

Thessaloniki, 10 June 2011  
DIR/2011/253**Equipping people with the right skills for employment and developing labour  
market intelligence on current and future skill needs****OVERVIEW OF CEDEFOP'S MAJOR PROJECTS AND CONTRIBUTIONS IN THIS AREA****1. European skills forecasts <sup>(1)</sup>**

In 2008, Cedefop released the first pan-European skills forecast. It focused on future demand by sectors, occupations and required levels of education. Since then, Cedefop has published a forecast of skills supply by level of education (2009), a new forecast covering supply and demand up to 2020 for EU27 (2010), and an updated forecast to reflect latest economic developments, in particular the crisis (2011).

Europe has become an economy where services and skills- and knowledge-intensive occupations prevail and demands on qualification levels have been increasing in most if not all occupations. But even in occupations that are decreasing, substantial employment opportunities exist also in future as workers leaving their jobs (due to retirement, migration etc.) need to be replaced. This is particularly true for jobs requiring medium-level (including VET) qualifications. The forecast shows that, besides continued efforts to raise qualification levels through education and training, employers should also use better the skills and talents of their staff <sup>(2)</sup>.

A new supply and demand forecast will be release in early 2012 for EU27 and EFTA countries. It will provide breakdowns of supply and demand by economic sector, occupation and educational level, including different variants/scenarios. The scope of possible skill imbalances and mismatches will be analysed. The forecasting model will be developed further to include scenarios based on, e.g., environmental sustainability and greener jobs, capture interaction between demand and supply (including adjustment processes), and migration effects. The possibility of linking occupational skills profiles to the new forecast results is also being explored.

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<sup>(1)</sup> The Council Conclusions of 7 June 2010 'New Skills for New Jobs: the way forward' entrust Cedefop with updating skill supply and demand forecast every two years. This activity is supported financially by Progress programme, managed by DG Employment, labour and social affairs.

<sup>(2)</sup> Forecast results are available online <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/publications/15540.aspx>. Full set of data and country results are available upon request to Cedefop: [skills-analysis@cedefop.europa.eu](mailto:skills-analysis@cedefop.europa.eu).

## 2. Pilot employer skill survey <sup>(3)</sup>

Cedefop develops an employer survey instrument to reliably identify changing and emerging skill needs in enterprises in Europe. Cedefop's approach is innovative and concentrates on changing importance of tasks and related skill requirements. It assesses whether there are skills gaps, their source and remedial actions by enterprises. In addition, a number of generic tasks, in particular those associated with green technologies, are being introduced for the first time in such a large scale survey. This survey will also gather information on occupation-specific tasks.

Survey testing will start in autumn 2011 in five countries and first results are expected in 2012. Based on the results of the pilot, Cedefop will prepare guidelines for future employer surveys on skill needs.

## 3. Skills mismatch and obsolescence

Cedefop's research programme on skills mismatch and obsolescence aims at synthesising research, as well as gathering new insights on mismatch for particular groups: ageing workers as well as migrants and ethnic minorities and the (long-term) unemployed.

Cedefop has developed a pilot survey to understand better the process of skill obsolescence during careers and identify the most frequent causes. It pays particular attention to how skills obsolescence can be prevented or remedied through human resource policies at the workplace and individuals engaging in lifelong learning. The survey is being tested in four countries (2011).

## 4. Skills for a sustainable economy and green restructuring <sup>(4)</sup>

Cedefop analyses skill needs for a sustainable, low carbon economy, with a particular focus on green skills and environmental awareness in VET. 'Skills for green jobs' (2010) evidences that a low-carbon economy depends on adapting the skills base of existing occupations, rather than creating new 'green' jobs'. It also shows that such skills upgrading requires a set of generic skills (STEM in particular) rather than specialised green skills. Thus, building a sustainable economy heavily relies on providing continuing vocational training to those (potentially) 'green' workers already on the labour market as well as adapting the curriculum in existing qualifications. Every job can potentially become 'greener'; understanding the environmental impact of occupations needs to be mainstreamed into education and training. A new study on skill needs in renewable technologies was launched in 2011.

## 5. Common European tools and principles in education and training

Cedefop is actively supporting a range of EU initiatives (common tools and principles) in the field of education and training that are directly and indirectly relevant to the 'new skills for new jobs initiative' launched in 2008 and the Europe 2020 'agenda for new skills and jobs' <sup>(5)</sup>. The following are particularly important:

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<sup>(3)</sup> This activity is supported financially by the Progress programme, managed by DG Employment, labour and social affairs.

<sup>(4)</sup> [http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/Files/3057\\_en.pdf](http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/Files/3057_en.pdf)

<sup>(5)</sup> <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=822&langId=en> <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=958&langId=en>

- **Implementing the European qualifications framework (EQF) and developing national qualifications frameworks (NQFs)**

An important objective of the 'new skills for new jobs initiative' and the 'new skills and jobs agenda' is to contribute to modernising countries' education and training systems and to help strengthen their relevance to citizens and labour markets. The ongoing implementation of the European qualifications framework (EQF) forms an important part of this strategy, in particular as national qualifications frameworks are being set up across Europe. Cedefop has played a key role in shaping the EQF concept and continues to provide scientific expertise to these developments:

- Cedefop supports the Member States in linking their national qualification levels to the EQF. The majority of countries are expected to have concluded this referencing process by 2012. The EQF will then make it possible to compare content and profile (learning outcomes) of different European qualifications. This contributes directly to European cooperation and integration and to removing mobility barriers.
- Cedefop monitors and supports the development of national qualifications frameworks in Europe. All countries are now developing such frameworks. Most of them cover all levels and types of qualifications, which makes national education and training systems more transparent. Cedefop has paid particular attention to the role of NQFs as platforms for increased dialogue between education and training and the labour market – a precondition for strengthening the relevance of education and training systems to individuals and employers.

- **Continuous development of EUROPASS**

Cedefop designed, maintains and further develops – on behalf of the European Commission – the Europass website<sup>(6)</sup> available in 26 languages. Europass is a portfolio of five documents (CV, Language passport, Europass Mobility, Certificate supplement and Diploma supplement) used by citizens to present their skills, competences and qualifications – including those resulting from work or life experience. Europass popularity has increased substantially since its launch in 2005: by May 2011 the site received 36 million visits and around 13 million CVs have been completed online. Cedefop is actively involved in continuous technical and conceptual developments of the Europass instruments and related web resources and, notably, supports the development of a European skills passport.

- **Validating non-formal and informal learning: increasing the visibility and value of the learning that takes place outside formal education and training**

Cedefop has for more than a decade monitored and contributed to the development of arrangements for validation of non-formal learning. These arrangements allow citizens with important learning experiences from work or from voluntary work, for example, to have these skills and competences documented and (possibly) certified. Cedefop has developed European guidelines in this area<sup>(7)</sup> and regularly updated the European inventory on validation – latest edition 2010. . Currently, Cedefop supports the Commission in preparing a Council Recommendation on validation, which is expected for autumn 2011.

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<sup>(6)</sup> <http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu>

<sup>(7)</sup> <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/publications/5059.aspx>

## CEDEFOP'S SUPPORT AND INPUT TO THE AGENDA'S KEY ACTIONS

### 1. Skills Panorama

Cedefop actively supports the development of the EU Skills Panorama to be released in autumn 2012. The **EU skills Panorama** will improve transparency for jobseekers, workers, companies and/or public institutions. The Panorama will be available online and contain updated information and analysis of skills supply and labour market needs up to 2020. Findings of Cedefop's skill needs analysis will directly feed into the Panorama.

### 2. Improving the dialogue between education and training and the labour market – ESCO

ESCO – the European terminology on skills, competences, qualifications and occupations - was launched by the 'new skills for new jobs initiative' in an effort to improve communication between education and training and the labour market. This structured terminology, which will help map and match skills, competences and qualifications to occupations, is now being developed. Cedefop supports the work also by building a systematic and coherent qualifications pillar to ensure that ESCO and EQF will be complementary and consistent. A first version of ESCO is expected in 2012.



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