and teaching activities. Finally, several projects tend to bring education, training and learning closer to home. This is very often interpreted as not bringing it into the home but bringing it closer to the local community.

It has been extremely difficult to make a limited selection of examples of good practice among the practices that have been collected. It is important to mention that CSR Europe has a on-line database where a large number of examples of good practice ([www.csreurope.org](http://www.csreurope.org)) which are very revealing for the six key messages of lifelong learning in the Memorandum.

### **Key message 1: acquisition of basic skills**

#### ***Lattice Creative Education (UK): a dual learning initiative to combat truancy in schools***

The Lattice Creative Education (CRED) project is a groundbreaking initiative providing remedial education for final-year children who find traditional school difficult and who need other forms of motivating education. Thus 50 children from local schools of 14 to 16 years of age receive alternative education within this project.

The project is run and financed by a varied group of partners composed of companies, local, regional and national education authorities and associations or foundations: Reading Borough Council, Berkshire Education Business Partnership, LEA (Local Education Authority), DfEE (Department for Education and employment, the Lattice foundation and the Leasing group.

The project is based on the creation of a learning centre created in an office of the company. The selected pupils follow a one-year programme that follows a work related curriculum. They spend three days a week at the Learning Centre developing literacy and numeracy skills and they work for a Business Studies GNVQ (General National Vocational Qualification). The two remaining days are spent on self-selected work experience placements with builders, motor mechanics, hairdressers, childcare centres, offices and retailers. The success is evaluated by attendance figures, the qualifications obtained and the placement reports. Attendance figures average 85% compared to an estimated 40% in their previous schools.

***The ABB MAHIS programme: work promotion as a function of the company as a learning organisation, programme managed by ABB Finland***

The objective is to improve the workers' health, the ability to work and the psychosocial environment. It is composed of three projects. The Health Project aims at improving the health of all personnel. The Work Ability Project aims at improving the physical and psychological condition of the employees. The third project or Working Community Project aims at raising the awareness of the individual that he has an influence on the contents of his/her work and the psychosocial work environment. The overall objective is that people learn that they are the agents of change and improvements.

The health project consists of clinical examinations for all personnel, more exactly examinations and follow-up for people with poor health and/or lower work ability, individual health care and guidance, exercise groups for people with lower physical conditioning and a stop smoking campaign. The work ability project consists of one- or two-day work ability seminars for all personnel once a year and of directed ergonomic improvements. The working community project consists of activities of which most are organised by the personnel of the company. Working groups, consisting of the supervisor and eight employees, have been created to guide, plan and implement the process in each department in order to improve the psychosocial environment. The programme includes among others leadership training, how to manage teams and how to work in teams.

The MAHIS programme is in the first place **a learning process**. It has offered a great number of things to learn for everybody involved: the impact of health on work, how to create a positive psychosocial work environment, the impact of ergonomic improvements, the organisation and management of teamwork. Employees have learned how to influence themselves important things, how to use all of their abilities better. They have learned that such a project makes their work more interesting and that they get more job satisfaction.

***Quality Project for schools of ABB S.p.a. Italy***

This project focuses on help given by ABB Italy to schools which want to turn themselves into learning organisations which give quality services not only to the pupils but also to their family and to the whole surrounding community.

The project is run by a varied partnership composed of companies, schools and Assolombarda (the local industries in Milan of Lombardia) together with other similar associations and local authorities.

The partners assist the schools in integrating concepts and tools reflecting a new organisational culture based on the concept of the learning community and the learning organisation. The major focus is on the efficiency of the school system in terms of quality.

***The Microsoft European Scholar programme: IVCT provision for long-term unemployed***

The objective of the European Scholar Project of Microsoft EMEA is provide ICT skills training to the unemployed, enabling them to acquire industry-recognised ICT certification and well-paid employment at the end of the training.

To implement this project local subsidiaries of Microsoft identify target unemployed population groups such as unemployed youth in Italy, long-term unemployed university graduates in Morocco or rural unemployed people in Sweden. The candidates are selected for the training with the help of the local unemployment agency or with the help of a recruitment agency. The training partner, which is usually a local Microsoft certified technical education

centre is selected which provides training on basic ICT and Microsoft technologies at a discounted rate.

The selected candidates follow intensive training (3 to 6 months) with the goal of obtaining one of the following industry-recognised IT certifications: MCSE (Microsoft Certified Systems Engineer), MCSD (Microsoft Certified Systems Developer), or MCP 5 (Microsoft Certified Professional). Depending on the national unemployment regime, candidates are paid an unemployment allowance by the government during the length of their training.

In certain countries, scholars receive job placement and job search assistance; help is given to them in learning to draft a CV, they are helped in acquiring interview skills and communication skills).

Over 10.000 scholars have been trained and certified throughout Europe since the programme was launched in mid 1990's. The programme is sustainable thanks to the fact the project is founded on a partnership with a government agency. The local employment or labour ministry indeed often decides to take over some of the funding and implementation of the programme after a couple of years or decides to implement a similar programme on a nation-wide basis as was done in Ireland.

### **Key message 2: More investment in human resources**

#### ***Web based computer science degree – joint venture BT, CWU and University of London***

This project is a joint venture of BT with CWU, the Community Workers Union and University of London, Queen Mary Westfield College. It is an excellent partnership between an employer, a trade union and a university.

The objective of this web-based computer science degree is to give employees, who have not had access to degree level studies, the opportunity to study on a foundation course which, when successfully completed, gives access to a full BSc course. Students successful in their foundation year go on to enter the full BSc (Bachelor of Science) computer science course.

This course takes four years part time. The academic fee costs are roughly 50% of the usual University charge of £ 1350 per year. BT pays for the foundation year and students are expected to make a contribution of approximately £ 260 per year. Furthermore BT funds administration and the provision of computing hardware including a server. CWU provides accommodation for studies.

#### ***Milan CI: Providing over the counter support for new enterprises (Punto Nuova Impresa)***

The 14 PNI Counters (helpdesks) are located in Chamber of Commerce Offices in Lombardy and staffed by graduates who were granted special scholarships after a selection and training process. This network is co-ordinated by a centre PNI that transfers know-how, ensures a fluid interchange of information and provides a dedicated IT infrastructure. The services are only provided to first-time entrepreneurs involved in creating a new venture.

PNI experts assist with various aspects of the business evaluation process, supported by a dedicated software package and provide information on markets, procedures and access to financing tools. The training consists of frequent contacts between the new potential entrepreneurs and the experts to assess training needs and organise seminars and courses. Specialised assistance, such as drafting a business plan, is provided by consultants free of charge to the potential entrepreneurs.

Fifty-two one-day seminars on “Setting up your own business” have involved almost 4000 participants. Fifty longer start-up courses have also helped nearly 1300 entrepreneurs. Specialised assistance has totalled nearly 3000 hours. All of this has led to the creation of 18000 new companies in the Lombard Region. All of this has been strengthened by co-operation with employers’ federations, local authorities, employment agencies and the media.

### ***Motorola: major investment in education programmes***

For Motorola nothing is more important than education as it is the area with the most profound long-term significance to our society. Motorola hence seeks to enrich the lives of children, neighbours and employees through active involvement in the education arena.

Motorola philanthropic support strengthens primary and secondary schools as well as colleges and universities, all over the world. Motorola people work as volunteers in the classroom at all levels to teach and inspire. Internships in Motorola provide valuable experience in fields such as engineering, finance, marketing and human resources. Motorola is fully aware that it also benefits from its educational activities. Their efforts bolster their corporate presence in the classroom, aiding recruitment of the best and brightest. Part of their educational agenda is to be known among students as the leader – and employer of choice – in the industry. Motorola runs the following projects: Junior Achievement of Chicago, the MIT media lab, the China’s HOPE project for schools and a Robotics competition.

The Motorola Foundation provides funding to higher education as well as a multitude of primary and secondary education programmes assisting individuals to reach their greatest potential and to become lifelong learners. The priority areas are: a) engineering, technical and science programmes in universities; b) programmes reaching traditionally under-represented groups in the areas of maths, science, engineering and businesses; c) programmes providing technical assistance, research and statistical information on the state of the science and engineering education; d) strengthening science and maths education at the pre-collegiate level; e) educational programmes to promote and support the environment.

### **Key message 3: Innovation in teaching and learning**

#### ***Professional integration of young unemployed people with social difficulties: Suez***

The project is focusing on young people who have integration problems due to their social or ethnic origin, their family situation, their level of education or training. The integration is implemented on a local basis in co-operation with local authorities through a local agreement for integration. The integration is double: at work and in society in general. The only criterion for selection is the real desire for integration.

The objectives of the project are first to give them the basis for a) a social integration, such as norms of social behaviour, communication abilities, or basic competencies in mother tongue and numeracy and b) a professional integration: the basic knowledge of working life focusing on what a company is, on output, customers, competition, teamwork, the working organisation and concepts of result. The objective is to give them professional know-how, as well theoretical as practical, answering a market need and, if possible, validated by a diploma. The professions concerned are: electrician, plumber, secretary, road building worker, worker in city cleaning services etc.

The innovative method applied includes three main principles: three phases, a double coaching or tutoring and a multiple partnership. The three phases consist of a re-socialisation phase outside the company. It aims at basic social skills, self-organisation and basic literacy

and numeracy and is delivered by the local authorities. This is followed by an integration phase into the company through sandwich courses initiating young people to professional life and helping them choose their vocational orientation. The third phase is the qualification step during which the real training for the targeted trade can begin on a sandwich course principle. It is composed of a theoretical training component in a vocational school or adult training centre and of a practical training component within the company.

Double coaching supports the process. The social integration is managed by the social coach from a public agency. The professional integration is the company's competence and is managed by the professional coach who is usually the supervisor responsible for the trainee's work in the company.

Finally a **multiple partnership** supported by a project team is necessary for this integration programme. At local level it is a partnership between the company and the local public agency linking up with funding partners (local authorities, regional councils or State services), training partners (for the courses run outside the company) and social services for special assistance. **Tutors** are trained within the company to support the young people.

This is a good example of a complex project that focuses in fact on several of the key messages. It promotes basic skills for socially disadvantaged youngsters. It is aware of the need to have well trained human resources. It is applying innovative teaching and learning strategies to facilitate personal and professional integration of the youngsters. It values education as it leads to clear qualifications. It also focuses on counselling and guidance trying to find the right job for the youngsters and it brings education closer to home by creating around those youngsters a good example of a learning community.

### ***IBM: Reinventing Education***

IBM's global commitment to improving education is delivered through its flagship community relations programme: Reinventing education. Working closely with teachers, administrators, teacher trainers and parents the programme has developed the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) to improve student performance, strengthen the teaching profession, raise the quality of instruction and make it accessible to all.

Reinventing Education is a catalyst for fundamental change across the public education systems. Each IBM partnership addresses a specific barrier to higher achievement, such as the length and structure of the school day or the school year, how learning is measured, how literacy, maths and science are taught, how effective practice is disseminated.

Through the programme, IBM-partners in the education sector have worked with IBM researchers and project managers to create new IT applications which a) enable teachers to collaborate on developing materials for instruction, b) enable parents to access their child's work and discuss progress with their teachers, c) enable students to work in teams and d) enable e-mentors to support learning in schools. Data analyses enable to target resources to students with the greatest need.

Alongside these major programmes, staff volunteer on school management boards; they help with literacy in the classroom and they support staff to develop their IT skills.

***Another IBM initiative "The Training for work programme"*** is addressing key societal issues: the need for higher standards in schools and the adaptation of workforce skills. Thus the project focuses on the one hand on young people lacking qualifications and on long-term unemployed lacking skills for new jobs.

The project focuses on the barriers to training for unemployed such as: lack of confidence and motivation, previous failure with traditional methods and institutions, poor basic skills of the unemployed, lack of awareness of training opportunities and problems accessing help and information and the lack of flexibility in existing training provisions.

To overcome these barriers this IBM project uses appropriate network technology and multimedia. It creates new forms of access to training and adapts training to the particular needs of the unemployed and to his or her particular learning style.

The objective was that IBM would create partnerships in several European countries involving IBM managers together with representatives from government, from training organisations and from organisations addressing social exclusion. 5 organisations were contacted in 6 EU countries to come forward with proposals addressing the key elements of the project proposed. In the end seven projects have been selected and are highly successful.

### *Assolombarda: Twinning schools with enterprises*

The present project has devised a methodology to improve the quality of school education and training that is easily adapted and reproduced. It is part of a nation-wide Confindustria Programme in Italy. The result of the project is a “toolbox”, collecting a flexible set of experimental training and learning materials that can be used to activate a quality project. It is composed of five modules: adhesion to the project, a contract for the project, analysing the situation at my school, teamwork and project development. The project is supported by the head of the school and a core group of three motivated people.

The cornerstone of the project is a survey on training requirements that highlights the gap between supply and demand of skills and competencies. The survey carried out showed training needs in three specific areas: critical needs (growing need and scarce supply), emerging needs (innovative area, low diffusion) and declining needs (reduced demand). The survey also showed the professional profiles which are most in demand and which should be produced by vocational and technical schools (quality systems, environment and safety customer assistance, technical project management, controller). The project bases its activities on the findings of this survey to develop the project activities.

13 companies participate in the project with the objective of strengthening the quality of the education in the schools. They support the schools through their seconded quality expert, by helping in the analysis and by planning and implementing the training programme needed to improve the quality. A preliminary seminar has merged industry experts, teachers, the regional experience authorities and the Milan School Council, with the objective to stimulate reflection on past experience and start joint planning of new similar initiatives. The work methodology introduced with the Quality Project, rated by teachers, has proved a very useful process to be adopted also for others aspects of teaching activities.

#### **Key message 4: Value learning**

##### ***Portugal Telecom S.A.: Quality Training PROGRAMME Qualificant Training***

Portugal Telecom started a training programme intended for employees having low standard of qualification. The main purpose of this programme is to allow these employees to succeed inside the company and, at the same time, to develop staff mobility. The retraining programme runs after working time and on a voluntary basis. This programme follows recurrent training laws established by the Ministry of education. The workers who successfully finish the programme are offered a certificate showing the equivalence to the official education.

The creation of the Qualificant training Programme intended to develop the qualifications of the employees who have the lowest levels of qualification and are at risk of being excluded socially and professionally. This training programme, with 600 hours duration, introduced on a voluntary basis, has a target population of around 5000 people and, as a result, PT has increased the turnover within its organisation and allows, at the same time, an individual to earn official certification from the Education ministry. This is a very concrete way in which education and training can be valued.

##### ***Pressalit: Training unemployed people and employees***

Pressalit entered into a job rotation project along with a job centre and local labour market training centres. A group of 12 employees went on a long-term training course and were replaced by 12 unemployed people who joined the company. The unemployed trainees had attended a three-month qualification course before receiving training in various divisions of the company. In accordance with Danish Labour market legislation, Pressalit received just over 60 percent of the minimum wage in subsidies during the nine-month training period.

This initiative is one of many within this company. It also takes in unemployed youngsters, disabled persons and people with reduced working capacity for aptitude testing and rehabilitation. It also offers work experience to school drop-outs. As a result of the job rotation project almost all the unemployed trainees found a job in the company. The training had equipped them with a one-year qualifying industrial worker's certificate which is another way of valuing the training they had taken.

##### ***Cadbury Schweppes Ltd: A bridge into work***

The main idea behind this project is to combat social exclusion in inner city Dublin. There are growing opportunities for employment in the "low-technology" industries in Dublin. Unfortunately, many young people lack the inter-personal skills and the motivation to take advantage of these opportunities. Furthermore, many employers are reluctant to recruit from the inner city.

Cadbury Schweppes has agreed to work in partnership with Dublin Education Authority to create a "bridging" scheme which will enable **young people to gain recognition / accreditation for their non-formal experiences and competencies**. Ultimately, it is envisaged that this scheme will improve the employability prospects of young people and support economic and social regeneration on housing estates in inner city Dublin

Cadbury Schweppes objectives are to provide: a) advice about the work-related competencies for which the company looks in the recruitment process, b) opportunities for work-related

activities, including work experience, c) to motivate disadvantaged young people to seek employment and d) access to employment for those who successfully complete the programme. The objectives for the schools are double: to provide access to employment via the non-traditional route and provide guidance and pastoral support to re-motivate disaffected young people for learning.

Important is the impact the project has on the combat against social exclusion in the inner cities, the contribution it makes to better employability, the support it can give to economic and social regeneration of inner cities and the improvement of the liveability in those areas.

### **Key message 5: Rethinking guidance and counselling**

#### ***Infoempleo: matching job vacancies and demands to address unemployment***

Infoempleo is a service in which job vacancies and demands are matched. It provides information on job vacancies existing in Spain. It also provides managers with a great database including all our clients' curricula, interacting in this way between job demanders and companies. In this way Infoempleo plays a double counselling and guidance role towards the job seekers and the potential job providers.

Infoempleo provides services to people with a university degree spreading all the job vacancies offered in Spain and sending to its clients the curricula of those jobseekers who better fit the requirements. They also provide social support as they offer valuable information to young people to allow them to make a decision about their studies. They inform about every training programme, course or grant existing in Spain, which can contribute to improving the qualifications of youngsters.

#### ***Gestnave S/A counselling and guidance to redundant employees***

Gestnave has set up a support office to Employment Creation and Development. The activities to be developed by this Office are diverse: information and orientation about the possibilities of inner and outer training programmes of the company; legal assistance and support in the resolution of legal formalities and others to establish outsourcing projects; other initiatives the employees could embark on. Counselling and advice (and contracts) are also given to companies created by former employees who decided to set up their own working place either individually or in partnership.

Particular counselling and guidance has been given by this office to support redundant employees as a consequence of Gestnave restructuring plans. The office helped to find outsourcing and outplacement solutions providing the technical and legal support needed for the individual projects of those who were made redundant. The company supported around 1000 workers in the development of their own projects in different sectors such as catering and cleaning services. This has led to the creation of many new small businesses helping to reduce the negative social effects created by the company staff reductions.

#### ***Strategic Plan Kempen: 50 large companies helping small and medium-sized enterprises to expand***

PLATO is an intensive support programme under which large companies support SMEs collectively and individually in all aspects of management. The large mentor companies make one or two managers available on a part-time basis and, at the cost of SPK, they embarked on intensive training in general management and in group-dynamics. The selected SMEs are

subdivided into groups of approximately 12 SME business-leaders and two managers-trainers. The training course is spread over two years and has four components/ group sessions, individual support, seminars and informal activities like company visits and receptions.

The objective of the SPK joint venture was to turn one region in Belgium into a leading region. 700 SME business leaders took part in a Plato project and 50 large mentor companies have provided 100 manager-trainers. This has really created a positive dynamic in the region. A university carried out assessments. Plato stimulates business leaders continually to improve the management of their business with respect to personnel policy, financing, marketing etc. An effective network is created between participants and the co-operating organisations and the project is a learning experience for both the SMEs and the large companies.

### **Key message 6: bringing learning closer to home**

#### ***BT: Routes into education through ACCESS in the community and at home (REACHOut)***

REACHOut is a family of courses developed by Liverpool Hope University College (LHUC). BT has provided a grant as well as its expertise in multi-media and distance teaching to assist the production of the course materials. Part of BT's funding has been to install a video-conferencing studio in a training room in Liverpool Hope University College with links to each of the PSP centres, enabling students to attend 'virtual' lectures and seminars.

LHUC in conjunction with PSP started REACHOut access courses five years ago through which parents study part-time at a PSP centre and at home using distance teaching materials. The courses are aimed at those with few or no qualifications, those who are unemployed or in low-paid employment and those with pre-school children.

The courses have lead several hundreds of students to take pre-degree courses but as a result the parents-students were motivated to go on to take a BA / BSC combined studies degree. The impact of the parents obtaining a degree is a major element to motivate their children towards learning and lifelong learning. This is also a good example of how education is being valued.

#### ***Whitbread Community involvement Programme (CIP)***

Whitbread links its 6.500 locally based businesses with their local communities in order to identify the business resources relevant to the community need. The main pillars of the programme are: partnerships between business and education, the Brighter Future Campaign which encourages all employees to consider work experience, teacher placements, curriculum development projects, mentoring and governships.

Support for the voluntary sector in cash and kind, and for volunteering, externally through the Whitbread Volunteer action Awards and internally by supporting, encouraging and recognising the diverse activities in which the employees are involved. Assistance for local social and economic regeneration through partnerships with national and local organisations, tackling issues such as crime, disaffected youth, small business support, homelessness and the environment.

The CIP is fully in line with Whitbread's mission statement which states that it intends "to be a leader in the field of partnerships between business, the community and the public sector demonstrating that working together for the common good is the responsibility of the company and good business practice. One of the specific objectives of community involvement is to provide through those activities personal development (learning) and motivational opportunities for Whitbread's staff. Human resources has recognised the value

of community activity and it has become a popular and integral part of personal development plans in most of the divisions of Whitbread.

***Diageo Plc.: a wide ranging community involvement programme***

Diageo, one of the world's leading consumer goods businesses has a wide-ranging programme of corporate community involvement which it regards as an integral part of the business. Diageo established the Diageo Foundation to help communities in the 200 countries in which it operates by providing charitable donations and long-term social investment.

The Diageo Foundation supports initiatives in four key areas. "Skills for life" is an initiative recognising that learning and the development of life skills are basic to the well being of all communities. "Local Citizens" is developing local partnerships to make a significant difference on acute social issues such as unemployment and homelessness. The Foyer project and the Gateway project have a particular focus on enhancing employment by facilitating access to education and learning. "Our People" is encouraging Diageo's 85,000 employees to become involved in the local community and in its charitable activities. "Water and life" is a major environmental and humanitarian community initiative that is supporting projects across the whole world giving people in developing countries access to fresh water.

***Anytime Anywhere Learning: Microsoft UK promotes ICT skills and lifelong learning skills with kids and teachers to create a connected learning community***

The Microsoft Anytime Anywhere Learning programme sets out to equip every UK teacher and pupil with a laptop of their own, as an everyday tool for teaching and learning. The project intends to promote equity by giving access to innovations in ICT which facilitate teaching and lifelong learning, irrespective the individual and the community one belongs to and irrespective of the financial and social circumstances.

The AAL project builds on the creation of community partnerships which establish and foster relationships between schools, parents and within the community that access best practice in education. By giving access to computers and through computers to many learning opportunities a connected learning community is created. Such a community links schools, homes individuals, workplaces and government into a collective commitment to lifelong anyone anywhere learning environments. The project brings about true innovation through its commitment to ICT based teaching and learning in a connected learning community for the benefit of the community and those within it. The AAL project is at the moment already piloted in the UK and in Belgium and is very successful.