



# MATCHING SKILLS TO SUPPORT CAREER DEVELOPMENT

GOOD PRACTICE GUIDE



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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The European Union has agreed on an employment rate target for women and men of 75 % for the 20-64 years age group by 2020: an ambitious commitment to the sustainability of Europe's social model, welfare systems, economic growth and public finances.

Bridging the gap to the target will be no easy task. The recent economic crisis has highlighted the crucial need for workers to update their skills in order to be able to adapt and contribute to new patterns of work organisation and to technological change. The current skills gap and skills mismatches observed on our labour markets risk impacting negatively the competitiveness of our economies, jeopardising a sustainable economic recovery based on innovation and job creation.

To meet this challenges also increased cooperation between guidance centres and employment services as well as between employers and education and training institutions should be encouraged and should

contribute to more dynamic and responsive interactions between the worlds of work, education and training.

Selected cases of good practice that are providing answers to these challenges were identified and explored by the EFFECT project partners. They are presented in this guide with the aim to initiate and support development of further practices in the area of matching skills, lifelong learning and career development in order to bring our economies closer to achieving our commitments.

The present GOOD PRACTICE GUIDE is also a collection of existing research findings and reflections that have already been published in different policy papers and other documents. The aim of this collage of statements is to highlight developments and challenges in the field of matching skills to support career development.



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## 2. SKILLS MISMATCH, CAREER DEVELOPMENT AND LIFELONG LEARNING

### 2.1 About skill mismatch

#### What is skill mismatch?

**Skills** are a key element in matching persons to jobs. However, the meaning of “skills” embraces many aspects and the concept is used in many different ways. Often the term is used as a general expression of the (economic) capabilities of people at and for work, but often its meaning is not separated from “qualifications”.<sup>1</sup>

**Mismatches** are usually explained by a combination of information asymmetry between employers and employees, incomplete information in the labour market, differences between people, and transactions costs.<sup>2</sup>

**Skill mismatch** refers not only to skill shortages or gaps, but also to qualifications, knowledge and skills exceeding job requirements. It is a widespread phenomenon in Europe, with overeducation incidence averaging around 30 % and a substantial share of the population undereducated. Shortages in some sectors may occur simultaneously with overeducation in others. When skill mismatch takes time to resolve it imposes real costs on individuals, enterprises and societies.<sup>3</sup>

Whether skill mismatch is stable or increasing over time differs between countries. The overeducated suffer a wage penalty, but earn more than their matched colleagues, while the reverse applies to the undereducated. Mismatch between the type of skills someone has and the type of skills required is also prominent and has a negative impact on earnings. The duration of skill shortages will be a function of their

level and complexity, while the duration of skill gaps is linked to retraining. Skills obsolescence can occur over a relatively short number of years compared to a working lifetime, which means that lifelong learning is essential for successful careers.<sup>4</sup>

#### Importance for the labour market

Skill mismatch should be of concern to all citizens, but especially to policy-makers, employers’ associations and trade unions. Because of skill-biased technological change, its incidence will increase over time, though over education could have some positive effects. As Europe’s population is ageing rapidly, skills obsolescence is also likely to grow in importance. Matching skills and jobs is, therefore, crucial for Europe.<sup>5</sup>

The severity of the financial crisis adds an exceptional degree of unpredictability about the future of the world’s economy – yet in order to put Europe on the road to recovery it is essential to enhance human capital and employability by upgrading skills. But upgrading skills is not enough: ensuring a better match between the supply of skills and labour market demand is just as necessary. Improving monitoring, assessing and anticipating as well as the matching of skills is crucial to address both the employment impact of the crisis and the long-term job prospects of the EU workforce.<sup>6</sup>

To confront rising unemployment matching of skills must be improved. Due to imperfect information and structural rigidities, workers and businesses are not provided with the right level of skills in the right areas, which damages competitiveness in particular in smaller enterprises. The composition of skills emerging from EU

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<sup>1</sup>Anticipating and Matching Skills Demand and Supply; Synthesis of national reports, ETF 2012.

<sup>2</sup>The Skill Matching Challenge; Analysing skill mismatch & policy implications, CEDEFOP, 2010.

<sup>3</sup>The Skill Matching Challenge; Analysing skill mismatch & policy implications, CEDEFOP, 2010.

<sup>4</sup>The Skill Matching Challenge; Analysing skill mismatch & policy implications, CEDEFOP, 2010.

<sup>5</sup>The Skill Matching Challenge; Analysing skill mismatch & policy implications, CEDEFOP, 2010.

<sup>6</sup>New Skills for New Jobs, Anticipating and matching labour market and skills needs.

universities and training systems does not fully support a truly innovation-driven economy.<sup>7</sup>

A substantial improvement in capacity to forecast, anticipate and match future skills and labour market needs is a precondition for the design of efficient employment, education and training policies and individual career choices. Since there are long delays between decisions to invest in skills and when these skills are finally available, without anticipation of skills needs the mismatches on the labour market are likely to be greater. With data collection and forecasting work the facilities are provided that both the public and private sectors can use to form decisions to invest in skills development.

### Basic recommendations

Good data are probably the most crucial prerequisite to supporting timely, effective and evidence-based skill mismatch policies. The current shortcomings of data sets may take years to remedy. Ideally, new matched employer-employee panel data, with information on labour demand and supply, should be developed. Collecting these data is very expensive and several years of data are needed for full research potential. Individual or household data can be used instead, but with a comprehensive coverage of the various elements of mismatch, which is not currently the case.

How to measure skill mismatch is a core concern. Three alternative methods could be used: systematic job evaluation (objective measure), worker self-assessment (subjective measure) and empirical method (where data sets do not contain a direct question on the phenomenon). Each method has some weaknesses.<sup>8</sup>

Practices of matching are situated at different levels, the labour market institutions being key players. In most countries several ministries, in which responsibilities are distributed differently, are involved in these practices at the aggregate organisational and systemic levels. Ministries of education, and

sometimes of science and research, are responsible for the supply of education; ministries of labour or social affairs, often with different additional responsibilities, are responsible for PES; and ministries for the economy are responsible for the affairs of enterprises. Thus the matching practices at these aggregate levels, and in particular deliberate policy attempts to intervene, include collaboration between different departments, and thus between a range of more or less integrated top-down structures. Such collaboration is always difficult.<sup>9</sup>

Current matching problems typically cannot be solved by educational policies targeted at initial education; on the contrary, initial education policies can only contribute to solving future matching problems. Anticipation is therefore a necessary ingredient, particularly in initial education. Initial and continuing education are also differently positioned as regards the time frame of matching: current problems can be resolved by continuing education, but initial education is primarily geared towards meeting future needs.<sup>10</sup>

PES should consistently design their training schemes according to market needs as well as to stimulate entrepreneurship and self-employment.<sup>11</sup>

Matching is to be based on systematic matching of job profiles, breaking down job vacancies to their individual components (both of job specific and generic skill requirements).<sup>12</sup>

Policy makers should provide labour market information and efficient job placement services.<sup>13</sup>

## 2.2 About career development

### What is career development?

Career development, a major aspect of human development, is the process through which an

<sup>7</sup>New Skills for New Jobs, Anticipating and matching labour market and skills needs.

<sup>8</sup>The Skill Matching Challenge; Analysing skill mismatch & policy implications, CEDEFOP, 2010.

<sup>9</sup>Anticipating and Matching Skills Demand and Supply; Synthesis of national reports, ETF 2012.

<sup>10</sup>Anticipating and Matching Skills Demand and Supply; Synthesis of national reports, ETF 2012.

<sup>11</sup>New Skills for New Jobs: Action Now; A report by the expert group.

<sup>12</sup>New Skills for New Jobs: Action Now; A report by the expert group.

<sup>13</sup>The Skill Matching Challenge; Analysing skill mismatch & policy implications, CEDEFOP, 2010.





individual's work identity is formed. It spans one's entire lifetime. Career development begins with a person's earliest awareness of the ways in which people make a living, continues as he or she explores occupations and ultimately decides what career to pursue, prepares for it, applies for and gets a job and advances in it. It may, and probably will include, changing careers and jobs.

It is important to note that career development will occur naturally, as one matures, but with intervention, one can forge a happier and more successful path. Career guidance and education, or other means of managing one's career development, can prove to be very helpful. This intervention can begin as early as elementary school and should continue through adulthood.<sup>14</sup>

Organisations need to realise that positive career development for their workforce is a way of helping to attract and retain the best people: by recognising and responding to the needs of individual employees they will get the best out of them. More effective guidance will assist the development of a knowledge economy

and benefit individuals, employers and society at large. It will, however, require a cultural shift in management behaviour in organisations towards self-management (Hackman, 1986). Understanding how to motivate employees, and knowledge workers in particular, is likely to be a critical factor for organisational success.<sup>15</sup>

### Importance for the labour market

The Lisbon agenda for growth and jobs already required that citizens are equipped to manage labour market changes more effectively, are given opportunities to develop their skills, and gain access to information, advice and guidance to handle their careers, which is highlighted also in the New Skills for New Jobs initiative. If the shift to a knowledge economy is to be accompanied by greater social cohesion, a key question is how to empower adults to make appropriate and well-informed learning and career choices. Since the Resolution on Lifelong Guidance of the EU Council of Education Ministers (Council of the European Union, 2004), much has been achieved in the Member States in improving access to career guidance and quality of

<sup>14</sup><http://careerplanning.about.com/od/careerchoicechan/f/career-development.htm>.

<sup>15</sup>Career Development at Work, A review of career guidance to support people in employment, CEDEFOP, 2008.

provision. However, as shown by international reviews, only a tiny proportion of the workforce in Europe has access to some form of guidance. To support lifelong learning and active participation in the labour market, career guidance services need to be further developed and offered to employed people.<sup>16</sup>

The provision of career guidance is a shared responsibility for the social partners, public authorities and individuals, and requires partnership building among stakeholders. More effective guidance will assist the development of a knowledge economy and benefit individuals, employers and society at large. Effective career development support is important not only for individuals but also for the organisations that employ them. For both of them it is part of a strategy of achieving resilience to handle change more effectively. Governments also benefit from facilitating career development, both to support the development of a knowledge economy and to avoid the consequences of some people being excluded from having careers in any meaningful sense.<sup>17</sup>

## Basic recommendations

The systematic recognition of prior learning, as well as knowledge and competences acquired in work and life outside the school system, is still the exception in Europe. Validating this learning experience may help individuals to better understand their own capabilities and encourage further learning, employability and career development.<sup>18</sup>

The EU Member states should assure and facilitate, throughout an individual's life, participation in, and access to, vocational and career information and guidance, job placement services and job search techniques and training support services.<sup>19</sup>

When delivering career support in the workplace the diversity in provision, along with partnership, is the best way of achieving resilience and to cope with change. Different stakeholders (like social partners, guidance

providers, public employment services, etc.) should cooperate rather than compete with each other.<sup>20</sup>

Effective career support by employers to their employees in the workplace meets both business and individual needs. It will only be sustainable if the mutual benefit is clear to both parties. Paying attention to career development is particularly important as the workforce becomes increasingly diverse: the performance of all employees' matters to the company as well as to the individuals.<sup>21</sup>



<sup>16</sup>Career Development at Work, A review of career guidance to support people in employment, CEDEFOP, 2008.

<sup>17</sup>Career Development at Work, A review of career guidance to support people in employment, CEDEFOP, 2008.

<sup>18</sup>New Skills for New Jobs: Action Now; A report by the expert group.

<sup>19</sup>Recommendation Concerning Human Resources Development: Education, Training and Lifelong Learning, ILO.

<sup>20</sup>Career Development at Work, A review of career guidance to support people in employment, CEDEFOP, 2008.

<sup>21</sup>Career Development at Work, A review of career guidance to support people in employment, CEDEFOP, 2008.

Since trade union representatives perceive credibility and trust from their members they should be an important player in providing advice and guidance prior to engagement in learning or development activities for employees.

The key message for employers is that helping their employees and managers use and develop the talents and skills of their workforce will attract and retain a more skilled and more highly-motivated workforce, and lead to their employees being better utilised and more productive.<sup>22</sup>



## 2.3 About lifelong learning

### What is lifelong learning?

Lifelong learning covers “all learning activity undertaken throughout life with the aim of improving knowledge, skills and attitude within a personal, civic, social and/or employment-related perspective” (EU definition, laid down in the 2001 document ‘Making a European Area of Lifelong Learning a Reality’).<sup>23</sup>

The concept of lifelong learning expresses the idea that all of us are capable of absorbing educational processes and content throughout our entire lives, starting in the school period itself. Lifelong learning serves our personal development, fosters our social integration and improves our employability.<sup>24</sup>

Key competences for lifelong learning are a combination of knowledge, skills and attitudes appropriate to the context. They are particularly necessary for personal fulfilment and development, social inclusion, active citizenship and employment.<sup>25</sup> With the relation to lifelong learning the term “competencies” covers the knowledge, skills and know-how applied and mastered in a specific context. The term “qualifications” means a formal expression of the vocational or professional abilities of a worker which is recognised at international, national or sectorial levels.<sup>26</sup>

### Importance for the labour market

Education, training and lifelong learning contribute significantly to promoting the interests of individuals, enterprises, the economy and society as a whole, especially considering the critical challenge of attaining full employment, poverty eradication, social inclusion and sustained economic growth in the global economy.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>22</sup>Career Development at Work, A review of career guidance to support people in employment, CEDEFOP, 2008.

<sup>23</sup>Employment for All (Resource center on employment for persons with disabilities).

<sup>24</sup>Employment for All (Resource center on employment for persons with disabilities).

<sup>25</sup>Recommendation 2006/962/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 on key competences for lifelong learning [Official Journal L 394 of 30.12.2006].

<sup>26</sup>Recommendation Concerning Human Resources Development: Education, Training and Lifelong Learning, ILO.

<sup>27</sup>Recommendation Concerning Human Resources Development: Education, Training and Lifelong Learning, ILO.



Cedefop Director Joachim James Calleja said: “Only skills enhance employability and can guarantee employment, so adult learning is not an option in today’s labour-market context – it’s a necessity. Organisations such as Cedefop and other VET-related institutions, although they cannot provide lifelong employment, are obliged to offer structures for lifelong learning.”

According to the Cedefop Director, “it’s not too late to equip people for the 21st century because we are at the start of it, but the words we need to focus on are joining forces, action and skills/competences.” He noted that highly skilled jobs will increase from 36.5 % in 2000 to 44.1 % in 2025 and 90 % of jobs will require qualifications.

Today’s rapid pace of change demands that workers continuously educate themselves in order to avoid stagnating the economy. Workplace roles and requirements are changing at an unprecedented rate. Employers believe that employees need continuous education just to keep pace with the demands of their current jobs.<sup>28</sup>

Economic factors such as income and employment play an important part in lifelong learning. They can provide people with reasons for joining learning programmes, as well as featuring in policy decisions on financing provision. The direct economic effects of lifelong learning potentially include impacts on earnings, on employability, and on the wider economy. And since higher incomes or steady employment tend to have further effects on health, well-being and sociability, it also follows that the economic effects of learning have indirect outcomes.<sup>29</sup>

## Basic recommendations

Education, training and LLL are fundamental and should form an integral part of, and be consistent with, comprehensive economic, fiscal, social and labour market policies and programmes that are important for

sustainable economic growth and employment creation and social development.<sup>30</sup>

Governments, employers and workers shall renew their commitment to LLL: governments by investing and creating the conditions to enhance education and training at all levels; enterprises by training their employees; and individuals by making use of the education, training and LLL opportunities.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>28</sup>Lifelong Education and Labour Market Needs, An examination of how ongoing learning benefits the society, the corporation and the individual, The EvoLLution, 2012.

<sup>29</sup>Is Lifelong Learning Making a Difference? Research-based Evidence on the Impact of Adult Learning, John Field, 2012.

<sup>30</sup>Recommendation Concerning Human Resources Development: Education, Training and Lifelong Learning, ILO.

<sup>31</sup>Recommendation Concerning Human Resources Development: Education, Training and Lifelong Learning, ILO.



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### 3. GOOD PRACTICES FROM SELECTED EU COUNTRIES

In line with the Europe 2020, the European Employment Strategy seeks to create more and better jobs throughout the EU, arguing that “it is essential to enhance human capital and employability by upgrading skills. But upgrading skills is not enough: ensuring a better match between the supply of skills and labour market demand is just as necessary”.

As part of this, the EU Flagship Initiatives – An Agenda for New Skills and Jobs sets out the following priorities:

- Better functioning labour markets.
- A more skilled labour force.
- Better job quality and working conditions.
- Stronger policies to promote job creation and the demand for labour.<sup>32</sup>

A number of initiatives are being delivered at EU level to try and achieve this, including:

- Forecasts by the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP).
- Analysis of trends at sectoral level and the development of sectoral skills councils.
- Development of a European Framework for key competences for lifelong learning – which defines the eight key competences that everyone should have to thrive in a knowledge society.
- Ongoing research with the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).
- Work on ESCO - Classification of European Skills/ Competences, qualifications and Occupations which will describe the most relevant skills, competences and qualifications of occupations.
- Development of a European Qualifications Framework – which defines qualifications on

the basis of learning outcomes so everyone can understand what they mean in practical terms.

- EU funding – via the European Social Fund and the Lifelong Learning Programme.
- The University-Business forum – encourages dialogue between business and education and training providers.<sup>33</sup>

Good practice in skills forecasting at country, regional or city level can be hard to define as it depends on the specific content, with different approaches suiting different situations. All approaches undertaken correctly can be good practice whereas the right approach done badly is not good practice. The key thing when considering good practice is the importance of getting the balance right between the different approaches. In addition, even the best practice in skills forecasting is only useful if it is shared with key stakeholders, considered in context and influences decision making, policy and practice.<sup>34</sup>

A good practice is simply a process or a methodology that represents the most effective way of achieving a specific objective. Another way of defining a good practice is one that has been proven to work well and produce good results, and is therefore recommended as a model. The essence of identifying and sharing good practices is to learn from others and to re-use knowledge. The biggest benefit consists in well-developed processes based on accumulated experience.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>32</sup>Skills Forecasting at City Level, ESIMeC.

<sup>33</sup>Skills Forecasting at City Level, ESIMeC.

<sup>34</sup>Skills Forecasting at City Level, ESIMeC.

<sup>35</sup>Identifying and Sharing Good Practices, SDC Knowledge Management Toolkit, 2004.

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## PARTNERSHIPS AND COOPERATION OF KEY LABOUR MARKET PLAYERS

*Close cooperation between the government, employers and employees is an important feature of effective and permanent links between the education and the world of work to promote the development of real skills at the right time.*



## AMS Standing Committee on New Skills, Austria

*In cooperation with Austrian social partners, the Austrian Public Employment Service established an AMS Standing Committee on New Skills aimed at determining the short-to medium-term qualification needs*

The AMS Standing Committee on New Skills was established in October 2009 on an Austrian national level at the AMS national headquarters. The initial situation prompting the establishment of the AMS Standing Committee on New Skills was the economic and financial crisis the country was going through at the time. This development made it clear that changes and developments that were already on-going before the crisis were further accelerating within the companies. The standing committee was therefore established with the objective of making the most of periods of operational underutilisation combined with labour market policy support measures, in order to prepare the workforce (employees and persons seeking work) for upcoming changes and requirements in a timely manner.

The main goal of the AMS Standing Committee on New Skills is to keep pace with the required qualifications through early anticipation of developments. The objective is to initiate new programmes offering continued education for job-seekers and employees with short implementation lead times that address the identified qualification requirements. Experts from different occupational fields identify short to medium-term qualification requirements. These investigations are carried out separately for the individual occupational fields on an overall national and economic level. Operational experts, cluster managers, representatives of education and training facilities, the Public Employment Service, social partner organisations and consulting institutes at several workshops have developed curricular proposals for further education offerings as an orientation guide for the planning of the AMS course offerings based on the specialist groups' results. The specialist courses of the so-called "New

Skills" programme are implemented by the AMS branch offices in the individual federal states in cooperation with the respective educational establishments. The primary target group of the specialist courses of the "New Skills" programme includes persons who have already worked in a certain occupational area and are trained with respect to current requirements of the labour market in this field, in order to improve their occupational opportunities and allow a re-entry into the labour market. A particular focus is on the target group of persons above the age of 45.

Within the scope of the two work phases completed so far, AMS has made the first steps in implementing the development of new training offers. At the same time, the insights gained during the workshops are on the one hand made accessible to a broader audience and on the other hand further expanded and corroborated within the scope of a series of accompanying measures. Based on the results of the first and second work phase, *curricular proposals* for further education offerings targeted at job-seekers were prepared for each cluster. The AMS branch offices use these as the basis for their tenders for specialist courses. In addition to this, modules included in the curricular proposals, as well as other results established within the workshops, are being used to adapt existing AMS course offerings. Within the AMS *research network* ([www.ams-forschungsnetzwerk.at](http://www.ams-forschungsnetzwerk.at)), a separate area was established for the collective results of the work groups. As a complementary activity, focus groups were organised to identify the aspects regarding future qualification requirements that are important to employees. The results were summarised in a separate report.

*The establishment of a standing committee at the national headquarters of the Austrian Labour Market Administration promotes continued engagement and further development of the issue. The results serve as the basis for strategic considerations and recommendations to the Board of Directors of the AMS, which includes employee and employer representatives as well as government officials. Still, communication*

*and exchange of ideas between AMS, centres for vocational training, companies, job-seekers and employees regarding existing and required further educational offerings should be improved, and the collaboration should be intensified on all levels; the cluster experts expect more innovation regarding the development of new offerings and a stronger inclusion of the companies by local partners for training and education.*

More information: [www.effect-project.eu](http://www.effect-project.eu)



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## Qualification Network in Styria, Austria

*Network of at least 5 companies, aimed at collaborating in the planning and implementation of qualification measures for employees, based on current demand, and providing skills that are usable across company boundaries*

Qualification network is a network of several companies aimed at collaborating in the planning and implementation of qualification measures for employees with a particular focus on the productive ageing approach. It is a facilitation instrument for companies deployed by the AMS on a national level and implemented within the individual federal states. The qualification counselling financed by the Public Employment Service (AMS) and the European Social Fund (ESF) supports the establishment of qualification networks. The objective of this free counselling is to intensify the exchange of experience between the

companies, to facilitate the implementation of life cycle-oriented further education measures and to secure the employment of employees. The start-up consulting services and supervision of qualification networks was awarded to two external consulting institutions: bit management GmbH and move-ment.

The target group for the establishment of qualification networks includes companies and organisations established in Styria. The provisions established by the funding agency determine the mix of participating companies. Prerequisites for establishing network: at least 5 companies within a region or industry (at least 50 % SMEs), preparation of productive ageing concept including measures and network concept and establishment of network bylaws, establishment of network management and companies participating in the network may not have received more than 200,000 euros in de minimis aid during the past 3 tax years. Within a qualification network, there is the possibility of receiving aid to cover the qualification costs; reimbursement rates by target group are between 70 % and 60 %.

Qualification networks operate in eight phases: (1) *Companies with further education needs* report to the AMS or are acquired by the consulting institutions. The consulting institutions look for other companies within the same industry or the same region (minimum of 5 companies, mixture of large corporations and SMEs). All interested companies meet for the first time at the (2) *Information workshop* and are made familiar with the objectives and conditions of the aid programme. (3) *Establishment workshop* where all companies sign an agreement that they intend to collaborate on a life cycle-oriented training programme is followed by the (4) *Productive ageing workshop* where demographic development and accordingly relevant training measures are discussed. At (5) *Planning workshop*, an educational plan is discussed in detail and set for a duration of 6 months. The companies decide who is to be their training service provider at the (6) *Selection workshop*. At (7) Training phase, the training is carried out (6 months) and it is followed by the (8) *Final workshop*, where feedback regarding the network process and training measures implemented is provided.



*The qualification networks are an example of successful exchange of experiences between companies and their collaboration with the AMS and the individual training service providers. The companies benefit by increasing competitiveness through well-trained and motivated employees, reduced training costs due to financial aid by the AMS and ESF, demand-oriented training courses, training locations within the region and training dates based on company preferences.*

More information: [www.effect-project.eu](http://www.effect-project.eu)



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## Local partnership for employment, Croatia

*Local partnerships for employment have been established with the purpose of promoting development of human resources at the regional level using partnership approach and standards of the European Social Fund*

Local partnership in the area of Krapina-Zagorje County was established and operates from 15.12.2010 under the name Partner Council for Krapina-Zagorje County Labour market. The main task after the establishment was to develop a Human Resources Development Strategy that is made pursuant to the relevant labour market analysis and information gathered from various sources, in accordance with the actual needs of the

local labour market and in accordance with regional and national objectives. Representatives of all three sectors - civil, economic and public - participated in that activity. Further activities are aimed at strengthening the capacity of partners and other stakeholders through the development and application of various joint projects, education through various workshops with the purpose of strengthening partnerships in order to be able to better respond to local problems and situations primarily in terms of market requirements and/or needs to adopt new knowledge and skills and thus lead to the improvement of the situation at the regional and local labour market.

Local partnership for employment was established in a way that interested partners from the economic, civil and public sector signed the Agreement on local partnership for employment, adopted Rules of Procedure, elected governing bodies and created a work plan. Work of the Partnership members takes place through Thematic working groups (for the economy, education and the creation of new employment opportunities). Depending on the needs, members are convened, partners and activities are agreed and then they work together on the development of project proposals. Members of the Partnership conduct workshops, organise round tables and fairs and include other members in these activities.

Final beneficiaries of this good practice are all residents of Krapina-Zagorje County. Although an evaluation of the work was not been made yet, some areas of improvement in work of local partnership has been identified.

*In order to ensure sustainability and transferability of this good practice, we need common will and desire of relevant stakeholders at local/regional labour market to jointly contribute to solving problems in their local labour markets. It is also important to clearly define responsibilities and duties of partnership members and to foster the exchange of information, knowledge and experience between partners. Local partnerships contribute through their work to the creation, development, programming and monitoring of HRD documents at the local/regional level.*

More information: [www.effect-project.eu](http://www.effect-project.eu)



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### Matching supply and demand in the labour market of Krapina Zagorje County, Croatia

*An initiative of the Croatian Employment Service regional office on monitoring and assessing the needs of the Krapina Zagorje County labour market*

With the aim of better monitoring of the labour market needs, regional offices of the Croatian Employment Service annually (since 2010) prepare Recommendations for educational enrolment policy and policy of scholarships in accordance with the Regulation of the Government of the Republic of Croatia on monitoring, analysing and forecasting of the labour market needs for particular occupations and making and taking into account the recommendations for educational enrolment policy. In order to make these recommendations more relevant, the CES Regional Office Krapina initiated Regional Partnerships for monitoring and assessing the needs of the Krapina Zagorje County labour market that bring together representatives of the CES RO Krapina, Krapina Zagorje County, Chamber of Trades and Crafts in Krapina Zagorje County, Croatian Chamber of Economy County Chamber Krapina and Zagorje Development Agency and, if necessary, other partners. The role and tasks of the key players in the labour market – members of the Regional Partnership – are described and set forth in the Regional Partnership Agreement. Methodology for assessing and monitoring the needs of the labour market is used, particularly for deficient occupations (Model for the identification and tracking of deficient occupations) to determine the order of the three-year educational programmes/occupations by deficiency/ need for training.

The results of the joint assessment and forecasting of training needs is influencing the scholarship program for deficient craft occupations of Chamber of Trades and Crafts in Krapina-Zagorje County. Krapina-Zagorje County, based on the Recommendations for educational enrolment policy and policy of scholarships, awards extra points for scholarships for deficient occupations, and CES RO Krapina takes the results into account when planning educational activities for unemployed persons. Also, CES RO Krapina monitors the employment of persons upon completion of education funded by CES from which it can be seen that in the six months after completion of education about 60 % of participants are employed. From this it is evident that key stakeholders in the labour market are taking into account forecasts of labour market needs and recommendations for enrolment policy and policy of scholarships when making decisions concerning this area of work, but they considered it is still necessary to strengthen the partnership relations and the ability to anticipate the needs.

*In order to make the activities of monitoring the labour market needs more efficient, the exchange of information between all stakeholders in the labour market while strengthening and developing partnership dialogue is necessary. Also, it is necessary to work on the development of more effective measures to improve compliance of supply and demand in the labour market, where is particularly important to strengthen the capacity of key stakeholders to estimate future needs.*

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## MATCHING SKILLS SUPPLY AND DEMAND ON THE LABOUR MARKET

*The EU will be able to effectively exploit the talents and stop wasting human capital only with timely anticipating and matching skills supply and demand.*



## AMS qualification barometer (AMS-QB), Austria

*The first comprehensive online information system on qualification trends in Austria*

The AMS-QB is a labour market policy instrument for the presentation of qualification and occupation-related developments on the Austrian labour market. The objective is to collect and structure evidence of the current and foreseeable qualification requirements and to make this information accessible to the broader public via the Internet by creating an information system.

The AMS-QB, established in March 2003, is an online system that offers a structured and quick overview of central aspects of the qualification requirements in Austria. The contents apply to the macro-level of an industry and provide clear statements regarding the need for certain qualifications at the level of the different occupational fields. Access to the AMS-QB information is granted from each hierarchically higher level to the level immediately below, i.e. going deeper from the Austrian national level to the level of the individual federal states. In doing so, regional particularities are taken into consideration, and for the first time ever, evaluations are carried out on a micro-level (professions). Information on current and foreseeable qualification requirements, corresponding job offers, additional information on the labour market and the current employment situation are provided. Labour market trends are presented elaborately on the levels of “Occupational area” and “Vocational field”. On each of the three levels, employment data is shown, offering an indication of the labour market requirements during the past two years. For the first time ever, this data, which previously was not available to a broader audience, is being made available online in a detailed and clearly structured manner. Comprehensive lists of references and concrete explanations of more than 230 qualifications (with a total of approximately 5,500 subtopics) and approximately 560 detailed occupational profiles complete the comprehensive and clearly structured presentation.

The AMS-QB is targeted at AMS employees, journalists and responsible persons in politics and business and at persons facing a decision regarding their professional future. With its abundance of data, its topicality, its forecast function and not least the clearly arranged presentation, it is an indispensable instrument for anybody who – for private or professional reasons – is interested in the developments on the labour market as well as the qualification needs.

The AMS-QB was created and is continuously maintained by 3S Unternehmensberatung GmbH and the Institute for Research on Qualifications and Training of the Austrian Economy (ibw) on behalf of the Department for Labour Market Research and Vocational Information (ABI) of the Austrian PES.

*The AMS-QB is well underway to becoming a long-term instrument for Austrian labour market policy. A major condition for its continuation is certainly the long-term financing of the instrument. As this can be considered stable at this time, the work currently carried out focuses mainly on a continued improvement of user friendliness as well as the contents and information sources. As the instrument has already proven itself for more than 10 years, a high portability regarding concept, preparation and provision of data as well as the preparation of forecasts is given. The core message of the AMS-QB is that the labour market as well as the workforce (employees and persons seeking work) need to react to coming changes and requirements in due time. Through early anticipation (e.g. development of concepts for new or modified further education offerings, assurance of the next generation of specialists, creation of networks, etc.), it is thereby possible to keep pace with the qualifications and opportunities of the future. And this is exactly where the AMS-QB comes in as a useful instrument. In the ideal case, this will result in a balance of supply and demand on the labour market.*



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### Berlin Programme for Job Orientation at School (BVBO), Germany

#### *Job orientation programme for pupils at school*

BVBO is a job orientation programme for young pupils at the age of 14 or 15 years. The main characteristics of the BVBO programme are its close relationship to schools, the shared effort to help pupils in the transition field and to strengthen young people's decision competence between teachers, schools and external partners. The job orientation is situated in schools and realised by external service companies.

In the BVBO programme, pupils learn more about their own personal skills and they broaden their horizons of knowledge referring to occupations and professions as a whole. Trained through different tasks and tests, they achieve a higher level of self-confidence and they learn to decide for themselves the next steps in orientation towards a profession. Pupils go into business for two or three weeks at the age of 16 or 17. The last and also relevant step is to support pupils in creating job applications during their last year at school.

The most important objective of the BVBO programme is to encourage many schools and pupils to commit to this programme. Forecast data for the Berlin labour market indicates that there will be an enormous skill shortage during the next 20 or 30 years. That means that we need the next generation of young people to be well prepared for the labour market. The aim is to diminish the drop-out-rate in vocational training and in universities as well.

The programme has been implemented since 2007 and has been increasing continuously over the last six years. Nowadays, the BVBO programme is working at 112 Berlin schools, starting at the 8th class. During the last term, nearly 24,000 pupils participated in the programme. Through BVBO, pupils broadened their horizons referring to different occupations and teachers recognised a higher interest in the process of decision making. Pupils are also better prepared to create job applications.

The programme is financed by the Berlin government and by the National Labour Agency. The controlling group, members of two ministries and the labour agency meet frequently and decide about the development of BVBO. In addition, there is an advisory board in which the Government, trade unions, chambers, universities and labour agencies meet, usually once a year, to discuss the further process of job orientation.

*If such programme is started, it is important that it lasts at least ten years, because multilateral cooperation has to be founded and networks have to be built between schools, businesses and social partners. Job orientation established in the long term means that we all have to work on school reforms. Job orientation should take place in each subject, no matter if it's chemistry or sports, languages or geography. Each subject should work on the aim to strengthen pupils' self-confidence and to make them fit for further life-decisions.*

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## Regional Scholarship Schemes, Slovenia

*An instrument of scholarships for young educated in the most wanted occupations in regions; occupations that accelerate economic and social development and improve employability of youth*

In Slovenia, there is a structural imbalance at regional labour markets. Mismatch between skill supply and demand on the regional labour market is primarily reflected in the fact that companies hardly obtain adequate staff in which to invest systematically during the period of education. The lack of such staff, mainly in peripheral regions, has been seen as a development deficit in the region. It is very important to approach solving this problem systematically and in the long-term by encouraging networking between educational sphere and businesses. This procedure contributes to more balanced regional development, prevents moving staff to economic centres, decreases structural unemployment and facilitates rapid transition from education to the world of work. Therefore, the Government introduced the programme to improve the situation and decrease the imbalance on the labour market.

Regional Scholarship Schemes are initiated by the Public Fund of Human Resource Development and Scholarship, co-financed by the European Social Fund (50 %) and Slovenian companies (50 %) and implemented at the regional level. The programme contributes to matching skill supply and demand in Slovenian regions, motivates young people towards enrolment in programmes and acquiring occupations demanded by employers and thus enables higher employability for the young. The programme also encourages HRD planning in accordance to regional labour market needs, increases educational level, decreases structural unemployment and reduces the outflow of young educated people from the region and encourages return of trained young people from university centres back to the region.

Programme was initiated in 2007 and since then it has been implemented by development agencies and organisations at the regional level. It is a regional instrument based on partnership between employers, regional development agencies and the Government (Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities and Public Fund for Human Resource

Development and Scholarships). Regional Scholarship Schemes are implemented in all 12 Slovenian regions by the unique principle and procedures. Since 2007, more than 3,000 scholarships were contracted with 1,350 employers. Although results are below expectations due to the economic and financial crisis, some positive impacts have to be stressed: students find jobs, especially higher educated and graduates, after completion of education when returning from university centres back to their region of residence. In addition, the share of those wanting continuing study is increasing.

By tripartite contract (between student, employer and RDA), an employer is obliged to employ the student and the student is obliged to be employed by the selected employer for at least the period of total time of getting the scholarship, e.g. the time studies last. Financing of scholarship is on a monthly basis in the maximum amount of 30 % of minimum wage. During studying, students can co-operate with the future employer and prepare research, projects and have practice in the company and both the student and employer have the opportunity to know each other; students can examine acquired knowledge in practice and get work experiences. If the student doesn't want to be employed by the contracted employer or if the employer does not employ the student after study completion, with the exception of bankruptcy, they have to return all public (ESF) sources.

*Through the Regional Scholarship Schemes, companies have opportunities to plan employment and select employees with education and competencies according to their needs and receive co-financing for educating their own future staff. Students receive scholarships and during studying they have opportunities to co-operate with future employers through performing practice, projects, research and theses.*

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## COMPETENCE AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT OF EMPLOYEES

*Skills development, upgrading skills and better matching between the supply of skills and labour market demand is not only necessary but also a challenge for the EU and shared responsibility of national public authorities, education and training providers, employers and employees, with social partners playing a crucial role.*



## Education and Human Resource Development at Vetropack Straža Glass Factory, Croatia

*A good practice of activities at the company level aimed at the education and development of employees according to the identified needs*

Vetropack Straža is part of the Vetropack Group, one of Europe's leading manufacturers of glass packaging that has grown from a local glass manufacturer into an international group of seven factories in six countries - Switzerland, Austria, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Ukraine and the Republic of Croatia. The company's business is characterised by continuous adaptation to new requirements and standards in all business segments.

The company pays much attention to the training and additional education of employees, which is an integral part of company policy. From the moment of recruitment and throughout the lifetime of workers, they are undergoing a thorough education path designed depending on the position of the work that they perform.

In the last 15 years, the company invested over a hundred million EUR in improvement of production technology, product quality, infrastructure, environmental protection and organisation. As they believe that qualified and motivated staff are a prerequisite for successful business and that constant changes set constant need for training, employee training is an integral part of the company policy. So the company runs an annual training plan in order to increase the efficiency of employees, based on the expressed needs. Within that, they organise statutory training as well as training to increase efficiency, like foreign language courses, IT, increase quality, organisational skills, leadership, communication skills, motivation, introduction to business, etc. The beneficiaries of such activities are employees of all hierarchical levels and functions. The company is constantly evaluating activities through interviews with employees, evaluation of training, performance analysis and knowledge checks by tests and audits.

Communication is essential for establishing and implementing the objectives of the company, developing plans for their achievement and organising human and other resources in the most efficient and the most effective way. It is also essential for selection, development and evaluation of the organisation members as well as for managing, directing, motivating and creating a climate in which people are willing to contribute to the goals.

*It is important to invest in training for employees, because they are a key factor for the growth of the business success of the company. The efficiency of workers is a product of knowledge, motivation and satisfaction. Also, career management is a way to attract quality candidates, retain key employees and reduce employee turnover.*

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## Education and Workforce Development at Valoviti papir Dunapack, Croatia

*Company model for education and training that is supporting career development of employees*

Valoviti papir Dunapack is a member of the Prinzhorn group, producing corrugated cardboards and packaging from corrugated cardboard (boxes). The company's corrugated products are made from recycled paper and are 100 % recyclable and biodegradable. Their business shows positive results that are growing from year to year due to continuous care for their employees. For education and workforce development, the company designed a model of academies that support the career development of every employee (employee, management and leadership academy).

According to the needs identified through the annual interviews with employees, the company conducts thematic and team building workshops. Through them, they encourage the creation of organisational climate and personal commitment to use rounded and complete activities aimed at continuing professional and personal development. They also support periodical feedbacks that are an integral part of fulfilling development goals. Beneficiaries of the good

practice are all employees of the company, which is, in the delivery of its HRD activities, involving different training providers as well as employees as mentors for "on the job training". In order to evaluate the results of HRD activities, the company regularly conducts analysis of job satisfaction and work climate among employees that are showing good results.

In order to ensure sustainability and transferability of this good practice, we need regular interviews with employees in order to define development needs and provide feedback, good information flow through the promotion of multi-directional communication, monitoring and evaluation of performance and implementation of common goals.

*It is important to create an atmosphere in which devotion and good performance will be recognised and openly acknowledged and commended. A framework for creating the described climate involves multidirectional communication and regular conversations with employees based on the social competence and fundamental values that the company represents.*

More information:

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## Competence Centre for Human Resource Development (CC4HRD), Slovenia

*Partnership in the field of human resource development for strengthening competencies of companies and branches of economy*

Competence Centre for Human Resource Development (CC4HRD) is an instrument promoted by the Public Fund for HRD and Scholarship and financed by ESF since 2010 that contributes to improvement of matching skills, career development and lifelong learning.

CC4HRD is a partnership between companies and other organisations (e.g.: Chamber of economy and industry and its industry associations, association of employees, development organisations, universities and educational/training institutions, trade unions, etc.) in specific sectors of the economy where companies and other organisations cooperate and exchange knowledge and experience, train their employees in accordance to the company's needs and increase competencies of their employees and contribute to decrease of deficit in specific competencies, thus increasing the competitiveness of companies and their employees. The purpose of CC4HRD is strengthening competencies of companies and branches of economy through cooperation in the field of human resource development between members, companies and organisations through targeted training for higher competitiveness of employees, companies and sectors. CC4HRD centres are established and operated in different sectors of the economy throughout Slovenia and are financed by the European Social Fund.

For each CC4HRD, a specific Competence model is developed and includes competence profiles for selected key occupations/jobs at individual competence centres. Based on competence profiles and identified deficits in competencies for specific jobs, a training plan is designed at each CC4HRD, and employees are trained in accordance with the Training plan and targeted competencies in all companies, members of CC4HRD. After the end of the training programmes, the progress in competencies

and improvement in performance of employees is evaluated.

Since 2010, 19 partnerships in different economic sectors were established and 19 competence models were designed and through training several thousands of employees improved their competencies. Experiences from cooperation in CC4HRD and Competence model are transferrable to the whole branch and by promoting occupations the profile of industry and profession is raised. The cooperation should be extended to educational and training institutions and business associations.

*For better matching and career development and for achieving key competencies in companies to reach higher competitiveness, the Slovenian Public Fund for Human Resources and Scholarship promotes partnerships of companies and other organisations through CC4HRD. By investing in training, CC4HRD impacts the sustainable usability and flow of knowledge in the economic sector and thus contributes to higher adaptability, efficiency and competitiveness of companies within specific economic sectors and their employees. Through a sectorial approach and through partnership and collaboration of companies, educational and training institutions and other key players, more efficient transfer of information and knowledge, development of critical mass of specialised knowledge and generating of new approaches and skills are provided.*

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## Lifelong Career Orientation for employees and companies, Slovenia

*Lifelong Career Orientation programme for lifelong career orientation of employees and strengthening HRD departments in companies*

Lifelong Career Orientation for employees and companies is a national programme, initiated in 2011 by the Public Fund of Human Resource Development and Scholarship and co-financed by the European Social Fund (ESF).

The purpose of Lifelong Career Orientation is to facilitate lifelong career orientation to employees in companies and strengthen their HRD departments through a network of external providers and by this providing quality career development of employees and better access to such services. Through the Lifelong Career Orientation programme, the Public Fund enabled companies in a time of financial crisis and recession and reduced funds for training and HRD in order to start investing in employee development again. Through the implementation of various activities, companies obtain a well-motivated, employable and adaptable workforce and the possibility of developing employee careers and thus higher personal satisfaction and commitment is reached. In the career planning process, the interests of employees and employers are co-ordinated, thus creating a greater impact on increasing competitiveness and improvement in performance. The programme is also focused on development of individual skills for their own management, planning and career development in accordance with their life goals, abilities and interests with regard to opportunities in education, training and employment or redeployment.

Lifelong Career Orientation programme enables companies to have well-motivated employees, flexible to a rapidly changing market and able to acquire new skills. Through the programme, the competitiveness of companies and their employees is increased. A broader goal of the programme is raising awareness of the general public about the importance of career guidance within companies.

The programme was initiated by public tender and selection of training providers that were listed and

announced on the Public fund webpage. The next public tender was dedicated to companies that apply for funds for training their employees and the first activities for companies started in June 2012. Companies choose training providers from the list and companies contract them for training and other activities related to HRD, according to company's needs. There were two public tenders and 5,580,000 EUR were dedicated to lifelong career orientation activities in Slovenian companies. By now, 169 companies and more than 5,000 employees have been involved in different activities. The second tender was published at the beginning of 2013 and activities will be implemented by 2015.

*Companies agree that through training of their employees and the appraisal process, they better understand and thereby strengthen mutual cooperation, limit conflicts and increase employee satisfaction. Employees understand training as a positive contribution to company development and not as a tool for negative goals such as decreasing salaries or even losing jobs. The ability to use new knowledge and skills is the advantage needed for improved performance and increased competitiveness of employees. Today's job market requires increasing flexibility, therefore it is necessary for employees in companies to provide access to career guidance and encourage them to be included in the various activities to develop their potential. It is important to support employees in holistic development where a career plan is carefully designed and where opportunities for personal development of employees and interests of employers are reconciled.*

More information:

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## Successful Talent Management at InDenova, Spain

*Talent management model with which the company succeeded in creation of pleasant workplace where people are ready to make additional efforts if needed, since they feel respected, their job is secure and they are supported in their career development*

The model comes from a small sized ICT company from Valencia, Spain specialised in solutions and advanced developments of electronic signature and BPM, security and digital certificates. The most accurate word that defines the style of talent management in this company is RESPECT (for all people, for creed, gender or sexual orientation, a job well done, for their clients, towards the mentor). This is the most important value at the company and persons in charge demand it from all workers. Respect is the basis to manage a diverse staff and achieve a positive work environment. It is essential and the origin of comradeship, honesty, integrity, transparency, trust, loyalty or good mood, some of the most important features that describe a positive working environment. InDenova supports the value, the importance of the person, because people created the company, they are the best ambassadors and they promote, reinforce and change the InDenova brand. One of this management's successes is staff involvement in the creation of the work environment.

During recruitment, the interview is the most important part, where the focus is on the values of the person, not on the CV so much. The philosophy behind this is that the most important thing is the person, because the technology skills can be taught and learned. Therefore, the company offers training and tutoring, where the best team coordinators are those who began as internship students. The emphasis is also placed on information and knowledge sharing as well as on team building. The company enables and expects a lot of adaptability and flexibility, where everyone has to be responsible for their work (rigour) - it is a way of respecting others. The beneficiaries and users of this talent management model are InDenova workers and their clients. They are creators and renovators of this kind of talent management for career development.

In order to ensure sustainability and transferability of this good practice, we need to humanise recruitment process, humanise the companies and consider a positive work environment as an investment to achieving good results.

*The most important asset of the company is not the managers but all of the staff. Since the values are those that guide us in our work, it is important to build on them and strengthen them during the career development process. Respect is a basis for the working environment, good financial results, engagement of staff, motivation, etc. Also the value of work ("we believe in what we create") provides better results in working atmosphere and promotion of the company.*

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## STRENGTHENING COMPETITIVENESS ON THE LABOUR MARKET

*Education, training and lifelong learning significantly contribute to promoting the interests of individuals, enterprises, the economy and society as a whole.*



## Styrian Web TV, Austria

*TV station established for training unemployed young people*

Many young people are unemployed; it is difficult for them to find their way within tight boundaries and they see no sense in classic professions. Computer games, TV and social media excite them. On the other hand, the industry's demand for "moving images" (corporate presentations on the Internet, viral videos on Facebook and YouTube, a growing number of TV stations, electronic newspapers) is on the rise due to the digital revolution. Based on this situation and the fact that the media sector in general is very attractive to young people, the idea for the establishment of an own Internet TV station was developed and Styrian Web TV was born.

Styrian Web TV is a project offering young unemployed people aged 18 to 25 whose main residence is in Graz and surroundings the opportunity to learn the film production business from scratch. It is a first-rate education in the areas of cutting & design as well as camera & sound. Its goal is to create an education that is relevant to young people's living circumstances and in particular is attracting for such groups of unemployed young men and women that despite considerable effort have not been able to make a first step into the labour market. Styrian Web-TV is an Internet TV station that broadcasts its programmes via mobile TV and web TV and is operated by the project participants themselves, guided by industry experts. This allows them to acquire specific technological know-how and practical experience in the areas of camera and sound as well as cutting and design. The TV programmes range from reporting on regional events to segments on individual companies and projects.

The project was implemented from September 2012 through August 2013 and 24 young people were trained in the areas of camera and sound as well as cutting and design. The crucial success factors of this 43 week long training programme are: direct connection to the industry (cooperation agreements and internships), flexible training hours that make it possible to also

carry out evening and weekend projects, transfer of sound practical knowledge, qualification for professional activity and further educational measures, acquisition of essential soft skills relevant to the labour market, strengthening of the self-confidence of the young participants and experience of work as something that can be both sensible and fun. The training provided within the scope of the Styrian Web TV project addresses both women and men. In particular, female participants are offered an opportunity to discover talents and potential for technical occupations that they may not have been aware of and to apply these skills directly in practice at the station created for training purposes. The training is carried out under supervision, mostly of professionals with hands-on experience in the cinematographic industry. The training centre is located in the City of Graz at the so-called "R29", a new hotspot for creative people, and at the location of former factory in the Graz Reininghaus area, where Styrian Web TV has found a home together with various types of other creative companies.

The body responsible for the project and the overall coordination is the LFI Styria, the Chamber of Agriculture's institute for further education. 54 % of the project costs were financed by the European Social Fund and 46 % by Austrian Federal Ministry for Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection.

*The training provided within the Styrian Web TV project has made a positive contribution to the battle against the alarming increase of unemployment among young people over the past few years. As a part of the strategy to becoming a permanent institution within the media project and/or (Styrian) training landscape for media professions and as a core element of the long-term vision for the development of Styrian Web TV into a permanent training television station, the aspiration to obtain a certification as a recognised training course for the occupational profiles of camera operator and cutter is a logical next step.*

More information: [www.effect-project.eu](http://www.effect-project.eu)



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### Linking the Economy and Higher Education at the Regional Level, Croatia

*Development of the regional economy with establishment of a College that connects public government and local companies in order to reduce the gap between the skill needs and knowledge provided in the region*

To meet the needs of the economy in the Krapina-Zagorje County, the regional and local government together with the strong economic entities established the College Hrvatsko zagorje Krapina. The mission of the College, as an educational and professional institution, is that through maximum and constant innovation of teaching content and applying modern methods and techniques of education and researching processes it educates teens and quality professionals in the field of their study programs, being information technology, transport logistics and operational management. The intention of the College is to enable leaders who will lead the progress of the economy in the county and Croatia, young professionals who are able to engage in the European labour market.

The Governing Board of the College consists of representatives of professions, local government officials and business representatives. Students are involved in professional councils. When changing the curricula of existing programs or launching new programs of study, the fundamental bases are county strategic plans and the opinions of prominent businessmen.

Since companies are looking for students that are able to immediately implement the gained knowledge in the real working process and contribute to the development of economic entities, the required periodical modernisation of all study programs and the launch of new programs are necessary. In addition, the College has recognised the need for improving the quality of higher education focused on connectivity of economy and higher education and initiated the “entrepreneurial incubator”.

The quality of academic programs has been verified in the process of re-accreditation conducted by the Agency for Higher Education, Croatia, where it confirmed the fulfilment of all the requirements in teaching, teaching staff, space, equipment and student standards. But the best indicator of the quality of this approach in education is the fact that almost 90 % of graduates are employed.

*Educational institutions must be sensitive to the economy and only those programs that ensure competitiveness in the labour market can survive in the long term. Programs in higher education institutions must be manufactured with the close cooperation of businesses from the region.*

More information: [www.effect-project.eu](http://www.effect-project.eu)



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## Role of the Family Centre Krapina-Zagorje County in improving lifelong learning, Croatia

*Recognising the importance of lifelong learning as an essential factor in the advancement of personal growth and development*

Through regular implementation of Family centre activities, the need for their expansion in order to improve the quality of life of all County residents was recognised. Since the Family centre recognised the importance of lifelong learning, it developed several informative and educational workshops to enhance self-awareness and training skills as well to acquire new knowledge. Activities are conducted through individual and group counselling that is aimed at empowering individuals to recognise their own needs, potential and real opportunities that relate to improving their knowledge, skills and competencies through work on themselves. The centre also delivers workshops where the importance of lifelong learning and education is promoted and they cover topics like positive communication, optimism and life goals, emotional intelligence, assertiveness, etc. Users of the service of counselling and prevention education workshops are all residents of Krapina-Zagorje County, regardless of age, gender and educational status. Along with the Family centre, there are also County bodies, cities and municipalities, kindergartens, primary and secondary schools, associations and government and public institutions that are involved and contributing to the good practice.

The Family centre evaluates its work through oral and written evaluations by users of individual counselling and workshops. The results show great satisfaction with activities and emphasise the need for even more frequent implementation. To implement such an example of good practice in the long term, further recruitment of experts as well as further financial support for the implementation of the activities is necessary.

*These types of work require more frequent implementation to enhance the quality of life for all residents of the County as well as to inform residents about possible courses of action and assistance in accordance with their needs.*

More information: [www.effect-project.eu](http://www.effect-project.eu)



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## LEES (Lanzadera de Empleo y Emprendimiento Solidario): Career Boosting Program, Spain

*LEES is a new concept in social intervention to unemployment, originating from Castilla y León, Spain, that is focused on local needs*

This initiative of labour integration is about unemployed people being themselves the main figures in their processes of employability. This project is based on cooperation and mutual assistance as synergies generating strategies to overcome the current situation. Unemployed people interact in a new context, a context of trust with shared feelings, experiences, information, training and so on, that greatly improves the chances of finding employment and the development of own self-employment projects.

Unemployed people, who are active, visible and solidary, are put in diverse teams (different careers, studies, ages, ...) that are coordinated by a coach (also a former unemployed) and search for work together and support each other. Apart from the main coach, whose role is to be the group leader and motivate it, the unemployed are the main players in the process, developing a collaborative and supportive structure that empowers them to job search and build their own businesses, entrepreneurs or project groups. Similarly, it is a flexible methodology that also integrates training, developing emotional intelligence, group techniques, relationship management, charitable activities, entrepreneurship, etc.

LEES targets local unemployed people as well as enterprises and companies looking for staff, city councils, etc. The concept involves also a promoter, financial support (local government and private funding) and collaborating institutions that provides spaces, resources and the recruitment of the unemployed that will be in LEES. Although the concept is rather new (from spring 2013), it is already providing encouraging results in rates of integration and changes to the feelings and attitudes of unemployed people involved (more motivation, feel supported, initiative, new knowledge and skills acquired, etc.).

In order to ensure sustainability and transferability of this good practice, we need in particular cultural change (from job consultancy/counselling to team coaching) as well as financial support.

*Unemployment creates serious consequences on emotional balance that can be mitigated through power teamwork and solidarity. Through the experience of good practice, people wish to lead their own career, but they need empowerment and support from their peers. The practice has proved that a change of situation is possible. It is important to improve the employability of the unemployed from a perspective that places them in an active position and is shared and supportive during the great challenges posed by the current situation.*

More information: [www.effect-project.eu](http://www.effect-project.eu)



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## Educational model at Florida Education Group, Spain

*The Educational model from Valencia, Spain is promoting the development of entrepreneurial attitudes among its students and contact with business realities during the student's education, with the objective of facilitating their integration into the professional world*

The model is aimed at matching demanded and supplied skills. The challenge for model development was the fact that “we are still teaching the students of today with the methods of yesterday for the world of tomorrow.” According to trends and opportunities, a dynamic and innovative educational model that trains competent and highly employable professionals, in a rich and inspiring learning environment in which the students learn by doing, enjoy the learning process and do it throughout life, was developed. It is about a different way of learning and teaching through Integrated projects – multidisciplinary projects carried out in real contexts, where students learn in a cooperative way, integrate their knowledge to solve real problems (learning by doing), develop social skills (team work, leadership, communication, conflict solving, etc.) and are responsible for their own learning. The Integrated project process includes development of competencies as well as team work and leadership. During this process, students are put in teams according to their team role and learn competences through team work, which develops from leader directed to self-managed teams, ending in the 4th year with team members acting as team leaders for the 1st year students.

The educational model is targeting students and teachers at the Florida Education group as well as companies and educational centres that are involved in the internship periods and closer environment. The educational model is also affecting Florida's organisational model by demanding interdisciplinary organisation, educating competences, working in teams, sharing good practices and improving quality. So far, the methodology used in classes has been rated

highly by students, whose opinions and suggestions are incorporated.

In order to ensure sustainability and transferability of this good practice, we need motivated and committed professionals, interest to change the way we educate, passion for teaching and passion for learning and strong contact with the business and labour market: training/education connected to the real world.

*The changing environment also demands changes in the way we educate. For this, educators need to build competencies, since they enable this transformation. Building of competences and empowerment of students should be incorporated in the curriculum, wherein re-organisation of organisation is needed in order to bring these two aspects into harmony.*

More information: [www.effect-project.eu](http://www.effect-project.eu)



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## 4 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMENDATIONS

The skills mismatch has to be overcome if we want to effectively use our human capital and talents. We have to establish better matching skills supply to labour market demand supported by career development and lifelong learning. Adaptation of education and training to the changing requirements of the world of work is crucial for preventing labour market imbalances. Improving the efficiency of education and training systems is crucial, they have to generate new skills responded to new jobs requirements.

It is an urgent need to step up measures to improve labour market matching by adapting education and training systems to provide skills and competencies in future job-rich sectors-notably in the green economy, health care, green and ICT sectors, by supporting occupational and geographical mobility through better cooperation between employers and employment services and by targeting young people through the development of partnership based approaches for apprenticeships and quality traineeships.<sup>36</sup>

Ensuring a better match between the supply of skills and labour market demand is necessary. The development of new skills and competencies to fully exploit the potential for recovery is a priority and a challenge for the EU and national public authorities, for education and training providers, companies, employees and students. To confront rising unemployment matching of skills must be improved. The removal of obstacles, more transparent information on labour market trends and skills requirements and enhanced coordination between different policy area and labour market institutions would contribute to better match between individual's skills and job opportunities.<sup>37</sup>

Close cooperation between the government, employers and employees is an important feature of effective and permanent links between education and the world of work to promote the development of real skills at the right time.

Cooperation between different ministries is greatly enhanced by various forms of partnerships between various stakeholders. Special attention is paid to cooperation countries with economies or with representatives of employers as a guarantee that the information on the labour market is taken into account when designing education and training programmes. Connecting with representatives of employers is particularly important in the field of vocational education and training. Countries with apprenticeship systems normally report small or insignificant problems in relation to skills mismatch. This should be related to the fact that the training under the apprenticeship is automatically adjusted to demand, and that companies provide internships for those occupations for which there is demand, obsolete trades are automatically excluded from the scheme. Constantly updating existing professional qualifications as well as the establishment of new qualifications, both are crucial.

Observed partner countries are at different levels of anticipating and matching skills, career development and lifelong learning processes. Also, cooperation between stakeholders for better interaction between the world of education and work is at different stages and forms. But some improvements should be made in all countries: better responsiveness of education/training systems at all levels; creating partnerships and cooperation between stakeholders at all levels and engaging them throughout the processes; encouraging employers to co-invest and participate

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<sup>36</sup>[http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/themes/27\\_skills\\_gaps\\_and\\_labour\\_mobility.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/themes/27_skills_gaps_and_labour_mobility.pdf).

<sup>37</sup>Agenda New Skills for New Jobs.

in the education/training activities; strengthening apprenticeship schemes. In addition, the key EC recommendations are as follows:<sup>38</sup>

1. Provide the right incentives to upgrade and better use skills for individuals and employers.
2. Bring the worlds of education, training and work closer together; establish skills-based qualifications, cooperation between work and education/training and joint approach will improve matching skills demand and supply on the labour market.
3. Develop the right mix of skills, the right skills portfolio; adapt curricula content, teaching, delivery methods and assessment to intended learning outcomes; building entrepreneurial competence in school.
4. Better anticipate future skill needs; improve the capacity to anticipate future skill requirements, using a combination of different methods at national and EU level; develop measuring tools of structural imbalance between skills supply and demand.

One of the fourth strands of the EU New Skills for New Jobs Agenda for anticipating and matching skill demand and supply at labour market is strengthening the Union's capacity for forecasting and anticipation. Businesses have a key role to play in the assessment of skills needs and should be actively involved. Therefore the Commission will promote dialogue between business and education and training providers and establishment of partnership to meet medium-term skill needs.

Skills development, upgrading skills and better matching between the supply of skills and labour market demand is not only necessary but also a challenge for the EU and shared responsibility of national public authorities, education and training providers, employers and employees, with social partners playing a crucial role.



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<sup>38</sup>New Skillsfor New Jobs; ActionNow; KeyRecommendations; EC, February 2010.



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