



European Economic and Social Committee
Labour Market Observatory



European Centre for the Development
of Vocational Training



Conference on "Skills and mobility for competitiveness"

Date: 3 December 2013

Venue: CEDEFOP, Europe 123, 570 01, Thessaloniki, Greece

*Simultaneous interpretation available from German, Greek, English, French
into Greek, English, French*

9:00 – 9:30 **Registration**

9:30 – 9:50 **Welcome**

- **Joachim James Calleja**, Director, Cedefop
- **Christa Schweng**, President of the Labour Market Observatory (LMO), EESC

9:50 – 11:20 **SESSION 1: ENSURING A GOOD UNDERSTANDING OF SKILL NEEDS: RECENT INITIATIVES IN SKILL FORECASTING**

Moderator: Christa Schweng, President of the LMO

The lack of data about what skills will be needed in the future has been a long-standing concern in Europe. Anticipation of labour market skill needs has been considered a top priority by the EU, as well as by the social partners since 2004, and the crisis has underlined the importance of this challenge. Skill supply and demand forecasts now provide comprehensive information on the future labour market.

This session will explore recent methods, approaches and tools that facilitate effective monitoring and anticipation of skill needs, in order to enable all labour market actors – from policy-makers and the social partners to employees, employers, students and parents – to take informed decisions and evidence-based action.

9:50 – 10:40 **Presentations:**

- **Pascaline Descy**, Head of the area Research and Policy Analysis, Cedefop – *Skills forecast and skill mismatch in the EU*
- **Sigrid Rand**, Manager of the European Network on Regional Labour Market Monitoring (EN RLMM) – *The role of regional / local labour market observatories in skill monitoring – a quantitative and qualitative approach*
- **Sari Gustafsson**, Principal of the Point College, Finland - *From new skills to new professions - motivating young people*

10:40 – 11:20 **Debate**

11:20 – 11:35 **Coffee break**

11:35 – 13:00 SESSION 2: MATCHING PEOPLE’S SKILLS AND JOB OPPORTUNITIES – EQUIPPING PEOPLE WITH THE SKILLS THAT ARE RELEVANT TO THE LABOUR MARKET

Moderator: Krzysztof Pater, Vice-President of the LMO

Improving skills is a key element in securing a lasting European economic recovery and enabling the EU to respond to challenges such as the worldwide increase in the quality of education and supply of skills, ageing, and the low-carbon economy.

However, people need the "right" skills to enter and stay in the labour market. Over-qualification and not having the right qualifications are very different things. Today, the mismatch between the skills available and labour market needs affects all Member States, albeit to varying degrees. In 2012, despite rising joblessness and youth unemployment reaching 23% across Europe, there were over 2 million unfilled job vacancies in the EU.

This part of the event will focus on the current reforms in curricula aimed at providing the "right" skills (including basic skills, transversal skills, STEM, entrepreneurial skills, digital competencies). Attention will be given to the need to increase synergies between the worlds of education and work.

11:35 – 12:20 Presentations:

- **Spyros Nakos**, Social Scientist, European Commission expert speaker, member of Team Europe - *EU employability policies and their implementation*
- **Alexander Riedl**, Deputy Head of unit, Knowledge Base, DG Communications Networks, Content and Technology, European Commission - *Recent developments regarding digital skills*
- **Dimitris Raftopoulos**, Chair of the Finance and EU Projects Working Group, European Centre for Women and Technology - *An example of Grand Coalition for Digital Jobs - Animating Female Talent through a partnership between industry, education and ICT professionals*

12:20 – 13:00 Debate

13:00 – 14:30 Lunch (venue: Cedefop)

14:30 – 16:00 **SESSION 3: VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS, APPRENTICESHIP AND TRAINING**

Moderator: Denis Meynent, Vice-President of the LMO

Research shows the benefits that VET (vocational education and training) brings to individuals and society as a whole, as well as to organisations. For example, the wellbeing and positive work environment generated through VET influences behaviour at work and job satisfaction and can lead to higher productivity and higher wages. VET is also seen as a way of promoting social inclusion, integrating young or disadvantaged people into the labour market. CEDEFOP data shows that VET's lack of parity of esteem compared to general education is not justified, and that at the medium level, VET graduates are more successful than general education candidates in finding employment.

The value of work-based learning – and notably of the dual systems – in smoothing the transition between education and work and increasing competitiveness is also widely acknowledged.

This session will focus on recent developments regarding apprenticeships and training, as well as on challenges, at the national level, as regards attractiveness and VET quality.

14:30 – 15:15 **Presentations:**

- **Mélanie Tocqueville**, Chief scientific officer, Iperia Institute, vocational training institute working closely with the European Federation for Family Employment (EFFE) – *Enhancing the skills of workers in the field of personal and household services*
- **Thomas Mayr**, Director, Institut für Bildungsforschung der Wirtschaft (IBW) Austria - Research & Development in VET – *Practical example on VET and stakeholder involvement*
- **Marianna Georgallis**, Policy officer for traineeships and the follow-up to the Quality Charter for Internships, European Youth Forum – *Update on quality traineeships*

15:15 – 16:00 **Debate**

16:00 – 16:15 **Coffee break**

16:15 – 17:40 **SESSION 4: TOWARDS RECOGNITION OF QUALIFICATIONS AND ENHANCED MOBILITY**

Moderator: Christa Schweng, President of the LMO

The mismatch between skill needs and supply also has a geographic component: skill shortages and bottlenecks coexist in areas of extreme unemployment.

This session will look into the existing tools for transparency and comparability of skills, as well as the validation and recognition of informal and non-formal learning. Regarding mobility, the focus will be on the reform of EURES, which should soon become a fully-fledged European placement and recruitment tool, providing users instantly with clear geographical mapping of job offers.

The obstacles to the free movement of workers within the EU will be dealt with in the next LMO event, in February 2014.

16:15 – 16:50 **Presentations:**

- **Mara Brugia**, Head of area Enhanced Cooperation in VET and LLL, Cedefop – *Qualifications frameworks in Europe: supporting transparency, flexibility and mobility?*
- **Representative of the Public Employment Service, Greece**
- **Ricardo Nobre**, Managing director, Cross Border Talents – *Practical example regarding recruitment and mobility*

16:50 – 17:40 **Debate**

17:40 – 17:45 **Conclusions**

Christa Schweng, President of the LMO

The debates include interventions from:

- ***The social partners at EU level – ETUC (European Trade Union Confederation), BUSINESSEUROPE (Union of Industrial and Employers' Confederations of Europe), Eurochambers (Association of European Chambers of Commerce and Industry), UEAPME (European Association of Craft, Small & Medium-sized Enterprises)***
- ***The social partners at Greek level - The Hellenic Federation of Enterprises (SEV), the Greek General Confederation of Labour (GSEE), the Hellenic Confederation of Professionals, Craftsmen & Merchants (GSEVEE), the National Confederation of Hellenic Commerce (ESEE), the Association of Greek Tourism Enterprises (SETE)***
- ***The Economic and Social Council of Greece (OKE) - Nikolaos Tsemperlides, Member of the Executive Committee***
- ***National Confederation of Disabled People (NCDP) of Greece - Foteini Zafeiropoulou, Member of the Executive Secretariat, in charge of international relations***