



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion

Skills
VET, apprenticeships and Adult Education

INFORMATION NOTE ON EDUCATION AND TRAINING ISSUES DECEMBER 2015

Contents

1. EQAVET – RECENT DEVELOPMENTS.....	2
2. ECVET STATE OF PLAY	4
3. EUROPEAN PACT FOR YOUTH.....	4
4. THEMATIC REVIEW: UPSKILLING UNEMPLOYED ADULTS (AGED 25 TO 64)	5
5. EPALE – E-PLATFORM FOR ADULT LEARNING IN EUROPE.....	7
6. SKILLS PAY - THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COSTS OF LOW- SKILLED ADULTS IN THE EU (BY CEDEFOP)	8
7. EXPERT GROUP COMPOSED OF EUROPEAN ASSOCIATIONS OF VET PROVIDERS.....	10
8. ANNUAL GROWTH SURVEY.....	11
9. WHAT IS DROP'PIN?.....	11
10. ESCO EUROPEAN SKILLS CLASSIFICATION OF SKILLS, COMPETENCES, QUALIFICATIONS AND OCCUPATIONS	13
11. THE IMPACT OF GLOBALISATION ON VET: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES - OUTCOMES OF CONFERENCE (BY CEDEFOP)	14
12. RECENT CEDEFOP PUBLICATIONS (PROVIDED BY CEDEFOP).....	17
13. RECENT ETF PUBLICATIONS (PROVIDED BY ETF).....	21

1. EQAVET – RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

Recent developments in EQAVET can be summarised as follows:

1.1. Restricted call for proposals for EQAVET National Reference Points

The Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) has launched on 5 November 2015, on behalf of the European Commission, a restricted call for proposals to contribute to the funding of the activities of the EQAVET National Reference Points (NRPs). The EQAVET NRPs play a key role in the implementation of the EQAVET Recommendation. As defined in the Recommendation, the tasks of the NRPs consist of:

- keeping a wide range of stakeholders informed about the activities of the framework network;
- providing active support for the implementation of the work programme of the framework network;
- taking concrete initiatives to promote further development of the framework in the national context;
- supporting self-evaluation as a complementary and effective means of quality assurance which allows the measurement of success and the identification of areas for improvement in respect of the implementation of the work programme of the framework network;
- ensuring that information is disseminated to stakeholders effectively.

The external evaluation of the implementation of the EQAVET Recommendation carried out in 2013 showed that NRPs often tend to lack sufficient financial resources to carry out their tasks. Furthermore, it is useful to note that most of the national contact points or implementation bodies linked to other tools and instruments (such as the EQF National coordination points, the National Europass Centres or the national teams of ECVET experts) do receive financial support from the EU budget. Therefore, the Erasmus+ programme committee has agreed to foresee the amount of 1.500.000 Euro in the Erasmus+ work plan 2016 to contribute to funding the NRP activities.

1.2. Complementing the EQAVET Framework

The external evaluation of the EQAVET Recommendation, mentioned above, pointed to some weaknesses of the EQAVET Framework. In particular, the findings indicate that several topics are not (sufficiently) addressed in the EQAVET Recommendation, i.e. work based learning, the learning outcomes approach as well as quality assurance of qualification design, assessment and certification. The 2014 Report of the Commission to the EU Parliament and Council on the implementation of the EQAVET Recommendation acknowledged the need to complete the Framework to cover the topics described above. At the EQAVET Annual Forum in June 2015, the Network agreed to develop additional indicative descriptors and indicators regarding these missing topics, and agreed to set up a working group to this purpose. The draft mandate for this working group is currently being developed by the EQAVET Steering Committee. This exercise of complementing EQAVET is informally referred to in the network with the working title of 'EQAVET+'. It should be clear that this doesn't require any change in the Recommendation. In fact this exercise simply implements the first article of the EQAVET Recommendation; expressly

inviting the Member States and the Commission to further develop the Framework, quality criteria, indicative descriptors and reference indicators. This work on EQAVET+ would result in a guidance document with additional indicative descriptors and indicators to be agreed by the EQAVET Network as useful complementary tools.

1.3. Increased transparency: reporting on quality assurance developments in the EU

It is important to remind that the EQAVET Recommendation explicitly states that the Framework aims to contribute to increased transparency of VET policy developments between Member States and thereby promoting mutual trust, mobility of workers and learners and lifelong learning. The external evaluation of the implementation of the EQAVET Recommendation carried out in 2013 mentions in this context that there is very little evidence that EQAVET supports transparency of quality assurance arrangements across Europe. Furthermore, the 2014 Commission report on the implementation of EQAVET acknowledges that there is a need to increase opportunities for *‘European arrangements to make national QA measures more transparent across countries’* and promote the development of *‘common guidelines on how to describe QA procedures compatible with EQAVET’*.

In addition to promoting mutual trust, increased transparency of QA arrangements in EU countries would facilitate the identification and exchange of good practices on QA. Finally, increased transparency of national QA arrangements would also facilitate the reporting on national developments in relation to the QA deliverables defined by Bruges Communiqué and Riga Conclusions.

The EQAVET Network has therefore agreed at the Annual Forum in June 2015 to reinforce the reporting on quality assurance developments in the EU, in particular through two instruments: A) the information on the implementation of EQAVET in participating countries published on the EQAVET website, with qualitative and contextual information to be updated on a yearly basis and; B) the EQAVET Secretariat survey which will be undertaken in 2016 to generate more quantitative and comparable data.

1.4. EQAVET governance and events

There are no important changes foreseen regarding the EQAVET governance. As in previous years, an EQAVET Annual network meeting (instead of Annual Forum) is planned for spring 2016. In order to reach a wider audience and disseminate the EQAVET activities more broadly, a large open meeting (to be called EQAVET Annual Forum) targeting various stakeholders from EU and national organisations will be organised in autumn 2016. This meeting will include an annual meeting of the NRPs, which was organized separately until 2015.

In addition, several peer learning activities will be organised in 2016 and 2017 and one or two working groups will be set up. The first working group will deal with EQAVET+ (details, see above). If need be, a second working group could be created on a topic still to be decided.

2. ECVET STATE OF PLAY

The ECVET Forum 2015 (5th of November in Barcelona) gathered some 160 VET stakeholders (national and regional authorities, VET providers, mobility promoters, project coordinators, social partners) and 60 economic actors (companies, chambers, sectorial and professional bodies).

There was evidence, e.g. experiences in healthcare and nuclear energy, that the ECVET principles help finding solutions to labour market issues – with particular reference to sectors, branches and professional groups. In particular, the labour market was interested in qualifications becoming more flexible, not only in terms of flexible learning pathways leading to them, but also in terms of a more flexible structure of qualifications themselves – as promoted by ECVET units of learning outcomes. It appeared that as the learning outcome approach had become more widely used, the language employed needed to be clearer and well adapted to the respective context.

The participation of economic actors proved very useful and there was a widespread agreement that this should be the starting point for their sustained involvement.

The conference was followed on Friday 6 November by a joint meeting of the ECVET users' group and the coordinators of the national teams of ECVET experts – de facto the first meeting of the full ECVET network, bringing together policy groups and national implementation bodies.

Based on the discussion the day before, the joint meeting resulted in some suggestions of priorities for the 2016 ECVET work programme, discussed in the Users' group meeting on the 8th of December: promote visibility of learning outcomes in the validation process; seek synergies with other European instruments, in particular the EQF; start revising the User's guide; and intensify exchanges on ECVET work at national level.

The working group on units of learning outcomes met last time on the 9th of December and the final note will be distribute to the ECVET users' group early in 2016.

3. EUROPEAN PACT FOR YOUTH

The European Pact for Youth was launched on 17 November 2015 as a joint engagement of the EU and business leaders to boost business-education partnerships. It is an appeal to all businesses, social partners, education and training providers, and other stakeholders to develop or consolidate partnerships in support of youth employability and inclusion.

The Pact aims to help build a pro-youth and pro-innovation Europe by creating a fair and equitable culture of partnerships between business, education and young people. These partnerships are designed to enhance the quality of training and skills that young people can acquire, including transversal, digital, entrepreneurial, green and soft skills.

By end-2017 the Pact should deliver:

- 10,000 quality business-education partnerships
- at least 100,000 new good quality apprenticeships, traineeships or entry-level jobs
- 28 national action plans in the EU Member States (also open to EFTA and Candidate countries)

Examples of business-education partnerships:

- projects that boost apprenticeships and other forms of in-company training,
- initiatives that support non-formal and informal learning,
- projects that aim to make learning science and technology more attractive.

The Pact was initiated by the European Business Network for Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR Europe), and will be implemented with the support of the European Commission. Commissioner Marianne Thyssen will co-chair a Leaders Group together with Viscount Etienne Davignon, President of CSR Europe. The outcomes of this joint work will be presented at the 1st Enterprise-Education Summit in December 2017.

Webpages for more information:

<http://www.csreurope.org/pactforyouth>

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=2387&furtherNews=yes>

4. THEMATIC REVIEW: UPSKILLING UNEMPLOYED ADULTS (AGED 25 TO 64)

This Review, undertaken by the European Employment Policy Observatory (EEPO) in Spring 2015, presents an in-depth analysis of funded training provision across Member States aimed at raising the skills of adult unemployed persons (25-64) with low levels of qualifications or inadequate basic skills. The Review maps and provides detailed information of the set-up of training interventions and measures provided to unemployed adults throughout the 33 EEPO countries. It also explores lessons from comparative analysis, drawing on evaluation findings, highlighting effective design features and considers the role of the European Structural Fund (ESF) in supporting training for unemployed adults. Finally, it outlines the challenges training programmes need to overcome and presents a set of recommendations.

Review conclusions:

- Although training measures are essentially compensatory interventions, they have the potential to **support labour market efficiency** and are an appropriate **response to structural unemployment**.
- In a climate of increased unemployment, training courses need an appropriate **mix of generic and vocational skills**, and should **target** low skilled and long-term unemployed adults.
- Training measures with more positive evaluation results tend to be **well tailored** to the jobseeker's potential; meet (local) employers' skills need; lead to formal vocational qualifications; are smaller in scale; and target specific disadvantaged groups and particular occupations.
- **Vocational training** has significant positive effects for jobseekers with low levels of educational attainment.
- **Individualised approaches** are key to effective training.

- **Self-selection approaches** (allowing individuals to choose their training path) appear to work better, than decisions solely made by PES caseworkers.
- **Decentralised training provision**, delivered by a wide range of education providers, including non-profit organisations, enhances opportunities for tailored provision and practical training orientated towards labour market needs.
- **Integrated approaches** and **institutional cooperation** are important for those groups who face multiple employment barriers, in which information and guidance play a central role.
- Schemes which provide **experience that is as close as possible to working life** tend to be more effective.
- **Employer involvement** is important and the most successful schemes combine institutional training with practical training, mirroring a real job and workplace environment.
- Training providers not only help learners to develop knowledge, skills and competences and to gain working experience, but also work at the interface between learners and employers, and often function as labour market intermediaries, so **this intermediary function of training providers should be supported**.
- The system of **individual action plans** provides a useful mechanism for focusing interventions most effectively and speeding up the activation process.
- **Guidance and follow-up** for leavers from training, especially for those considered distant from the labour market and facing multiple employment barriers, is needed, with a view to keeping them on a lifelong learning pathway.
- **Targeted learning opportunities for unemployed people** can have a positive impact on improving progress towards the EU benchmark of 15 % adult participation in learning.

The review synthesis and country reports on which it is based are available on DG EMPL Website:

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=1086&newsId=2265&furtherNews=yes>

Thematic event

As is customary following an EEPO review, a stakeholder seminar was organised on 25 June to discuss the results, analyse examples of good practice identified during the review and draw their own conclusions about how best to advance work on upskilling unemployed adults.

This Thematic Event focused on upskilling unemployed adults and in particular on the **challenges and opportunities for raising the skills of long-term unemployed, unskilled and disadvantaged adults**. It brought together delegates from different organisations with a stake in labour market and education/training, including EU institutions and other international policy organisations, European government representatives, social partners, non-governmental organisations and research institutions.

Key policy messages from the event emphasise the need for:

- Policy coordination and better integration
- Engaging and supporting participants
- Relevance of training to participants

- Relevance of training to employers
- Quality and impact of training

A report on the thematic event, workshops and practices presented are available on DG EMPL website:

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=88&eventsId=1056&furtherEvents=yes>

5. EPALE – E-PLATFORM FOR ADULT LEARNING IN EUROPE

EPALE is a key instrument through which the European Commission promotes the objectives of the Enhanced European Agenda for adult learning. [EPALE](#) is the European online community for professionals involved in adult education (both general adult education and C-VET), including teachers and trainers, policy-makers, researchers, media, etc. Its purpose is to facilitate their work and their professional development and thereby improve the quality of adult learning policy and provision in Europe.

Its development started in spring 2014, and has continued until now. The platform now offers many features and a lot of content but it is most of all a community. More than 8,000 [users](#) have registered to the platform and over 10,000 are following it in [Twitter](#), while others also follow EPALE in [Facebook](#) or [LinkedIn](#). All of them are welcome to publish or comment content in EPALE, which is user-led.

To support the professional development and the collaboration between these professionals, EPALE offers the following features:

- A [partner-search](#) tool
- A [resource centre](#), with over 2.000 resources (case studies, reports, legislations, etc.)
- A [calendar](#) of courses and events of interest to professionals involved in adult education, with 900 events published so far all over Europe
- A [news centre](#), which has published over 1,000 pieces of information
- A [blog](#) in which nearly 630 posts have been published by experts in their domain, offering the possibility to registered users to comment and start discussions on the opinions, ideas or practices presented
- A [glossary](#), including over 200 words and expressions translated in the 24 EU languages
- [Thematic areas](#) where users can find a compilation of the resources, events, news and blog posts on 10 different topics.

EPALE is available in 24 languages, offering content in all EU languages; an automatic translation tool has recently been embedded in the platform allowing each visitor to visit the whole platform.

The platform is coordinated by DG EAC of the European Commission, with policy direction set by DG EMPL. It is implemented with the support of EACEA, through a Central Support Service (Ecorys UK and Intrasoft) and a network of 30 [National Support Services](#), in charge of promoting EPALE and identifying content to be shared in the platform. Five more countries will join EPALE in 2016.

Plans for 2016 include the development of the user-base, refinements of existing features, and very soon the possibility for groups of users to create their own collaborative spaces and communities of practice.

6. SKILLS PAY - THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COSTS OF LOW-SKILLED ADULTS IN THE EU (BY CEDEFOP)

Cedefop is currently finalising a new study aimed at investigating the economic and social consequences of a too high rate of low-skilled adults in Europe ⁽¹⁾.

Compared to other groups, low-skilled adults generally face weaker labour market conditions (e.g. higher unemployment rates and long-term unemployment, slower transitions out of unemployment, lower wages) as well as higher risks of poverty and social exclusion. During the recession their labour market prospects deteriorated further: hiring prospects became twice as bad for the low-skilled workers in all age groups ⁽²⁾, while over the last years the majority of net employment losses occurred in low-to-middle-paid jobs. Looking ahead, although the share of those with low or no qualifications will decrease rapidly in the next decades ⁽³⁾, people with low qualifications and low cognitive skills will still remain a vulnerable segment of the labour market.

Despite the magnitude and persistence of the low-skilling phenomenon among adults in the EU, not as much attention has been paid to low-skilled adults as opposed to other groups at risk of social and labour market exclusion such as young people. This is why there is an urgent need for designing and implementing further policies tailored to this particular group. As recent Cedefop analysis shows, the population of low skilled is very heterogeneous and it is composed of different subgroups with different characteristics and needs. Successful policy interventions therefore require more targeted measures to address the determinants and characteristics of being low skilled.

Conceptualisation and measurement of low-skilling

To date, mostly due to data limitations and data availability, the ‘low-skilled’ phenomenon has been analysed rather narrowly and primarily on the basis of the level of educational attainment of the population. This type of analysis tends to oversimplify the concept of low-skilling and fails to capture other dimensions that are highly relevant to the low skill phenomenon. The concept of low-skilled status needs to be expanded by (a) considering the causes of low-skilling (beyond educational attainment level) and (b) taking a broader look at the various ‘typologies’ of vulnerable people likely to be classified as low-skilled, including people with obsolete skills and/or who do not possess the non-cognitive skills

⁽¹⁾ Cedefop (2016, forthcoming). The economic and social costs of low skilled adults in the EU.

⁽²⁾ European Commission (2014a). European Vacancy and Recruitment Report 2014, 23.6.2014. <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=955>

⁽³⁾ Cedefop (2015). Briefing Note: Europe’s Uneven Return to Job Growth. www.cedefop.europa.eu/files/9098_en.pdf

and personality traits which are becoming increasingly important for employability. This is why, in carrying out the analysis of the phenomenon, Cedefop considered PIAAC data on cognitive skills alongside Eurostat data on educational attainment of the population and participation in low-skilled jobs of the EU workforce.

Characteristics and determinants

Cedefop's analysis clearly shows that low-skilled adults are concentrated in older cohorts and usually have non-native born parents with a disadvantaged background. On the other hand, educational attainment as well as parental education and foreign background tend to be strongly associated with low cognitive skills.

Furthermore, Cedefop analysis also shows that low skilled adults have a higher probability of experiencing spells of unemployment and inactivity and when at work they are more likely to get trapped in low-skilled occupations. More generally, compared to medium-highly qualified workers, low-qualified workers are more likely to be self-employed, have a higher share of temporary contracts, part-time work and usually experience poorer working conditions, including being employed in dangerous occupations.

Costs (and foregone benefits) for individuals and society

All above dimensions of low skills are inevitably associated to a cost not only for the individual but also for our economies and societies as a whole. From the point of view of the individual, adults who are low-skilled or who work in low-skilled jobs (such as elementary occupations) tend to experience higher wage penalties. For instance, foregone earnings due to low skills have been estimated at EUR 308,800 in Luxembourg, EUR 143,500 in Denmark and EUR 98,200 in the Netherlands.

Evidence also shows that adults with upper secondary education tend to have a better quality of health compared to low-skilled adults in all EU Member States, with the exception of Latvia, even when differences in demographic characteristics and parental backgrounds are accounted for. The estimated per-capita life-time health costs of being low-skilled ranges between EUR 258,000 in the UK and EUR 78,800 in Spain.

On the other hand, low-skilled represent also a direct cost for the society as they tend to receive more unemployment benefits than those with higher level of skills in most EU countries. Differences are largest in Denmark (although not for the 55-64 age group), Germany, Ireland, Finland and Belgium. Not surprisingly, differences are lowest in countries which typically have very low levels of unemployment benefits payments, such as Bulgaria, Estonia and Lithuania.

The impact of skills at macroeconomic level

Alongside differentials in terms of individual earnings, health, and public expenditures, Cedefop's study also provided an estimation of the macroeconomic impact of (low) skills for all relevant stakeholders, i.e. individuals, firms and public sector for every country in the EU. This approach allows Cedefop to measure the total effect of skills on GDP per capita implicitly encompassing the cost of producing higher level skills (net benefit).

As it was expected, a higher level of skills in the adult population increases GDP per capita. In particular, the effect of an increase in medium-level skills (ISCED 3-4) by one percentage point increases GDP per capita by 0.99 percentage points. While this estimate do not include some relevant dimensions which may be associated with the level of skills (e.g. lower crime and homelessness as well as stronger civic engagement and further intangible and intergenerational outcomes), it still depicts a very alarming scenario and call for immediate policy actions. The cost of non-acting is just too high.

7. EXPERT GROUP COMPOSED OF EUROPEAN ASSOCIATIONS OF VET PROVIDERS

The Bruges Communiqué states that: "VET provider organisations should be encouraged to cooperate at European level". Several deliverables in the Communiqué also imply other stakeholders to work with VET providers, where relevant, for issues like 'learning pathways connecting vocational and higher professional programmes' and collaboration with the world of work.

An expert group called "Platform for European Associations of VET providers" (Platform) has been created in the Registry of the Secretariat general, for the time being composed of the 6 European Associations of VET providers with which the Unit in charge of vocational training has been cooperating since 2010 informally: EfVET, EUproVET, EVBB, EVTA as VET centred organizations and EURASHE and Eucen, representing cross-cutting sectors of relevance, i.e. higher education and lifelong learning.

The expert group has agreed a mandate for the work to be undertaken until 2017 and is foreseen to meet two or three times per year. Two meetings took place in 2015, on 28 May and on 30 October. The Advisory Committee for vocational training will be kept informed of the activities of the expert group.

One main output of the Platform would be the organization, together with the Commission and in cooperation with other VET stakeholders, of **a European VET week in 2016**, to raise the attractiveness and improve the image of Vocational Education and training (VET). The VET week would aim at improving dissemination and communication with the grass root level and enhance visibility of EU VET policy and the medium term deliverables of the Riga conclusions.

On other topics, the work of the expert group would concern mainly the areas of VET European tools, mobility, permeability between VET and higher education and social inclusion.

It is envisaged that the expert group would cooperate with other VET stakeholders, like Public employment services, other civil society organizations and social partners.

The European Commission has also carried out a feasibility study on the creation of a sustainable European network of National Associations of VET providers. The expert group, together with some members of the ACVT, have been contacted by an external consultant, in order to collect their opinions on the topic. The Platform also participated in a validation workshop for the study.

8. ANNUAL GROWTH SURVEY

The 2016 Annual Growth Survey (AGS), adopted on 26 November 2015, is part of a wider package for jobs, growth and investment and is published alongside a set of documents, notably the Alert Mechanism Report, the draft Joint employment report and the Eurozone recommendations.

The AGS launches the annual cycle of economic governance, sets out general economic priorities for the EU and provides Member States with policy guidance for the following year.

In 2016 Annual Growth Survey, the Commission proposes 3 policy priorities: **re-launching investment, pursuing structural reforms and modernising public finances**. Strong focus is given to the **investment in human capital** (e.g. equipping people with relevant skills), reforms balancing flexibility and security considerations, tackling youth unemployment in line with the Youth Guarantee (through systemic changes to school-to-work transitions, activation policies and well-functioning public employment services, etc.), reducing long term unemployment in line with the guidance proposed in the Recommendation on the integration of the long-term unemployed, job creation and social inclusion.

http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/making-it-happen/annual-growth-surveys/index_en.htm

9. WHAT IS DROP'PIN?

The youth unemployment problem is too big to be solved by public policy measures alone. There is a need to mobilise and channel projects and initiatives by private as well as public actors who can offer help and ideas and together spread a positive message about the opportunities available. There are plenty of initiatives which are not sufficiently known, suffer from under-funding and do not build on each other. By making initiatives and ideas visible, further ideas and synergies can emerge and allow partners to join forces.

Drop'pin aims to help young people boost their employability and skills by connecting them with opportunities across Europe offered directly on the platform by organisations, including corporates, SMEs and NGOs, that have registered on Drop'pin.

One of the things that make Drop'pin unique is the fact that it offers opportunities at a European level that young people in any European country can access. Mobility is therefore key to the Drop'pin ethos.

Moreover, Drop'pin offers a space where organisations can connect with each other and create partnerships to jointly create new opportunities for young people, for example several companies setting up common training programmes or schools partnering with businesses to place students in traineeships or apprenticeships.

9.1. What kind of opportunities are on the site?

Opportunities on Drop'pin include apprenticeships, traineeships, training programmes, e-learning courses, language training, mentoring and coaching schemes, entrepreneurship support as well as various mobility and financial support services.

Drop'pin is not a job matching site. That is catered for by EURES. What the opportunities on Drop'pin have in common is that they can help improve the employability of young people and thereby bridge the gap between education and a first job.

All opportunities must be free of charge for the young person. If apprenticeships and traineeships are not remunerated this must be clearly indicated as well as all other conditions related to an opportunity.

9.2. What kind of organisations are on the platform?

It is our aim that the Drop'pin community will include the widest possible range of European companies and organisations from large and well established organisations to up-and-coming SMEs and start-ups representing a wide variety of sectors.

9.3. What's in it for the users?

Young people have in Drop'pin a unique point where they can access offers for apprenticeships, trainings, support, coaching, information, advice and other offers. To this end the platform complements and enriches the information currently available on the EURES portal and other EC websites.

Companies and organisations have in Drop'pin a unique opportunity to showcase their commitment to improving youth employment perspectives, thereby also gaining an improved image and reputation of their organisation by enhancing their CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) performance.

Drop'pin also offers organisations a place where they can find other organisations interested in cooperating and forming partnerships to develop new programmes and opportunities for young people.

9.4. Quality control

A number of strong quality control measures have been put in place from a careful validation of companies wishing to register and of the opportunities they want to publish and a continuous monitoring of all activities going on to various user generated controls such as abuse reports and a reputation building mechanism where users rate other users.

In addition the website will feature different quality labels and certifications, and self-assessment tools offered by partner organisations, such as the European Youth Forum and InternsGoPro.

9.5. Achievements so far

Key figures (as on 9 November 2015)

- Number of registered organisations: **145**
- Number of registered persons: **1.615**
- Number of opportunities published and open today: **235**
- We have had **36.000 unique visitors** since the launch 22 June and an average of **11.000 visits per month**, which is steadily growing since the summer break without virtually any communication activities at all.

Some example of organisations registered and offering opportunities:

- **openSAP** (free training on programming), **Siemens, Daimler, General Electric, Holiday Inn** (traineeships), **EF** (free language tests), **Junior Achievement Europe** (Entrepreneurial skills pass)

- Multipliers and partners: **CSR Europe** (European Youth Pact), Eurodesk, Telecentre Europe, AIM (European Brands Association) DG EAC, DG GROW...

Some examples of organisations seeking partnerships:

- **Holiday Inn:** searching for hotel schools to cooperate with to find trainees
- **Itinéraire International (French NGO):** searching for companies to receive young unemployed professionals in Austria, Norway and Croatia
- **Centro Superior de Formación Europa Sur Cesur (Spanish school):** searching for companies willing to take on students for traineeships and apprenticeships

Contact: *Henric Stjernquist (EMPL/D1), Henric.Stjernquist@ec.europa.eu*

10. ESCO EUROPEAN SKILLS CLASSIFICATION OF SKILLS, COMPETENCES, QUALIFICATIONS AND OCCUPATIONS

ESCO content development through online consultation

For the development of the ESCO classification, the Commission used NACE Rev2⁴ to structure its sectors resulting in 27 sectors that cover all areas of economic activity. We have organised the work around two phases of content development. Initially, domain experts were invited to Brussels to discuss and build the content from scratch for the first two sectors: Hospitality and Tourism as well as Agriculture, Forestry and Fishery. This methodology posed a number of challenges. To mitigate such challenges, for the next nine sectors we provided the first draft of the content and domain experts were invited to discuss and improve on these drafts. This is how the first 11 sectors ([ESCO-11](#)) were created. At present the content for these sectors is in translation stage to be published in 24 languages.

In order to make sure that we have a wider geographical balance, attract more stakeholders and facilitate the participation of interested parties in the development of the content of ESCO, we have restructured the development of the remaining content via an online means. To this fact, we launched an online consultation to produce the 16 remaining sectors (ESCO-16). The first draft of the content was developed by our taxonomy experts.

This online consultation invites domain experts from the ESCO-16 and for some parts from the Healthcare sector to review the classification, discuss with other experts and suggest improvements. We launched the online consultation on 14th October, till end December. To support the domain experts, we have provided [an online consultation platform](#) with all the functionality for this review. The consultation is organised in two rounds, first for content refinement and then as a validation step. The online review will be finalised in March 2016.

The new Member States working group on ESCO

The new Member States working group on ESCO is a Commission working group composed by representatives of Member States' authorities on labour market and education and training plus European social partners and its aim is to support the development and

⁴ Statistical Classification of Economic Activities in the European Community, Rev. 2 (2008)

implementation of ESCO, including its links with the soon-to-be-approved updated EURES Regulation.

The first meeting of the group took place on November 6th last, in Brussels. With the exception of EL, all Member States attended the meeting. The main goal of the meeting was to provide basic information on the developments of ESCO since its beginning, set clearly the mission of the group and the role of its members to act as coordinators for ESCO at national level.

During the meeting general support was expressed for the creation of the group and its mission. The group is seen as a crucial body for the implementation of ESCO and in particular for the mapping of national classifications systems to ESCO, that will be required by the updated EURES Regulation. The majority of the group members reckon to have scarce information on the ESCO project. Therefore the group required regular meetings to gather more knowledge/information on ESCO, to enable the members of the group to fulfil its mission on being coordinators of ESCO at national level and to fulfil national responsibilities in relation to the future EURES regulation. The next meeting of the group is planned for April 2016. Possible agenda items will include a coordinated communication strategy, risk mitigation, inclusion of qualifications in ESCO, and translation process.

11. THE IMPACT OF GLOBALISATION ON VET: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES - OUTCOMES OF CONFERENCE (BY CEDEFOP)

Conference objectives and participation

Cedefop's event on 26 and 27 November 2015 was an opportunity to discuss the quality and relevance of VET in the context of globalisation. It explored how globalisation influences the review and renewal of VET standards and the way qualifications, training programmes and curricula are defined to address global requirements. Participants also looked at the synergies of European and International sectoral standards and qualifications with national ones.

Questions addressed in the conference were:

- How are different national VET systems dealing with the challenge of globalisation?
- How can international knowledge, skills and competence requirements best be incorporated in national qualifications and curricula?
- Are European and/or international VET standards a way to go? What is required for these to work?
- What added value do international qualifications bring to employers, national authorities, workers and learners?
- Can sectors awarding international qualifications respond to national quality criteria?
- How can cooperation of actors from different levels (involved in the creation of standards, qualification requirements, curricula, etc.) ensure that there is a

continuous feedback loop to review national standards and respond to global requirements?

The Cedefop conference gathered more than 100 different experts and actors from over 30 countries and more than 20 European federations, associations and international companies. Participants discussed and shared views on how we can develop VET for a globalised economy. The event focused on the following issues: whether and how international standards are used to broaden national qualifications and influence VET content; the opportunities offered by international qualifications to strengthen employability; and the conditions for a successful cooperation between actors at different levels.

Key messages

Globalisation and rapid technological developments (e.g. digitalisation) transform occupations in some sectors and create new jobs while some skills become quickly obsolete. In this rapidly changing landscape, education and training must allow workers and learners to develop transversal skills that are transferable from one job to another and from one sector to another. It is also essential to accredit any skills which could be recognised and which enable people to remain employable and to compete in the labour market. To make this happen, education and training systems must be able to stay ahead of developments or at least follow them closely. Patrice Guezou, the keynote speaker quoted Jack Welch, CEO of General Electric to describe the challenge we are facing:

“If the rate of change on the outside exceeds the rate of change on the inside, the end is near”.

The conference identified a number of challenges that need to be addressed. The rapid rate of changes puts pressure on national systems to update and renew their VET standards, qualification requirements, programmes and curricula. Governance is a complex issue. Cooperation between different actors in education and training and the labour market requires a common language to make them work together effectively. In a globalised context, where different forms of VET provision and qualifications appear and new players (international sectoral bodies, multinational companies) provide training and award qualifications, national authorities must set the right conditions for quality assurance. This is necessary to strengthen the credibility of and trust in these sectoral, international solutions.

Discussions also addressed the opportunities that labour market intelligence can offer to education and training systems by establishing a continuous feedback loop to renew VET standards. It was agreed that the focus on learning outcomes has great potential as a common language between actors within and across sectors. Participants discussed the idea to strengthen the European dimension by developing core sectoral occupational profiles. The cooperation of Australia with countries in the Asia-Pacific region and the ‘sustainable professionalisation’ project, that some national qualification authorities in Europe tested several years ago, could serve as examples. This would require the

systematic commitment and cooperation of sectoral actors, social partners and national authorities.

Cedefop's director, James Calleja used an African proverb to indicate that there is only one way to proceed if we want to take advantage of the opportunities that are ahead of us:

'if you want to go fast, go alone; if you want to go far, go together'

Dissemination of information and follow-up

Cedefop follows developments related to the topic and will embed these discussions in its work on qualification frameworks, quality assurance and credit systems. It will also relate them to its research on learning outcomes, curricula and validation of non-formal informal learning. It will deepen its knowledge base on the way globalisation is changing VET in two forthcoming studies that will be launched in early 2016: one on the changing nature and role of VET; and another on the impact of globalisation on VET.

All conference material, including the ideas for cooperation developed during the thematic round tables, is available on the conference website:

<http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/events-and-projects/events/cedefop-conference-impact-globalisation-vet-challenges-and-opportunities>

12. RECENT CEDEFOP PUBLICATIONS (PROVIDED BY CEDEFOP)

[Job-related adult learning and continuing vocational training in Europe](#)

A statistical picture

This report provides a statistical picture of job-related adult learning and continuing vocational training in the EU. It selects, presents and analyses internationally comparable data from the adult education survey and the continuing vocational training survey – essential resources to complement and understand better the labour force survey indicator of participation in adult learning. The report looks at job-related and employer-sponsored components of learning and training. It also analyses types, forms, purposes, content, employer support and financing of adult learning as well as obstacles and barriers. It presents results at EU and country levels, as well as key trends and breakdowns.

[CVET in Europe: the way ahead](#)

This publication takes stock of recent Cedefop research on CVET. It analyses how CVET contributes to reaching economic and social policy objectives of the European Union regarding inclusion, employment, innovation, productivity, competitiveness and growth.

[Work-based learning in continuing vocational education and training: policies and practices in Europe](#)

Work-based continuing vocational education and training (CVET) requires more attention and strategic action. Work-based learning (WBL) is a powerful way to support adult learning and human resource development in enterprises, but the potential it has to offer has not yet been fully exploited in Europe.

[Skill shortages and gaps in European enterprises](#)

Striking a balance between vocational education and training and the labour market

The global crisis has increased unemployment in the EU to unprecedented levels, yet many employers claim they have difficulties finding skilled workers. This report shows that most vacancy bottlenecks arise because of factors other than general skill deficits, including job offers of poor quality. Genuine skill shortages affect a small group of dynamic, internationally oriented European enterprises in specific economic sectors (health and social care, ICT, advanced manufacturing). To mitigate skill bottlenecks, European companies must commit to offering high-quality apprenticeship places and good-quality jobs.

[Tackling unemployment while addressing skill mismatch](#)

Lessons from policy and practice in European Union countries

This study reviews recent policies and practices aiming to tackle unemployment through addressing skill mismatch in the EU-28 Member States. In-depth case studies help identify promising features of policy practices and contribute to better understanding of impact. The lessons support policy learning and can help Member States shape policies with a stronger focus on matching and pave the way for policy agendas that put skill matching centre stage.

[Vocational pedagogies and benefits for learners: practices and challenges in Europe](#)

This Cedefop research paper examines the role played by learning outcomes approaches in pedagogical change in initial vocational education and training (VET) in 15 EU Member States.

[Analysis and overview of national qualifications framework developments in European countries](#)

In 2014 there was stronger political commitment and more technical work towards developing and implementing national qualifications frameworks (NQFs) across Europe. Cedefop's fifth annual report and analysis confirms the key role of these frameworks in making qualifications comparable within and between countries.

[National qualifications framework developments in Europe](#)

Anniversary edition. The report provides an overview of European national qualifications frameworks (NQFs) and their qualifications, celebrating Cedefop's long-term work in the field and showing that the Centre can make a difference to European vocational education and training and, more importantly, to European citizens.

For cross-country information see also the overview on NQF developments flyer below.

[Country-based information](#)

[Apprenticeship review: Lithuania](#)

Signposting the apprenticeship path in Lithuania

This is the final report of the thematic country review of apprenticeship in Lithuania. It presents analysis of findings on main features, enablers and challenges of apprenticeship in Lithuanian VET, including the views of stakeholders at different levels. It proposes four directions for action to make apprenticeship a reality in the country.

[Apprenticeship review: Malta](#)

In pursuit of quality and relevance: revitalising apprenticeship

This is the final report of the thematic country review on apprenticeships in Malta. It is largely based on information collected from stakeholders and includes areas for future reforms and suggestions for action. Malta will decide whether and how these would be taken forward.

[Vocational education and training in Luxembourg – Short description](#) (EN)

[Spotlight on VET Luxembourg](#) (EN, FR, DE)

See also the short videos to go with Presidency countries' spotlights

[Spotlight on VET - Anniversary edition](#) (EN)

On the occasion of its 40th anniversary, Cedefop presents in a special edition a compilation of short info on national VET features and systems charts based on the spotlights published for the EU28+.

[Skills forecasts country reports](#)

<http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/country-reports>

Specific country report information by theme

[Briefing Notes](#)

Briefing note - Innovation and training: partners in change

Vocational education and training is contributing to innovation and training and is becoming more innovative

Forthcoming. Preprint (EN) already available at the DGVT meeting in Luxembourg. Country information will also be made available online

[Briefing note - Making apprenticeships work for small and medium enterprises](#)

See also information on the conference [Engaging SMEs in apprenticeships: Turning ideas into reality](#).

[Briefing note - Vocational education and training prevents and counteracts early leaving from the education system](#) (DE, EL, EN, ES, FR, IT, PL, PT)

[Briefing note - Encouraging adult learning](#) Despite improvements, adult learning still needs to become more attractive, inclusive, accessible and flexible (DE, EL, EN, ES, FR, IT, PL, PT)

[Briefing note - Europe's uneven return to job growth](#) Forecasts up to 2025 point to major differences in skills supply and demand across Member States (DE, EL, EN, ES, FR, IT, LV, PL, PT)

Flyers

[Matching skills and jobs in Europe](#)

Insights from Cedefop's European skills and jobs survey. Many of the skills Europe needs for sustainable economic recovery will be learned at work. According to Cedefop's new European skills and jobs survey, to overcome skill mismatches, more and better jobs that invest in people's skills are needed.

[Information note – Work-based learning: apprenticeships](#) Italy, Slovenia, Luxembourg and Greece

[Information note – Work-based learning: apprenticeships](#) Lithuania, Malta, Latvia

[Promoting learning for work](#)

All you need to know about Cedefop's work in an illustrated guide. Get acquainted with the agency's structure, current activities, networks and 40-year history.

[Overview of national qualifications framework developments in Europe](#)

OECD; Cedefop

[Green skills and innovation for inclusive growth](#)

This publication originates from the second 'green skills' forum jointly organised by Cedefop and the Cooperative Action programme on Local Economic and Employment Development (LEED) of the OECD in Paris on 14 February 2014. The gathering brought together academics, policy-makers and international organisations to discuss the challenges of greening the economy and their implications, with special focus on the links between skills and knowledge needs and inclusive green growth.

UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning; Cedefop; ETF

[Global inventory of regional and national qualifications frameworks](#)

Volume I: Thematic Chapters – looks at the impact of NQFs, links between NQFs and validation systems, and the development of world reference levels of learning outcomes.

[Global inventory of regional and national qualifications frameworks](#)

Volume II: national and regional cases – provides an inventory of 85 NQFs and seven regional frameworks.

The 2015 global inventory of regional and national qualifications frameworks showcases 86 countries and examines how learning outcomes of all types of learning - formal, non-formal and informal - are being integrated into regional and national qualifications frameworks.

Cedefop's magazine Skillset and Match

[September 2015](#)

Cedefop marked its 40th anniversary with a social activity and a conference in Thessaloniki, in June. *Skillset and match* has a full report and interviews from the celebrations (with Michel Servoz, Director-General of DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion; Shyamal Majumdar, Head of Unesco-Unevoc; Jane Shackleton, Assessment Advisor, WorldSkills) as well as the first findings of its European skills and jobs survey, and more on the latest developments in European vocational education and training.

[May 2015](#)

A special edition of *Skillset and match* magazine celebrating Cedefop's 40th anniversary features messages from leading European figures, including European Parliament President Martin Schulz, Cedefop's stakeholders, its own people past and present, and articles on the agency's work to improve vocational education and training in Europe and its prospects.

Cedefop annual report

[Annual report 2014](#) (EN, FR, DE)

Check the new Skills Panorama website (as of 1 December 2015)

13. RECENT ETF PUBLICATIONS (PROVIDED BY ETF)

13.1. Policy briefings

SECTOR SKILL COUNCILS - FORGING PARTNERSHIPS FOR RELEVANT SKILLS: INFORM 22

This policy brief provides insights to inform the policy dialogue on sectoral partnership approaches and sector skill councils. <http://bit.ly/1J34mco>

QUALITY ASSURANCE IN VET: INFORM 23

As well as identifying the main issues in quality assurance in vocational education and training (VET), this policy brief also outlines the ETF's approach. <http://bit.ly/1PYUQhV>

13.2. TORINO PROCESS

REGIONAL TORINO PROCESS REPORTS

Four Regional Torino Process 2014 reports for South Eastern Europe and Turkey, Southern and Eastern Mediterranean, Eastern Europe and Central Asia. The regional reports summarise the main findings in monitoring progress of the 2014 Torino Process in the four regions. They take a cross-country perspective towards VET developments in the regions, trying to identify the main issues, constraints and priorities for the further modernisation of VET policies and systems.

TORINO PROCESS DECLARATION

Announced at the end of the Torino Process conference, the Torino Declaration brings together the main themes of the conference together with a commitment from delegates to integrate VET into human capital development policies to help maximise the potential for economic growth, competitiveness and social cohesion.

TORINO PROCESS REPORT

A summary of the 2015 international conference 'Torino Process - Moving Skills Forward Together' that took place in Turin in June 2015. Held under the Latvian Presidency, the event brought together high profile policy makers, inspirational experts from partner countries and the EU, international organisations and social partners.

To learn more about the Torino Process and to read these publications, click here: <http://bit.ly/1NOHLEg>

13.3. THEMATIC PUBLICATIONS

SUPPORTING PUBLIC POLICY MAKING THROUGH POLICY ANALYSIS AND POLICY LEARNING

A review of the ETF's approaches to policy analysis and policy making. As part of its mandate, the ETF aims to make sure that policy analysis better supports policy making, with the organisation acting as a catalyst and a learning facilitator in the policy dialogue, rather than a reviewer or evaluator through externally run processes. <http://bit.ly/1Qt0pUw>

MEDIUM TERM DELIVERABLES FOR THE CANDIDATE COUNTRIES UNDER THE RIGA CONCLUSIONS

A leaflet outlining how the ETF will support both the implementation and the monitoring of medium term deliverables in the candidate countries. <http://bit.ly/1NtW19n>

COST AND FINANCING ANALYSIS IN VET: GUIDANCE NOTE

This note provides a method that partner countries can use to better factor cost and financing considerations into VET policy-making processes. <http://bit.ly/1ijiFVt>

CAPACITY FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF HUMAN CAPITAL: THE ROLE OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

The toolkit targets ETF operational and thematic units involved in the delivery of support to partner countries' human capital, as well as practitioners and experts operating in the field of VET capacity development. The toolkit also targets those partner country policymakers who are willing to engage in reflection, assessment and development of the tools and methods required to meet the capacity needs of the VET sector, and provides guidance on measuring the impact of capacity building actions. <http://bit.ly/1ULVbns>

MIGRANT SUPPORT MEASURES FROM AN EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS PERSPECTIVE

The findings from an inventory that the ETF conducted of migrant support measures from an employment or skills perspective, or MISMES, globally and in-depth in five partner countries. A summary report and methodological note are available in addition to five country reports (Armenia, Georgia, Moldova, Morocco and Tunisia). <http://bit.ly/1KjwYPI>

MAPPING VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING GOVERNANCE

Country reports for Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco and Tunisia map, analyse and self-evaluate VET multilevel governance systems with a special focus on financing and quality assurance. National Committees provided primary information, gave access to secondary information and engaged in a self-evaluation process. <http://bit.ly/1PDS6YN>

POSITION PAPER ON WORK-BASED LEARNING IN VET

This paper establishes a common ETF position on the topic of Work-based learning (WBL) which gives clear direction to the strategic approach of ETF in this area. It also aims to provide practical support to ETF's work with partner countries, EU and international partners.