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MINISTERO DEL LAVORO,

DELLA SALUTE E DELLE POLITICHE SOCIALI

Direzione Generale per le Politiche
per l'Orientamento e la Formazione

FOSTERING THE PARTICIPATION IN LIFELONG LEARNING

Measures and actions
in France, Germany,
Sweden, United Kingdom

Final Research Report

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Measures and actions in France, Germany
Sweden, United Kingdom

Final Research Report

The present report contains the main results of the activity of research carried out by Isfol – Area Politiche e Offerte per la Formazione Iniziale e Permanente (Policies and Supply for Initial and Lifelong Learning Area) in the framework of the NOP Ob. 3, C1 Action 9, contracted to the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies. Paola Nicoletti coordinated the research activities, carried out with the collaboration of the Consortium made up of Aster, IRRE-Emilia Romagna and Associazione Formazione 80.

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A cd-rom, *Fostering the participation in Lifelong Learning. Measures and actions in France, Germany, Sweden, United Kingdom. The specific measures, is attached to the present volume.*

CONTENTS

Introduction	11
Part I	
The comparative analysis objectives	17
1. The European framework for lifelong learning	19
2. The research project	27
2.1 Objectives and activity phases	27
2.2 The object of the research	30
2.3 Research tools used for the collection, analysis and investigation of data concerning “measures”	35
Part II	
Description of the lifelong systems in the analysed countries	37
3. France	39
3.1 Introduction	39
3.2 Adult education national policies	42
3.3 Role of the institutions	67
3.4 System and activities	69
3.5 Bodies	70
3.6 Services	73
3.7 Demand policy	82
4. Germany	85
4.1 Adult education national policies	88
4.2 Role of the institutions	97
4.3 System and activities	98
4.4 Bodies	100

4.5	Services	103
4.6	Demand policy	104
4.7	Personnel	106
5. Sweden		109
5.1	Introduction	109
5.2	Adult education national policies	110
5.3	Role of the institutions	113
5.4	System and activities	118
5.5	Bodies	124
5.6	Services	125
5.7	Demand policy	127
5.8	Personnel	128
6. The United Kingdom		131
6.1	Introduction	131
6.2	Adult education national policies	136
6.3	Role of the Institutions	143
6.4	System and activities	152
6.5	Bodies	161
6.6	Services	162
6.7	Demand policy	164
6.8	Personnel	167
7. Italy		169
7.1	Main measures of lifelong learning policy	169
7.2	Measures to (re) enter education and training system	175
7.3	Measures to strengthen support and accompanying services	189
Part III		
Comparative analysis of the measures and actions for lifelong learning		201
8. State policies on adult education - A comparison		203
8.1	Introduction	203
8.2	Systems comparison	204
8.3	Adult education policies comparison	206
9. Comparative analysis on adult education policy background trends		209
9.1	A problem common to all	209
9.2	Education policies: “basic elements” compared	211
9.3	Evolution of the policies for the individual right to adult education	213
9.4	Definition of the institutional role	217
9.5	Adult education system adequacy: interventions	222

10. Educational and Vocational Training offer for socially and culturally disadvantaged people	227
10.1 The central role of vocational education	227
10.2 Basic options	229
10.3 Vocational training supply for disadvantaged audiences	230
10.4 Cultural and vocational training supply targeted to the general adult population	233
10.5 Observations	234
10.6 National adult education strategy in Sweden	235
10.7 The United Kingdom: the National Skills Strategy	237
10.8 France: the continuing education central role	239
10.9 Germany: the dual system crisis	241
11. Specific measures to support service access and supply quality	243
11.1 Scope definition	243
11.2 Motivation, information and guidance	245
11.3 New technologies for distance learning	256
11.4 Competence recognition and certification: target audiences, procedures, strategies and related mechanisms	259
11.5 Supply quality assurance	262
11.6 Quality of trainers	265
11.7 Partnership and integration promotion	267
12. Labour market vocational training demand	271
12.1 Introduction	271
12.2 Time related measures	273
12.3 Various economic measures: loans, subsidies, vouchers, accounts, other tools	278
13. Some reflections on transferability	285
Acronyms	293
References	303
Web resources	331

INTRODUCTION

The strategic role of continuing education towards the promotion of both employability and active citizenship has been widely shared on a national and a European scale, since the mid-90ies, thanks to the momentum gained by the community action in that direction. The growth of people's education and vocational qualification level must be the objective, if the individual's professional placement and full participation in knowledge society is to be achieved.

The way ahead towards such goals requires that many European Countries take a strong commitment; the Countries involved are those which, like Italy, aim to pursue the lifelong vocational education and training objectives laid out by the Lisbon strategy.

Among the results to be achieved, not later than 2010, by the European vocational education and training system, based on parameters progressively refined through past experiences, at least 85% of the population 22-year old should hold an upper secondary level degree and at least 12.5% of the 25 to 64 age range population should participate in continuing education activities.

The Lisbon strategy has been recently updated and integrated; its revised version further enhances the trend which places growing emphasis on the individual's pivotal role in the unfolding of any lifelong learning pathway.

Significant advancements have been recorded in our country. However, they have not sufficiently raised the low education and qualification levels of the population, most of all in the 25-64 age range, nor have they reduced the spread of competence shortages, be them cultural, scientific, transversal or functional, among adults and young people of important social layers.

The above findings are supported by data concerning adult population literacy in the Oecd (Ials/Sials) Countries, and by the PISA international research activities which addressed learning among fifteen years olds.

In this respect, Italy's historical delay is mostly due to the older generations' lower qualification. As a matter of fact, the number of degrees awarded, and the figures accounting for education system participation by the Italian population, have peaked in the last two decades; still, it should be kept in mind that 5% of all fourteen year olds has completed primary school only.

Participation in continuing education activities by the 25 – 64 age range population is scheduled to move up, from its present 6.2% rate (as per the latest 2007 Eurostat figures) to an estimated 12.5% by year 2010; in other words, as far as Italy's is concerned, five million adults are going to become involved in educational activities. Even worse, the situation shown by people holding low level educational qualifications indicates that 1% only, of the 25-64 age range population which has left school without entering the upper secondary level, has taken advantage of some form of vocational education and training opportunity; according to what emerges from data gathered by Eurostat in 2005.

On the road signposted within the Community any further progress requires absolutely necessary work, on both the “supply” and the “demand” sides: the coordination and the integration of various kinds of vocational education and training offers; the vocational education and training requirements, coupled with information, guidance, enhancement and support initiatives addressing the educational participation of different adult population groups.

Recently, national research work conducted by Isfol, in the area of continuing education demand and supply, has highlighted and confirmed a number of open issues:

- vocational education and training activities are poorly attended;
- the adult population scholarly level is low and the medium-high level of the held study qualifications is tightly coupled with participation;
- the lack of adequate informative and guidance support activities versus a well spread prospective participation availability;
- the existence of a broad and diversified range of public and private providers and a multitude of courses and activities (often in the foreign language and information technology sectors), meeting the more popular requirements almost exclusively;
- the lack of supply provider coordination, as an obstacle to the creation of a local area network.

It is true to say that all inclinations towards continuing education, although widely shared, fail to be coupled with adequate action plans bringing together the involved actors and their target audiences, with the aim of attracting a significant rate of adult population, namely amongst holders of low level education and qualification. Data gathered so far in our Country, next to those presented by Eurostat regarding participation, reveal the exclusion of an outstanding portion of the adult population from the vocational education and training systems which focus on lifelong learning. Social and economic exclusion are a consequence or side effect of such a situation, far from unusual.

Equal opportunity access to vocational education and training is also far from being the rule; supply is mainly tuned on medium-high target audiences, which are already educated, trained and qualified.

Continuing education supply in Italy, as it appears from two surveys conducted

by Isfol, meets the most structured demand in all its vocational training sectors, matching requirements brought forward by its more educated users; additionally, it shows an overlap of formal and non formal education offers, markedly obvious when it comes to provision of computer literacy and foreign language course activities (that is the prevailing activities, by far).

As a matter of fact, both surveys highlight the sheer difficulty encountered when attempting to reach the weakest population layers, either due to the poor supply operator attention for the true needs of this social segment, or due to the less educated user base lack of awareness, for their own need of lifelong vocational education and training. The typical continuing vocational training course user profile identifies therefore a "solid" individual; in average, courses surveyed in 2001-02 show that users are: mostly in the 26 – 40 age range (41.3%), Italian citizens (96.9%), upper secondary school certificate holders (40.7%), employed (55.1%).

Those figures are still valid over two years, according to the more recent survey: continuing education course participants are still mostly in the 26 – 40 age range (46.4%), Italian citizens (93.7%), upper secondary school certificate holders (56.7%), employed (48.7%). Continuing education course attendance by the over 50ies counts up to 9.8% only.

Adult education is thus poorly attended by low or weak scholarly individuals, whose illiteracy is a hardly avoidable risk, in danger of exclusion not just from the labour market but from entitlement to their citizenship rights as well.

Paradoxically, the relevance of continuing education towards limiting exclusion by lifelong learning is acknowledged, but the surveyed data seem to say it fails to be acknowledged: on the one hand there is a consensus of opinion regarding the role played by learning, in strategic policies and in operational measures addressing the issues raised by various forms of exclusion; on the other hand however, the figures accounting for vocational education and training participation are far from encouraging.

Strangely, there are presently no in depth studies - with just a few exceptions – accounting for the impact continuing education may have towards the prevention of social exclusion for the adult population at risk of marginalisation, while more attention is being paid to the role played by basic education in the battle against young generation exclusion.

To bridge the above mentioned knowledge gap this comparative research has been planned and conducted by Isfol, under Labour Ministry financial provisions within the scope of the European Social Fund; the research aims to identify and analyse measures and actions, undertaken or ongoing in some European countries, towards the achievement of:

- easier inclusion of disadvantaged individuals and/or social groups in different lifelong learning pathways, in view of their employability;
- prevention of new forms of exclusion for adult population at higher risk of marginalisation.

The analysis, aimed at the identification of possible transferability elements within the Italian context, further stimulates the present opinion making towards the need to implement the Italian continuing education national system; supporting knowledge society citizens active participation and their employability is the primary goal, to be perceived as an action promoting the individual's potential development conditions (also through the design of programmes and special initiatives enabling recovery from disadvantage for the unemployed and for low qualification workers, by attaching a priority to lifelong learning activities, taking care of all aspects of equal opportunity employment and making professional and family life more easily compatible).

The view which is taken addresses both the development of the national continuing education system presently available and the battle against social exclusion, by recognising the value of educational experience and its related opportunities in terms of social life, and of knowledge and competence development, which are now rated as key factors of active participation in knowledge society, independently from the individual's age, socio-cultural status, educational background and occupation. Although a clear definition of "social exclusion" is missing, due to its various shapes (from lack of primary subsistence means to long term unemployment, from social marginalisation to socio-cultural deprivation), the expression is used to describe different types of "at risk" social groups (ethnic minorities, the unemployed, low professional qualification individuals, etc...) and the battle against social exclusion is in the agenda of the ongoing political debate, nationally and internationally. The unfortunate motivation for this agenda item to be debated is provided by millions of people, affected by social exclusion as a daily fact of life; even today, their life is one of economic poverty and/or cultural disadvantage, with effects on their sense of "belonging" (to their own family, community and society in its broadest sense) which are quite different from those experienced by individuals or social groups who are (economically, culturally, educationally, etc..) disadvantaged, but may perceive, on the contrary, a strong sense of inclusion in their own family, community, etc..

Promotion of lifelong learning for all and in different (family, profession, social) contexts, aimed also at social exclusion prevention and elimination, is therefore an integral part of the economic and social development strategies adopted by the European Union and by the Oecd member countries. Lifelong learning has been repeatedly recognised as the guiding principle which leads to the achievement of personal development, economic growth and cohesion objectives, in present day modern and complex societies.

For present survey purposes social inclusion has been focused upon as a "complex process" and, taking such complexity into account, special attention has been paid to the strategies which address the battle against social exclusion in vocational education and training terms.

The comparative survey actually conducted by the research does not address the continuing education systems, but the measures introduced by policies against

educational and social exclusion of the adult population in four European countries: France, Germany, Sweden and United Kingdom.

The Countries addressed by the study have been selected on the basis of a number of criteria, such as:

- the national continuing education systems historical development;
- the territorial organization and the direct responsibilities, at various levels, in the context of continuing education;
- the interconnection of responsibilities for matters concerning regulations, organisation, finances and management at the different (regional, provincial and local) territorial levels;
- the lifelong learning activity participation levels, as measured by benchmarks which ensure the entitlement to the award of the Lisbon European Council prescribed parameters, later confirmed by the Barcelona Council.

The UK, although already involved in the Oecd conducted Country-studies for adult education experiences in actions against social exclusion, was however included in the research due to the excellent figures accounting for lifelong learning activity in 2005 (27,5% versus the European 10,3% average, related to the 25 Country enlarged Union).

The continuing education system research scope has been limited to formal education, while the “measures” to be surveyed were selected for their significance towards the implementation of lifelong learning strategies, independently from the type of policy involved.

The adopted methodological approach is based on the concept that an educational policy is made tangible by the implementation of a series of measures, focused on the different factors upon which the policy intervention is expected (e.g.: the vocational training costs, the activities, the locations).

Measures are the heart and soul of this research work; they have been identified and classified in three categories, depending on their relationship with: demand, supply, service and infrastructure development. The research work studies the specific measures introduced by the policies; it does not analyse the continuing education systems in other Countries, nor the strategies, nor the sectorial policies.

Starting from the identification and the classification of measures implemented in the four surveyed Countries, in the context of the battle against adult population educational and social exclusion, the comparative analysis has allowed the acquisition of:

- an informative framework of experiences and success factors in the Countries involved;
- a furthering of the knowledge acquisition process regarding common success experiences, transversal to France, Germany, Sweden and UK. The value of this type of process proves itself precious, when it comes to promoting exchanges between models designed and implemented in different contexts and scenarios, including the Italian ones.

Introduction

This volume contains the results of the field survey and of the research work; initially, the analysis of the European adult education framework is presented, with its focus on lifelong learning and on employability; then the research objectives and methodology are described; following that, the present volume is focalized on the collection and the analysis of the specific lifelong learning measures and actions realized in France, Germany, United Kingdom and Sweden in order to favour the battle against adult population educational and social exclusion. These measures are divided for every afferent country in measures to demand policy, supply policy and services development of the services and infrastructures.

The working group has been sharing the measure comparative analysis with the foreign experts for the different systems; the experts contributed to the present summary through their participation at the interim international seminary of the search, organized by Isfol on 16 January 2006 in Rome.

A cd-rom attached to the volume, collects the analysis of specific measures and actions taken in lifelong learning in France, Germany, United Kingdom and Sweden to promote the fight training and social exclusion. These actions are broken down by each country in measures relating to demand policy supply and development of services and infrastructure.

part I

The comparative analysis objectives

chapter 1

THE EUROPEAN FRAMEWORK FOR LIFELONG LEARNING

“Lifelong learning is not a luxury; it is a necessity”. This statement appears in a report delivered by a High Level Group tasked with the identification of suitable measures forming a consistent strategy, towards the achievement of the objectives laid out by the Lisbon strategy¹. The report sums up the Community Institutions’ adopted direction very clearly; their policies revolve around the perception of lifelong learning as an essential factor of individual and collective growth, coupled with social cohesion in a competitive system. In other words, the statement addresses each individual’s right to lifelong learning, for the sake of fostering active citizenship self expression and employability promotion.

In its Report the High Level Group identifies priority actions, such as: reducing by half the number of early school leavers, urgently; adapting the education and training systems to the knowledge society; fostering lifelong learning for all; promoting and facilitating mobility.

Taking a glimpse backwards, the unfolding of the Community acknowledgement of the individual’s pivotal role in the learning process makes a Commission *White Paper* immediately come to mind: the White Paper titled “*Teaching and Learning: Towards the Learning Society*”², which aimed to enhance access to learning of not just traditional “basic knowledge” but of new “technical knowledge” and “social attitudes” as well, in a suitable framework for “knowledge acquired by an individual’s lifelong learning” to be valued, both in formal and in non formal institutions.

Later, the concept was addressed again by the Commission itself in the *Memorandum on Lifelong Learning*³, which revolved around two interrelated aims⁴:

1 In 2004, the European Commission was invited by Council to create a High Level Official Group, chaired by Wim Kok and chartered with publishing the document titled “*Facing the challenge: The Lisbon strategy for growth and employment*”, November 2004.

2 European Commission, *Teaching and learning: towards the learning society*, Luxembourg, 1996.

3 European Commission, *Memorandum on Lifelong Learning*, 30.10.2000 SEC (2000) 1832 DOC 0015120003.

4 The two aims span across six key messages: new basic skills for all; more investment in human resources; innovation in teaching and learning; valuing learning; re-thinking guidance and counselling; bringing learning closer to home.

1. The European framework for lifelong learning

- the promotion of employability, most of all through a process which combines competence acquisition, improvement and up-to-date keeping, as required by professional placement in information society;
- the active citizenship promotion, supporting people towards the knowledge and the skill acquisition targets set by the need to fully participate in a more complex and integrated society, featuring outstanding economic, technological and social changes.

The need to create a “learning culture”, driven by an understanding of citizens’ learning requirements (through demand and learner’s need enhanced knowledge and attention), has been repeatedly and specifically stressed by the European Commission in its communication *Making a European Area of Lifelong Learning a Reality*⁵ and by the June 2002 Council Resolution⁶, where lifelong learning (from pre-school to post-retirement and encompassing the whole spectrum of formal, non formal and informal learning) should be defined as «all learning activity undertaken throughout life, with the aim of improving knowledge, skills and competences within a personal, civic, social and/or an employment-related perspective». Granting learning for all, as a continuing process on a lifelong basis, irrespective of age, social and occupational status, for up-to-date personal competence and qualification improvement, while taking advantage of the widest possible experience forming contexts, demands an outstanding collective commitment. Lifelong learning actual implementation must be supported by the direct involvement of all interested parties.

Lifelong learning policy success requires everybody’s own basic competence level evolution and growth, up to the minimum which must at least be available for active participation in professional, family or collective living. The new basic competences are those related with information technology, foreign language knowledge, technological culture and entrepreneurship; social competences must be included, in addition to the traditional basic competences (reading/writing literacy and numeracy).

Year 2000 marked a key milestone of the individual employability and the active citizenship promotion process. Notice, firstly, the European Social Fund 2000-2006 programmatic planning, which specifically addresses lifelong learning, along the priority axis C, with a measure appropriately aimed at promoting lifelong education and training; two priority objectives are laid out consistently with the

5 European Community Commission, Communication: *Making a European Area of Lifelong Learning a Reality*, 21.11.2001 COM (2001) 678 def., where lifelong learning is defined as «*all learning activity undertaken throughout life, with the aim of improving knowledge, skills and competences within a personal, civic, social and/or an employment-related perspective*», p. 10.

6 The Lifelong Learning Resolution of 27.06.2002 published in the Italian Official Journal of the European Union G.U.C.E. series C 163 on 9.07.02, p. 1 and following.

objectives defined by the same year's *Memorandum on Lifelong Learning*: promoting entitlement to active citizenship rights in knowledge society; enhancing employability through the acquisition of competences required by labour market placement and occupational status stability.

Notice, secondly, the objectives laid out by the Lisbon European Council⁷, an important stepping stone towards the definition of medium and long term strategies which acknowledge lifelong education and training not just as a democratic knowledge society implementation pre-requisite, but also as a citizens' employability enhancement tool.

In spite of its seemingly growing difficulty, the making of a knowledge based European economy as the most competitive and dynamic system in the world, by 2010, is still the pursued objective; such system should trigger a sustainable economic growth, with new and better jobs and greater social cohesion, while bringing at the same time the European Union education and training system to a worldwide quality reference standard, as emphasized at the Barcelona Council⁸.

The Stockholm Council of 23 - 24 March 2001 already centred its agenda on the approaches to a modern European model and to the achievement of the Union strategic objective set forth by the Lisbon decision one year earlier. Three strategic objectives are identified; they aim to enhance the achievement of active citizenship and social inclusion in order to:

- improve the European Union education and training system quality and effectiveness;
- enhance education and training system access to all;
- open the education and training systems.

Monitoring of progress made by the Member States has required the identification, by the community institutions, of a number of quality indicators and parameters related to education and training systems, which are subject to periodic review and update.

A case in point was provided by the well known parameters released after the European Council of Barcelona⁹; they were intended to measure and monitor the average level of results achieved by the 15 States' education and training systems in six areas of concern: education and training investments; early school leaving; graduates in mathematics, science and technology; students who have

7 See: Lisbon European Council, *Presidency Conclusions*, 23 - 24 March 2000, p. 1 and following, http://www.europa.eu.int/council/off/conclu/mar2000/mar2000_it.pdf

8 Barcelona European Council, *Presidency Conclusions*, 15 - 16 March 2002 in EU Bulletin, n. 3, 2002, part I, paragraphs I.5-I.17, p. 3 and following.

9 European Community Commission, Communication: *European benchmarks in education and training: follow up to the Lisbon European Council*, Brussels, 20 November 2002, COM (2002) 629 def.

1. The European framework for lifelong learning

completed upper secondary school; basic competences; lifelong learning participation.

Another case in point was provided by the objectives identified by the same Barcelona Council, which aim for the European Union education and training systems to become a worldwide quality reference standard, and by the revision of the parameters accounting for the European average performance reference levels in the education and training sector¹⁰, which includes considering each individual Member State situation.

In the light of the above the *lifelong learning* activities (i.e.: participation in forms of lifelong learning) are expected to involve not less than 12.5% of the working age adult population in average by 2010, European Union wide (with an age range spanning from 25 to 64 year olds). Additional parameters cover other education system sectors¹¹, which are not less important.

More parameters have been identified in the context of the European Strategy for Employment¹²; the latter ones, summed to those previously mentioned, add considerably to the range of policies in pursuit of these three priority objectives: full employment; work place quality and productivity improvement; social cohesion and integration enhancement.

Therefore, the achievement of the objectives laid out by the European Councils later held in Lisbon, Santa Maria da Feira¹³ and Barcelona, needs reforms to be introduced in almost all surveyed States, towards the creation and the development of a continuing education and training system, enabling access to learning opportunities for all individuals, irrespective of their age.

As a matter of fact, in present-day society individuals are valued for their knowledge and their ability to use their knowledge; below a minimum knowledge and skill threshold they risk marginalisation and exclusion (from active citizenship participation; from the labour market).

A first line of intervention the European States may adopt links back to the strategies already brought forward in the *Memorandum on Lifelong Learning* and in its re-

¹⁰ Cfr. European Union Council, *Council Conclusions of 5 May 2003 on Reference Levels of European Average Performance in Education and Training (Benchmarks)*, in European Union O. J. C series 134 of 7th. June 2003, p. 3 and following.

¹¹ Early school leaver rates should be reduced by half with respect to their 2000 surveyed values, aiming to achieve an average EU rate not in excess of 10%; the number of graduates in Mathematical, Technological and Scientific disciplines should increase by 15% at least and, most of all, the current gender unbalance should decrease; at least 85% of the twenty two year olds should complete upper secondary school; the percentage of low reading literacy fifteen year olds should decrease by 20% with respect to the 2000 rate.

¹² The European Council Decision of 22 July 2003 on *Guidelines for the employment policies of the Member States* was published in the European Union O.J. L series 197 on 5 August 2003, p. 13 and following.

¹³ See: Santa Maria da Feira European Council, *Presidency Conclusions*, 19-20 June 2000, http://www.europa.eu.int/council/off/conclu/june2000/june2000_it.pdf

lated consultation process, currently ongoing in institutions and civil societies of the European States, including those which have not joined the European Union, towards the enhancement of continuing education and training.

Efforts to turn lifelong learning into a solid reality should be concentrated on the following three priorities, as reaffirmed also by the European Union Council in March 2004¹⁴:

- enable the acquisition of the required key competences by all citizens;
- create open, attractive and accessible to all learning environments;
- target efforts at disadvantaged groups.

Moreover, the Maastricht Communication of 14 December 2004¹⁵ established new national and community priorities, while the Commission adopted a series of communications and projects regarding issues such as: higher education versus the Lisbon strategy; fine tuning of a linguistic skill European indicator; lifelong learning key competences.

Recently, the Interim Report jointly issued by the Council and by the Commission, regarding progress made within the work programme "*Education and Training 2010*"¹⁶, identified a number of leverages and priorities towards the introduction of reforms in some key sectors, targeted to make the European education and training systems a worldwide quality reference standard by 2010, while ensuring that lifelong learning becomes a solid reality for all. This implies the need to deploy the required resources effectively, focusing on the lifelong development of citizens' key competences, such as learning to learn, to innovate and to build up an entrepreneurial spirit.

No significant progress has been recorded within the European Union in terms of reducing the percentage of labour force with a low educational level, as training participation tends to be proportional to the education level.

As a matter of fact, in most States participation in educational initiatives by low qualified people is poor, with the implication that a relevant part of the population (rough-

14 Reference is made to the European Union Council document *Education & Training 2010: The success of the Lisbon strategy hinges on urgent reforms*, Brussels 3 March 2004. It's a Council and Commission joint interim report on the detailed work programme implementation regarding the follow up to the education and training system objectives in Europe.

15 Maastricht Communication on future priorities of a broader European cooperation for vocational education and training matters: the Ministers responsible for vocational education and training from 32 European States, the European social partners and the European Commission jointly decided to make their cooperation stronger, towards a modernisation objective for vocational education and training systems, targeted to make European economy the most competitive and to offer all citizens – young people, senior workers, unemployed, disadvantaged people – the qualifications and competences necessary to achieve full integration in the emerging knowledge society, while contributing to the creation of new and better jobs.

16 Report published on the European Union Official Journal (2006/C 79/01).

ly 80 million people throughout the Community territory) risks social exclusion. In the European Union about 11% adults aged between 25 and 64¹⁷ participate in lifelong learning. The Italian rate is still limited to 6.2%, according to the latest Eurostat data, accounting for year 2005. The need to increase training participation rates remains a major challenge for Europe: in fact, more adults in continuing training attendance would also bring an increased labour market active participation and a contribution to a stronger social cohesion.

Attention and financial resource availability towards an enhanced access to adult education are not sufficient, yet; this is particularly true when it comes to senior workers (whose number is expected to grow by about 14 millions before 2030) and to poorly qualified people.

Four specific States (Sweden, Denmark, Finland and the UK), where the highest participation rates have been recorded, attached a high priority level to adult education strategies implemented within a global and integrated lifelong learning strategy; the high participation rates shown by these States apply to low education level individuals as well.

The shared objective is that *Education and Training 2010* work programme results should converge into the implementation process of the Lisbon integrated guidelines; they should also converge in the implementation of the cohesion targeted Community integrated guidelines and in the implementation of measures related to the future of the European social model, as discussed on 27th October 2005 at the Hampton Court informal European Union Heads of State and Government Interim Meeting.

The programme implementation is supported by paying special attention to:

- development of a schedule targeted to “peer to peer” learning activities, within the framework of the new lifelong learning integrated programme, and in the light of the experiences and of the strategic priorities already agreed in 2005;
- close monitoring of lifelong learning strategy implementation in all Member States, to be jointly reported in 2008, with specific mention of the lifelong learning role towards the achievement of a more robust European Social Model;
- entering an agreement for a European Qualification Framework (EQF) and for a project addressing lifelong learning key competences, coupled with further progress of the teacher training quality support activities.

Finally, the Lisbon Community Programme implementation makes it worth reminding the very recent European Parliament Recommendation¹⁸ to the Commis-

¹⁷ The 2005 education and training participant population rate, according to LFS- Eurostat data, as reported in the Council Communication *Modernising education and training: a vital contribution to prosperity and social cohesion in Europe*.

¹⁸ Bruxelles, 5.9.2006 COM(2006) 479 final – 2006/0163 (COD)

sion, which focuses on the creation of a European lifelong learning competence certification framework.

The proposal addresses the European Qualification Framework (EQF), a tool for comparing qualification recognition levels in national systems and a mechanism for the achievement of competence transparency, validation and certification. Specifically, the EQF aims to achieve relevant strategic results in matters concerning:

- transparency, required by integration and by European Union States mutual recognition;
- mobility, enhanced by transparency attached to competences acquired by Community citizens' completed vocational education and training pathways, in work and in life;
- lifelong learning, inclusive of the possibility for the individual to interpret her/his own competence system and to undertake a personal lifelong learning pathway, aiming also to raise her/his own levels of employability and of market competitiveness.

The proposal is linked with the Lisbon Strategy framework, and with the 2005-2008 employability guidelines, by the concern for using also certification of learning achieved in non formal and informal contexts, in view of the need to: increase flexible learning possibilities; enhance European citizens' mobility; enable active citizenship entitlement.

chapter 2

THE RESEARCH PROJECT

2.1 OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITY PHASES

The research has been planned according to the following objectives:

- identifying and classifying the measures included and realised in the four countries object of the survey to fight against the adult population's training and social exclusion;
- identifying and classifying the successful experiences within each country, bearing particular attention to the tools and methods developed (training programmes, evaluation systems, materials, approaches, learning and training methodologies, trainers and tutors' training etc.) as well as to the financial, organisational and management issues;
- identifying the transversal or peculiar successful factors of each of the four countries investigated;
- promoting an effective contamination among practices and models available in different contexts – including the Italian one – also involving key-actors from the countries investigated;
- foreshadowing the conditions that may facilitate the adaptation and implementation of the successful experiences within the Italian context. This may be helpful for supporting and promoting an active citizenship that consists on the one hand of education and training for all and on the other hand of basic skills development for disadvantaged users. Following this approach the key issue to be considered is lifelong learning as a "bridge" between those who are in and out of the education and training systems.

The above objectives have been carried out through a 12-month analysis, divided in four different phases:

1. **First Phase.** It was characterised by the gathering and analysis of primary sources (regulations and documents produced by ministries and bodies re-

2.1 Objectives and activity phases

sponsible for lifelong training policies), secondary sources (survey reports, specialized literature, similar projects etc) as well as by study visits in the countries investigated (France, Germany, Sweden and United Kingdom). Local foreign experts (so called “*Antenne Locali*”¹⁹) were involved in each country:

- one teacher from the Greta Network in France;
- researchers from D.I.E. - *Deutsches Institut für Erwachsenenbildung* (the National Institute for Adult Education) in Germany;
- researchers from N.I.A.C.E. - *National Institute of Adult Continuing Education* in the United Kingdom;
- one researcher from the Örebro University in Sweden²⁰.

The foreign experts had a key role in pointing out bibliographical material and resources of extreme relevance for the survey, as well as the structures and bodies responsible for the provision, management and planning of lifelong learning activities on national and local territorial levels. The foreign experts have also been actively involved in the organisation of each of the study visits and in the identification of relevant key actors to be interviewed by the Italian researchers.

2. Second Phase. This phase aimed at defining the quality and quantity standards according to the in-depth analysis of the successful elements characterising the measures and actions implemented and developed in the four European countries.

¹⁹ “*Antenne Locali*” are individuals who are involved in various levels and roles in lifelong learning on the national territory and who have been contacted during the planning phase of the research in order to support the Italian researchers in the gathering and analysis of the existing sources and in the study visit organization.

²⁰ Special thanks to the following experts, for their support and supervision on the analysis and description of the national systems and measures:

France

Teresa Rubinic, *GRETA*; Anne Verger, *Antenne AISP*. *GRETA Paramédical et Social*; Bernard Poirier, *GIP – FCIP de Paris/Formation Continue et Insertion Professionnelle. Département Validation*; Delphine Crouzet, *Délégation générale à l'emploi et à la formation professionnelle/Mission développement de la formation continue et promotion sociale*; Michèle Dubois, *European Programs Manager/Délégation académique à la formation continue – DAFCO*; Martine Paty e Thierry Pelletier, *Bureau de la formation continue des adultes/Direction de l'enseignement scolaire*; Andéole Dewatre, *Ministère de la Justice, Direction de l'Administration Pénitentiaire*; Gaëlle De Angelis, *Association «Archiméde» Mission Locale Bagneux – Clamart – Malakoff*.

Germany

Ekkehard Nuissl von Rein, Heino Apel and Stefan Hummelsheim, *D.I.E. Deutsches Institut für Erwachsenenbildung*; Manuela Martinek and Thomas Reuter, *DLR German Aerospace Center*.

United Kingdom

Jane Thompson, *NIACE National Institute of Adult Continuing Education*.

Sweden

Carina Abreu, *University of Örebro*; Anders Franzén and Erik Gutiérrez-Aranda, *Swedish Ministry of Education, Research and Culture, Division for Student Financial Support and Adult Learning*.

3. **Third Phase.** During this phase, the Italian researchers carried out a transversal analysis of the measures and actions investigated. They also studied if and how the measures and actions implemented abroad (in France, Germany, Sweden, United Kingdom) could be transferred into the Italian context. In this research phase an international working seminar was held. Some key-actors coming from each of the four European countries investigated were involved, being responsible for the creation, planning, implementation and evaluation of the measures developed in their own countries. The key-actors involved as discussant are: for France Anne Verger (*GRETA - Pôle ressources insertion professionnelle et handicap*) and Bernard Poirier (*DAFCO - Directeur technique du DAVA Département Validation du GIP-FCIP de Paris*); for Germany Ekkehard Nuissl von Rein (*Deutsches Institut für Erwachsenenbildung – D.I.E.*) and Manuela Martinek (DLR - German Aerospace Center); for Sweden Carina Abreu (*Örebro Universitet*) and Anders Franzén (*Swedish Ministry of Education, Research and Culture*); for the United Kingdom Jane Thompson (*National Institute of Adult Continuino Education – N.I.A.C.E.*) and Richard Mulcahy (*Lifelong Learning Division – Welsh Assembly Governement*).
4. **Fourth Phase.** The results of the research are described in a Final Report. They can be useful for stakeholders, decision makers, and those who are responsible for the planning and management in the fields of lifelong learning and social inclusion.

2.2 THE OBJECT OF THE RESEARCH

The research, as already told, aims at studying the successful elements that could be found in the lifelong training policies of four European countries - France, Germany, Sweden, United Kingdom. The purpose is to learn from foreign experiences and practices to be transferred into the national, regional and local lifelong learning policies.

According to the definition provided by the European Union Council in the 27th June 2002 Resolution, the lifelong training policies have as object “the learning process, from before compulsory education to after retirement and (include) the all various ways to formal, non-formal and informal learning. Moreover, lifelong learning is meant as any kind of learning activity undertaken in different moments of an individual’s life in order to improve his knowledge, skills and competencies in a personal, civic, social and/or occupational perspective. The principles that should guide the lifelong learning are the central role of the individual in a perspective of peer opportunities and the quality of learning”.

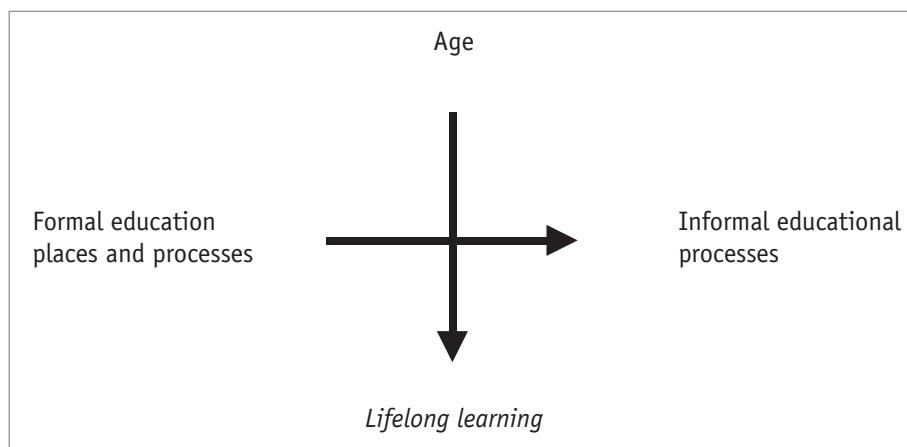
Three elements follow this definition:

- the field of implementation;
- the tasks of training;
- the lifelong learning policies.

2.2.1 The field of implementation

Lifelong learning policies concern not only the systems, but also the whole processes and actors in the different ages and learning places (see fig.1).

Figure 2.1
Lifelong learning conceptual frame



The concept of lifelong learning for adults here adopted concerns formal, non-formal and informal education and training processes developed during the adult life.

2.2.2 The tasks of training

The new conceptual frame of lifelong learning policies – such as it is being shared and promoted by all governmental institutions on a world, European and national level – also influences the definitions given to the tasks of training.

The Lisbon Strategy clearly includes lifelong training in those processes aimed at the knowledge society and economy that allow individuals to develop citizenship and to acquire skills and competences that would enable them to support the society's economic growth.

The tasks related to citizens' development are based both on the policies for the education system reform, according to the individual and social training demand, and on the educational development policies within the civil society, by supporting the role of families, local institutions, organisations, associated life in general.

In addition to that, implications relating to the training policy functions, further to undertaking the European Strategy for Employment, need considering. The labour market reform together with the shift towards active labour policies are now characterised by labour protection tools which do not aim at protecting the workers themselves within the «market», but at preserving their working place (*Tiraboschi* 2003). As a consequence, the labour market has opened up to “the free dynamics of the private contractual autonomy when establishing, developing and finishing business relations” and increased the creation of labour policies built through promotional and incentive measures accordingly. In this framework - where a strong role is played by the knowledge society - education and training are therefore considered as essential elements to “elevate the quality of the labour offer and make the most of the chances available on the market”.

Training is therefore also given the task – which is extended to each kind of formal, non-formal and informal education – to increase employability of individuals and to reduce the barriers between different kinds of training (professional and non-professional ones) and individual learning – no longer exclusively guaranteed by qualifications and diplomas (as well as the labour protection is no longer exclusively guaranteed by “binding rules”).

2.2.3 The lifelong learning policies

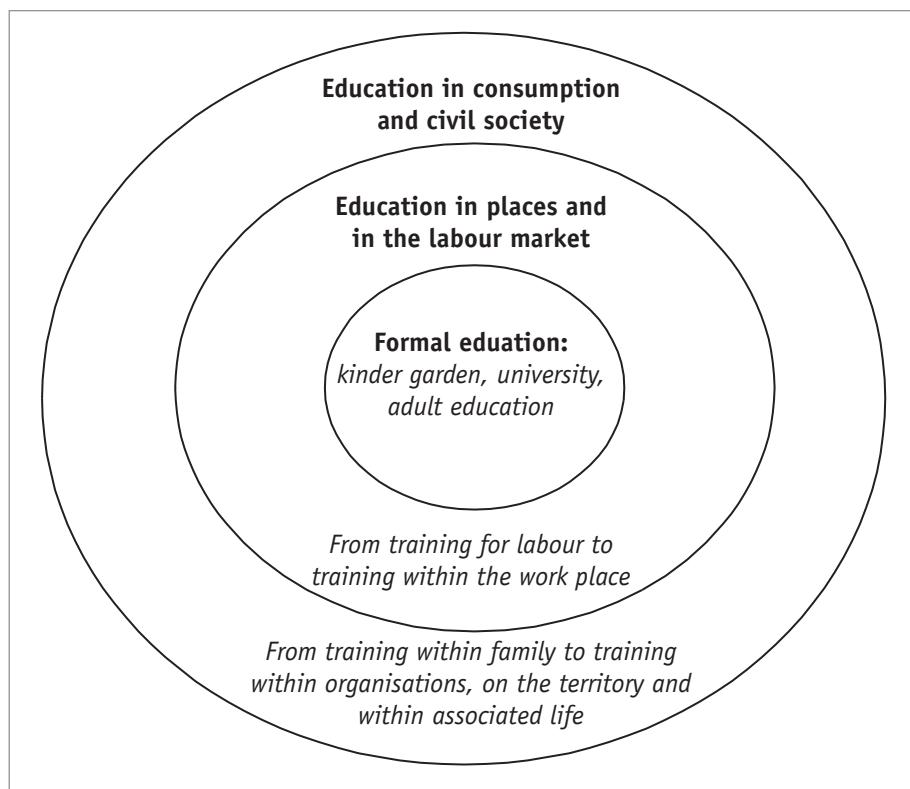
The implementation of new training strategies is based on a wide range of policies. They are essentially entrusted to “many actors”: individuals, companies, and public institutions. A lifelong strategy should be based first and foremost on a kind of society endowed with strong initiative. Together with the individuals' behaviours, what contributes to the society's accomplishment are also private policies in the production processes – learning organisation management within companies – and in cultural and non-cultural policies. Not only should public policies be extended towards exclusive competence fields, but also to the politic economy of training, that is to the individual's and businesses behaviour and policies.

For this purpose, it is the whole fiscal, health, financial and urban policies to be

directly responsible for the implementation of a coherent lifelong learning strategy. Nevertheless within the wide range of policies, we can make a distinction between the primary policies – whose main aim is training – and complementary policies – able to influence the implementation of the training strategies.

The figure below reproduces a synthesis proposal of the basic policies.

Figure 2.2
*Lifelong learning
“basic” policies*



According to the above analysis, as far as the lifelong learning systems are concerned, the research has been focused on the formal education, whilst as far as measures and actions are concerned the research has considered the main ones which are contributing or have contributed to the implementation of lifelong learning strategies regardless of the policies involved.

2.2.4 “Measures” as analysis units for policies

The analysis carried out in other European countries is mostly based on the “measures” which make up the policies – their basic units.

Instead of concentrating on the analysis of lifelong learning systems, strategies, or policies available in the other European countries investigated, the research is focused on the analysis of the specific measures introduced by the policies themselves. This can be helpful for the transferability of good practices, as this is

much easier when it concerns measures defined as policy components instead of policies themselves. The concept of “measure” is widely used in labour policies to identify how flexibility, support to the unemployed income etc. are carried out. It has been employed also in the European Social Fund Regulations and planning documents. The Adult Education Invalsi Glossary²¹ provides the following definition of *measure* and *accompanying measures*:

“A series of projects and initiatives aimed at implementing an identical objective. A measure represents an intermediate step between a definite priority and a project”.

In the regional policies of the European Union, “measure” is considered “the means by which (a priority) is implemented over several years which enable operations to be financed²²”.

The methodological hypothesis implies a training policy implemented through a number of measures, which have as objective various elements the policy is based on (training costs, kind of activity, seats, contents etc). They represent the tools through which the policy is implemented and that gives life to projects and actions induced by the policy (Federighi, 2006).

A policy without measure only consists of general guidelines. A measure can have a regulative value, which means defining in detail the rules to respect, or post-regulative value, which means aiming mainly at the individual's voluntary subscription, leaving to them the task to define the performance conditions. A measure should contain at least the following elements:

- objectives;
- individuals responsible for the implementation;
- tools and procedures;
- beneficiaries;
- implementation schedule;
- costs or investments;
- monitoring and evaluation scheme.

Through these measures, the government is therefore able to intervene and perform the following functions:

- resources allocation, in order to correct partial balances where private allocations do not exist (e.g. the lack of a proper training supply to answer the potential demand);

21 The Adult Education INVALSI Glossary drawn up by Ministry of Education, Ifsol Invalsi, with the collaboration of the Regions is available on the following website: <http://validi.invalsi.it/glossario/asp/home.asp>

22 The definition can be looked up on the following website: http://europa.eu.int/comm/regional_policy/sources/docoffic/vm20002006/chap3_it.htm

*2.2 The object of
the research*

- stabilization, which means to correct the general balance (shortage of skilled workers, low levels of competence in the population, scientific competence deficit etc);
- re-distribution, in order to correct the market dynamics and avoid the unjustified load of inequalities (exclusion of worthy individuals from training etc).

The expansion policies are based on the adoption of effective measures within policies answering the training demand and putting the individuals in condition of taking up training chances and assuming a definite role within individual and collective training processes.

2.3 RESEARCH TOOLS USED FOR THE COLLECTION, ANALYSIS AND INVESTIGATION OF DATA CONCERNING “MEASURES”

2.3.1 Selection criteria

“Measures” have been selected by taking into consideration their target group and according to the following goals:

- *effectiveness*: kind of measures introduced to implement vertical and horizontal subsidiarity;
- *equality*: kind of measures introduced to expand the access to adult learning;
- *competences development*: kind of measures introduced to increase the employability of individuals.

2.3.2 Research tools

Measures have been analysed according to the following criteria and indicators:

1. Target. These are individuals the “measures” are addressed to and towards whom “measures” aim at producing specific effects. Measures can have direct and indirect beneficiaries or different typologies of them.
2. Definition. It consists of crucial information useful to understand the main content and the meaning of each measure.
3. Expected specific effects and outcomes. They are quantitative and qualitative outcomes measures can produce with regard to the issue involved, if possible, within a defined period of time.
4. Complementary measures. They are the main measures adopted and implemented together with the selected measure. Such integration can strengthen or modify the outcomes expected in a positive or negative way.
5. Programme including the measure. This is the general initiative or policy where the measure is adopted.
6. Planning institutional levels and respective functions (State, Regions, Local Bodies) and decisional processes. These are all institutional bodies involved in the implementation of each measure selected.
7. Support/Coaching services. They are useful for the implementation and management of the measures.
8. Suppliers. They are actively involved in the previous issue.
9. Costs analysis. This piece of information is useful to understand the relation between funds and implementation of measures. With this regard it is useful to know about the global investment, but it is even more useful to know about unit costs (i.e. per person), where it is possible.
10. Evaluation of results and effects of the measure. They consist of quantitative and qualitative information enabling the evaluation of the impact the selected measure has/had and its characteristics. If there are some changes in the implementation of the measures they are taken into consideration.

2.3 Research tool used for the collection, analysis and investigation of data concerning “measures” available and implemented in France, Germany, Sweden and United Kingdom

11. Documentation. Published works and web sites where useful information about the measure is available.
12. Researches/reports about the measure. They are scientific published works containing some information about the evaluation of the selected measure.

As to the role and tasks of the local foreign experts (“*Antenne Locali*”) contacted in each of the four countries investigated they have been in charge with the following activities:

- collection and selection of sources and bibliography describing the national/local system of the measures;
- selection of about 30 “measures” (among the ones implemented, still to be implemented and which are being implemented) before the study visits took place, where possible;
- description of the “measures” selected according to the descriptive tool.

After collecting all sources and materials (in most of the cases it was integrated during the study visits) each Italian researcher selected about 10 measures per each of the four national contexts and used the surveying tool for the detailed description of each measure.

The *kind of “measures”* the national research project would like to investigate on are:

- ongoing “measures”;
- “measures” developed and implemented recently.

part II

Description

of the lifelong learning systems

in the analysed countries

chapter 3

FRANCE

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The vocational education and training (VET) measures in favour of the disadvantaged adult, which have been surveyed, fit in a national context identifiable by:

- the six priority areas for policy and action focus, defined immediately after the Lisbon European Council;
- a very significant number of adults using the available vocational opportunities, especially when compared with the Italian context;
- a well established continuing education system, recently reviewed by the social partners and by the legislator;
- availability of several adult education offers, both vocational lifelong learning for workers and continuing education, provided by social actors, institutions and other bodies; the availability is well spread across the territory: various kinds and levels of education, with differing eligibility conditions;
- availability of several vocational training offers and initiatives – promoted by various institutional actors – aimed at disadvantaged people basic competence recognition, social inclusion and professional placement;
- deployment of an identification and evaluation mechanism, for competences acquired from experience, aimed at making vocational training more attractive, increasing the number of study certificate and qualification holders across adult population, attaching greater value to non formal competences;
- availability of information, guidance and skills acknowledgement services throughout the national territory;
- deployment of measures aimed at job placement for disadvantaged people, and at drastic reduction of the unemployment rates presently experienced, through new kinds of measures.

3.1.1 The six priorities “after Lisbon”²³

The lifelong learning policies and actions, implemented in France after the Lisbon European Council, address six main objectives:

- fight against illiteracy;
- attach greater value to the (mainly youth related) learning’s non formal dimension;
- propose vocational solutions, suitable for distressed and vulnerable user bases, starting at the school system level, to limit failure and early drop out cases among young people going through initial education;
- broaden the competence recognition possibilities, by promoting the “*validation des acquis de l’expérience*”- VAE specifically, i.e.: the mechanism introduced to enable competence certification, however and wherever acquired;
- enhance partnerships generated by differing types of actors;
- broaden the social partners’ and local communities’ responsibilities.

Regarding the action plans and the measures adopted in connection with the first objective – “fight against illiteracy” – and, more generally, regarding the need to acquire stronger adult basic/functional competences, the following elements should be noted:

- such circumstances apply to 5 - 10% of the population; 11.6% young people suffer from reading/writing difficulties. Poor mastering of basic competences is reported among workers who had been recruited after successfully taking admission examinations (e.g.: Public Function), although they are rated as exempt from such problem²⁴;
- the Youth Directorate, within the National Education Ministry, promoted a reading / writing competence development plan, based on actions integrating scholastic and extra-scholastic education, under the responsibility of departmental groups with members representing all interested parties (local administrations, associations, parents, experts, scholastic institutions and public services), aimed at reaching leisure time centres and locations, libraries, book stores. The programme is financed with a budget of 1,300,000 Euro (2002). However, many such actions are autonomously carried out by municipal administrations; they finance private and/or social organisations which specialise in basic vocational training of adults lacking the most essential competences;

23 Cfr. Ministère des Affaires Sociales du Travail et de la Solidarité et Ministère de la Jeunesse et de l’Education Nationale et de la Recherche (2003), *Rapport National de suivi de la Résolution du Conseil sur l’éducation et la formation tout au long de la vie*, 2003.

24 Non recent data (second half of the ‘90ies) about illiteracy in France and about the scarce coordination of the educational offer are available in Geffroy, M.T. (2002), *Lutter contre l'illettrisme: rapport à la ministre de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité et à la secrétaire d'Etat aux droits des femmes et à la formation professionnelle*. La Documentation Française, Paris (<http://lesrapports.ladocumentationfrancaise.fr/BRP/994000766/0000.pdf>). Among other things, the Report underscores the need for social partners’ involvement, beyond all enterprise resistances, in the identification of basic competence related vocational requirements and in focused education opportunity promotion.

- several types of actions have been used also in the area of citizenship access to basic competences, with the collaboration offered by public actors (Ministries and Local Administrations) and by private parties (social partners, enterprises, associations, vocational training and education bodies). The Ministry for Social Affairs and Solidarity is the main financing institution. In 2001 a Fight Against Illiteracy National Agency (*Agence Nationale de Lutte contre l'illétrisme* - ANLCI) was established by a State initiative; all social actors are represented in its administration council.

The promoted actions include:

- investigations for the acquisition of broader knowledge, regarding prospective users and their experienced difficulties;
- organisation of specific vocational actions;
- improved informative actions regarding educational opportunities;
- “quality” and “vocational offer diversification” concern.

Functional competence development actions, in the field of new Information and Communication Technologies, are also promoted.

In addition to a series of youth specific measures, the following adult oriented measures are organised and managed by the *Agence Nationale pour l'Emploi* – ANPEs (Ministry of Labour National Employment Agencies) – operating locally:

- since 2000, all job seekers may apply to take advantage of an Internet and Personal Computing Literacy module. Such module (lasting 14 hours) enables to obtain a Ministry of Labour specifically awarded certification;
- since 2001, a number of complementary modules (lasting 21 hours each) have been made available, towards furthering individual ICT basic competences: their implementation is the responsibility of Employment Agencies, National Association for Adult Education, State endorsed vocational bodies.

Between March 2001 and October 2002, 150,000 job seekers obtained an Internet Navigator Certificate (55% were women, 57% were people holding a “below bac-calaureate” qualification level).

3.2 ADULT EDUCATION NATIONAL POLICIES

The well populated adult education policy landscape shows a markedly prevailing number of continuing VET policies, which cater to employees and have been developed since the early seventies. These policies emerge from social partner contractual negotiation (its results are later converted into State legislation); they rest upon enterprise contributed financial support for VET; they are managed by bilateral bodies/funds, i.e.: they are expressions of the social partners. As a matter of fact, part of the VET offer, promoted by the Ministry of National Education, targets employee continuing education as well, although not exclusively.

However, other policies have been developed, next to this part of the system; these were once promoted mostly locally and by non institutional associations and bodies, while today they are at the core of institutional interventions, e.g.: State, Regional and territorial community interventions, which integrate several objectives and target various kinds of workers, not just employees; such policies include:

- VET activities for job placement/re-placement and for employability;
- VET offers and specific mechanisms for adult worker and non-worker basic / functional competence recognition / consolidation / development;
- VET initiatives aimed at the social inclusion and occupational placement of specially disadvantaged adults.

This situation has been evolving while:

youth conditions were taking the shape of social marginality, in the eighties and the nineties;

- labour market and job type diversification were changing;
- new adult education requirements were emerging;
- social and cultural fractures were being determined by immigration.

Therefore, country specific adult education policies are no longer inspired mainly by the workers' need to adapt and update their own competence to workplace technological and organisational changes; they must additionally include VET as a tool and resource for:

- population cultural growth;
- improved social cohesion;
- citizenship.

The frame of reference which is progressively shaping up is the European lifelong learning type of framework.

Recent innovations in the area of continuing VET mark and confirm the evolving situation very well:

- on one hand, its opening to typical adult education objectives, such as basic competence recognition (the confrontation of illiteracy with language learning);
- on the other hand, the individual worker's VET pathway autonomous planning, besides the social partner agreed vocational planning.

3.2.1 The continuing VET system

New legislation determining factors

Thirty years after the first inter-professional agreement (1970) and the Law on “*continuing VET within the continuing education framework*” (1971), which introduced:

- enterprise compulsory contributions towards continuing VET;
- bilateral bodies, (*Organismes Paritaires Collecteurs Agrées - OPCA*) responsible for resource acquisition activities coupled with enterprise contributions and social partner agreed financial provisions for VET planning;
- workers' rights to benefits arising from VET activities and Individual Training Leave - ITL (*Congé Individuel de Formation - CIF*).

the continuing VET system has been the focus of a long standing negotiation between enterprise associations and union organisations, in 2002 and in 2003, ending with an inter-professional agreement, unanimously signed by all parties in September 2003.

The agreement contents later became a new legislative provision “*on vocational lifelong learning and social dialogue*”, approved in May 2004, which introduced various Labour Code modifications.

Several significant innovations have been introduced by the reform, in connection with:

- continuing education interpretation, revised in the light of labour world transformations and lifelong learning strategies;
- VET value as an individual worker's right, besides continuing VET as an interest mutually shared by employers and employees;
- bilateral body participation in vocational policy management, broken down into institutional responsibilities, target users, objectives.

Trade union negotiation was mainly driven by new tool identification needs, brought in by the impact of inequalities²⁵ upon worker participation, which had to be overcome, in spite of the well proven strength of the bilateral mechanism; however, the negotiation and its outcome had to face institutional innovation and new requirements as well, such as:

25 Vocational training and education access inequalities may be classified at several levels:

- by professional qualification: in 2001, the non qualified workers' access rate was over three times below the executives' (16,1% versus 52,1%)
- by company size: in 1999-2000, the workers' access rate was 9,7% in companies with less than 20 employees, versus 44,5% in those with over 500 employees
- by workers' age: in 2000, the workers' access rate was 36% in the 39 to 45 age range, 31% in the 50 to 54 age range, 20% in the over 55 age range.

- decentralisation process consequences; since 1983, decentralisation has been placing under Regional Administration responsibility a number of important competences, in connection with VET and employment policies;
- substantial deterioration of the terms of reference used by the continuing VET “model”; these were defined in the long gone seventies, when large manufacturing companies and industrial employment stability played a central role;
- need to encourage and to support workers’ individual responsibility in their own competence development, in order to achieve internal and external market adaptability and employability;
- need to increase the resources allocated to employee VET, in a growingly work-quality dependent competitive challenge, experienced by national economic and productive systems.

A three-players system

Summing up, the final results configure a system resulting from the following contributions:

- the OPCA bilateral bodies, which couple their central role in employment bound VET, with the responsibility for traditionally stable employee work;
- the State which, through its Ministry of Labour, caters to the VET initiatives in favour of poorly qualified people (unemployed, disadvantaged, precariously and not continuously occupied, special sector dependent), while promoting suitable system actions;
- the Regions, which hold responsibility for the professionalisation contracts of young people aged between 16 and 25.

The financial resources allocated to the various targets are differently sourced: enterprise contributions towards the continuing VET managed by the bilateral bodies; national and community resources catering to employment VET, offered to young and poorly qualified people.

Continuing VET redefined

The inclusion of continuing VET in a lifelong learning strategy framework calls for a redefinition of its meaning and objectives.

Article 2 of the new legislation says: “*continuing VET aims to facilitate workers’ vocational placement or re-placement, enabling occupational status keeping, competence development, vocational qualification level access, economic development contributions and social promotion*”, and further on: “*it also aims to enable people who left their vocational activity, for child care purposes, to return to their previous work*”. Therefore, continuing education cannot be limited to activities motivated by competence adaptability to technological and organisational changes, because of their impact on job profiles; employability and mobility are equally important objectives; its use as a tool and a condition against occupational emargination and in favour of equal opportunity employment must now be granted.

An important clarification is included in art.5, stating that: “*actions against illiteracy and towards French language learning are an integral part of lifelong vocational learning*”. This is a connection establishment between continuing VET and adult education, which appears to be aligned with:

- the tight coupling between work/employability and citizenship, which was pointed to by the European Commission Memorandum (October 2000)
- a “continuing education” broader meaning than “VET and update”.

The legislator and, upstream of legislation, the social partners’ agreements, show clearly their concern for employee exclusion and self-exclusion experiences from VET activities, caused by low qualification levels and scarce acquisition of basic competences; just like, probably, the professional placement and the mobility of foreign people who fail to master the hosting country language sufficiently.

Continuing education as an individuals' right and its mechanisms for the access

Before the new legislation, the French system already included provisions for a specific mechanism, supporting employees’ individually selected VET.

We are referring to the *individual training leave* (*Congé Individuel de Formation - C.I.F.*) – which is still available among the new legislative provisions – enabling workers with at least two years of employment (one of which with the current employer) to take a VET pathway lasting up to one year for full time employees, or up to 1,200 hours for part time employees.

In this type of situation employees make their choices autonomously, without employer intervention, even when the vocational pathway costs are not fully charged to the employees themselves. If and when the employers’ affiliated OPCA bilateral bodies endorse the workers’ choices, they assume the charges arising from the retribution (80-90% of the ordinary retribution, suspended while the leave period lasts) and from the course enrolment.

Within the CIF related provision a special type of leave is envisaged, covering the skills review. Employees may be eligible for this leave after serving a work contract for five years at least.

Another mechanism is introduced by the new legislative provisions. We are referring to the *Droit Individuel à la Formation - D.I.F. (Individual Training Right - ITR)* – an annual availability of 20 hours to be used for VET activities, normally outside working hours, based on individual employee initiative but with employer’s approval of the intended type of vocational training. The eligible workers have been serving an indefinite (full time or part time) employment contract for at least one year; special eligibility conditions apply to workers serving a temporary contract. Part time workers’ leave eligibility requires pro rata calculations. Hours of leave may be accrued, also across employment changes (provided the change is not determined by employee’s misbehaviour), for up to six years; unused leave hours,

which may have been accrued up to a maximum of 12 hours, do not entitle to any wage compensations. VET outside working hours – not exceeding 80 hours annually – attracts a compensation payable by the employers through an indemnity, or “*allocation formation*”, amounting to 50% the net wages. This is supposed to have a disincentive effect for employers to chose continuing education outside working hours; at the same time, it compensates for any spare time used by employees towards VET. Whenever an agreement fails to be reached within two years, since the employee's request to access VET, the employer's affiliated OPCA grants the employee a priority access to the CIF, provided the educational choice is aligned with this body's priorities and regulations.

Summing up, different mechanisms enable workers to access continuing education:

- employer initiative in connection with in-company VET plans (social partners agreed);
- employee initiative in the individual training leave – CIF – frame of reference;
- employee initiative with employer approval, through her/his eligibility for the individual training right – DIF.

In addition, there are new *professionalisation mechanisms* (“contracts” and “periods”) for young people aged 16 to 25, for the unemployed aged over 26 and for special types of indefinitely employed workers (low qualifications, aged over 45, in employment for twenty years at least, return to work after maternity/paternity leave); the number of available mechanisms highlights the traits of a continuing VET system which:

- on one hand takes into account the differing vocational requirements associated with employment and with the growing diversity of working contracts;
- on the other hand constructively supports individual investment in VET.

System financial support

In 2001, France's VET and apprenticeship expenditures reached 21.9 billion Euro (1.49% of the GDP), with enterprise contributions reaching 9.6 billions. These contributions have been growing during four consecutive years, with 7.1 billions allocated to employed workers' VET (vocational plans and CIF), while the remaining figure was allocated to apprenticeship and mobility contracts. The OPCA bilateral bodies acquired resources for over 4 billion Euro in 2002, with a 6% increase over the 2001 figure and a 15% increase over the 2000 figure.

Other resources were provided by:

- State: 8,098 billion Euro, with 3,318 Euro allocated to the public sector workers' VET;
- Regions: 2,073 billion Euro;
- other bodies and public administrations.

According to the Labour Code any enterprise, independently from its size, must contribute annually to VET action financing. The 2004 reformed Law raises enterprise compulsory contributions from 1.5 to 1.6% of all wages, when employees

are more than 10; for enterprises with less than 10 employees the increase is from 0.15% to 0.40% (0.55% by the end of 2005). On the other hand, the majority of the enterprises with more than 10 employees contribute above the legislative obligation by far (3.02% in average in 2002).

Resources acquired from enterprise contributions are shared by the three mechanisms:

- *Droit Individuel de Formation* - DIF (Individual Training Right);
- *Congé Individuel de Formation* - CIF – (Individual Training Leave);
- Social partner agreed educational plans.

Allocations of funds acquired from enterprises with over 10 employees (1.6% of all wages):

- 0.20% to an OPCA for CIF financing;
- 0.50% to a sectoral or inter-professional OPCA for DIF and professionalisation mechanism financing;
- 0.90% may be withheld by enterprises for direct educational action financing; alternatively, it may be paid to an OPCA for educational plan financing: or it may be paid to the State.

An additional contribution (1% of all wages for temporary contract workers) must be paid by enterprises, to a fund for the education of this type of workers.

Temporary work enterprises pay 0.30% of their contribution towards the CIFs.

The system's financing rules include one – aimed at promoting VET also among enterprises with few employees – entitling companies with less than 50 workers to State aids (on the basis of minimum wages) covering the replacement costs for one or more workers participating in VET activities.

Additional elements

The systemic shape of the new legislative provisions is confirmed by these other elements:

- the State and Regions' commitment “contributing to exert the right to a qualification, especially by people who have failed to acquire it at initial education time”, within the framework of the mechanism deployed towards the validation of knowledge through experience (*Validation des Acquis de l'Expérience* –VAE);
- the establishment of a “*Vocational Lifelong Learning National Council, chartered to facilitate the cooperation among parties involved in the definition of VET policies, while monitoring their implementation, and maintaining a connection with the regional labour and VET coordination committees*”. The Council gathers representatives of regional councils, social partners, experts; it is also responsible for:
 - evaluation of regional policies for apprenticeship and lifelong vocational learning;

- resource usage control;
- delivering to Parliament a report every three years on the subject matter;
- revisiting the law for its provisions regarding the social dialogue, the social partners' role and the collective negotiation on VET and workers' access rights.

Collective negotiation after the new legislative provisions

Following the inter-professional National Agreement (5.12.2003) and the new Law on Continuing VET (4.5.2004), 135 open negotiations (i.e.: 85% of all areas) have been brought to conclusive agreements, mostly in the productivity area; additionally, two inter-professional agreements in the areas of large and small industrial enterprises, and several company agreements have been reached. Overall, some 4 million employees acquired a constructive access to continuing education, also through the DIF. A recent study, requested by the Work Relations Directorate of the Ministry of Labour and Solidarity²⁶, highlights the importance of negotiation activities: mostly in connection with the initial employers' concerns for increased expenditures (enterprise contribution increases, for the economic commitment to the DIF introduction and for the indemnities payable to workers when VET is attended outside working hours). Trade unions too have expressed concern or difficulties: while *Confédération Française démocratique du Travail* - CFDT has signed 89% of the agreements, *Confédération Générale du Travail* - CGT has signed one agreement out of two (49%), only.

Specifically:

- 93% of all agreements address the DIF, but 97% of all cases leave to the individual enterprise the VET duration definition in the DIF frame of reference;
- 28% of all agreements attach the greatest importance to in-company training;
- 58% of all agreements envisage relations between continuing education and the vocational placement of qualified workers;
- 60% of company departments mostly relate education to young people;
- 27% of all agreements envisage special mechanisms for workers who are disadvantaged or involved in rehabilitation;
- the reform is fully used by large enterprises, while the small enterprise world is still experiencing a slow down in its use, for the widely spread difficulties experienced when facing the need for the employee to take leave from the production process, in order to participate in a VET programme.

Among the other analysis elements offered by the study, special interest is attached to:

- individual negotiation between employee and employer: e.g.: to determine the

²⁶ The study, conducted by a Research Company (*Circé Consultants*) and delivered in April 2005, analysed a sample of 45 agreements signed between June and December 2004 in different production tiers, such as: industry, agriculture, services, free lancing professionals. A study result summary, titled "*La negoziazione di comparto sulla formazione nel 2004: elementi di analisi*", may be found in *Entreprises & Carrières*, 767, 7-13 June 2005.

amount of time required by VET within the DIF frame of reference, the sectoral collective agreements indicate individual negotiation as the approach to be taken (30% of the cases under consideration) more frequently than the company's internal collective agreement (23%);

- important points frequently neglected or postponed by the sectoral collective agreements, such as: recognition of qualifications obtained from vocational education actions or from VAE; tools supporting the social dialogue between union representatives and enterprise committees; educational actions in favour of less qualified workers; OPCA provision of information regarding workers' rights; professionalisation contracts;
- need to consider, in several experts' opinion, the structural inadequacy of sectoral negotiations for problems raised by continuing education in the context of lifelong learning. Inadequacy stems from negotiations' concern being inevitably limited to "jobs" rather than including "employability", and from their consideration of a very specific "internal market" only; this situation seems to be incompatible with the many large enterprises which operate in different sectors, and with the often inter-sectoral use/mobility of the workforce.

More generally, the study emphasizes the need to interpret and implement continuing VET as a competence resulting from several responsibilities, shared by:

- social partners, granting labour and qualification rights;
- State, granting education and vocational training for all;
- regional councils, granting economic and social development

(*"Sectoral negotiation, however decisive its contribution may result, cannot make the lifelong learning social project a reality, if left alone "*).

3.2.2 Adult education as organised by the Ministry of National Education ***Responsibilities and organisational arrangements***

The Ministry of National Education has established a Continuing Education Department – DESCO A 8 – in charge of defining the general guidelines for a scholastic policy in this area. The Ministry plays a role concerned with

- preparing the adult vocational activities across the national territory, by means of a partnership with large enterprises and with professional trades;
- promoting European Union Programme participation;
- enabling the definition of vocational pathways by the individuals;
- making arrangements for system quality assessment and certification;
- coordinating the development of open and distance vocational education activities.

At the territorial level, adult education activities within the public school system are coordinated by the scholastic administration's twenty eight Academies (there is no

matching between Academies and Regions; each Academy may comprise a number of regional departments, ranging from 2 to 8), each headed by a Rector, who is at same time a University Rector and a State representative. The Rector maintains relations with the Ministry of National Education and with the local authorities.

Within the Academies, the continuing education issues are addressed by the decisions of the delegate in charge (*Delégué académique à la formation continue - DAF-CO*), also one of the Rector technical advisors, who defines the development plan and the policies in favour of continuing education, in cooperation with the Local Institutions and the Ministry of Labour's decentralised services; the delegate maintains relations with the enterprise world and coordinates the activities of the GRETA Centres. Each academic delegation has its own Continuing Education Centre (*Centre académique de formation continue - CAFOC*), which carries out trainer training activities. The adult education structures under the responsibility of the Ministry of National Education are the GRETA Centres, *Conservatoire National des Arts et Métiers - CNAM* (National Conservatory of Arts and Crafts), Universities (which make several types of adult vocational education available).

Greta Centres

GRETA centres (*Groupements d'établissements*) were established in 1973 (Instructions n°73-061 dated from 2 February 1973) to take care of the development and the organisation of adult vocational education. The public education institutions involved in the centres include: *collèges* (lower secondary schools, four classes: from the third to the sixth) and *lycées* (upper secondary schools, for general and technological education – *Lycée d'Enseignement Générale et Technologique - LEGT*, and for vocational education – *Lycée Professionnelle - LP*); they are mostly located within the upper secondary school premises. There are about 275 GRETA Centres, spread across the national territory; they form a consortium of about 6,500 educational institutes, with 43,000 trainers, approximately.

Each GRETA Centre is managed by a *Conseil Inter Etablissement - C.I.E.* (composed of all Headmasters of schools interested and of the person in charge of the GRETA management. The Rector or DAFCO and the Academy Inspector are members of the C.I.E. as well). The President of C.I.E. represents the GRETA.

The GRETA Centres president is an institute Headmaster, representing the associated different educational partners, with the collaboration of *Conseil Inter Etablissement - CIE* (made of delegates representing entrepreneurs, unions, public administration, trainers) for all decisions connected with the initiatives to be actioned. The Centres' organisation comprises:

- a management team which includes the Head of the institute and the administrative secretary, tasked with contributing to the development and control of educational conventions with external actors;
- one or more continuing vocational education counsellors, who define the educational offer to be deployed according to the local educational demand;

- coordinators and trainers; as many as required by the number of activities.

The Centres' trainers benefit from lifelong learning themselves, through the CAFOC academic centres for continuing education; the educators may be:

- National Education teaching staff, holding specific adult pedagogy qualifications;
- trainers with a professional environment background, holding an assessed qualification in their own discipline or profession.

The GRETA Centres carry out self-financing activities. The activities involve participant paid fees; however, based on participant status and education targets, the activity costs are paid by various parties, such as:

- OPCA centres or participants' employers, when the activity participants are members of staff in enterprises, Local Institutions, Administrations and Hospitals, and when the activities in question are required by educational plans or by mechanisms enabling individual access to education;
- state (Ministry of Labour – ANPE) and/or territorial administrations, when the participants are unemployed job seekers;
- regions, when the activities address young people preparing for vocational placement;
- participants themselves, when their own vocational training is an autonomous decision which has not been negotiated with an employer.

Greta Centres' activities

GRETA Centres offer activities in diversified fields, which other European countries place under different institutional responsibilities. Adults may refer to the GRETA Centres to obtain:

- information and advice on their educational opportunities, which differ by type and goal (cultural but mostly vocational development at several levels)
- specific services.

The goals listed by the National Education Ministry website include:

- general / vocational education progression or recognition;
- language learning;
- professional qualification certificate preparation;
- selection test preparation;
- qualification level increase;
- vocational competence update;
- skills review usage;
- update of personal knowledge;
- vocational self re-qualification.

The GRETA Centres provide educational activities in almost any direction: but each individual Centre only in Paris specialises in a specific educational offer; for instance:

- industrial technologies;
- public works and/or constructions;
- agro-alimentary;
- electricity, electronics;
- information technology;
- commerce;
- secretariat and office management;
- accounting;
- languages;
- hotels, catering, tourism;
- health and social services, environment;
- audiovisuals, press, arts and crafts etc ...

The other centres spread out through France offer various specific training courses.

Professional qualification certificates range from *Certificat d'aptitude professionnelle* - CAP to *Brevet de technicien supérieur* - BTS, hence from Level 5 (the first level after compulsory school) to Level 3 (short, post-secondary, higher education) certificates.

Educational activities differ by organisation, duration and frequency; they may be offered outside or during working hours, evenings or daytime, at fixed dates or in short/long sessions (a few days to several weeks), in a GRETA Centre's premises or in company's premises.

There are four different types of activity:

1. programmed training: collective type of vocational activities organised as:

- stages;
- sessions;
- modules;

with variable duration and frequency;

- they may take place;
- during or outside working hours;
- daytime or evenings;
- on fixed dates or as variable length sessions (a few days to several weeks);
- in a GRETA Centre's premises or in company's premises.

Access may be granted to workers from just one or from several companies; unemployed job seekers; people whose vocational training decision has not been negotiated with an employer.

2. Customised training: activities targeting individuals which customise con-

tents, methods, frequency. They are organised through:

- national education permanent centres;
- individualised pedagogy workshops;
- customised education mechanisms;
- language learning environments.

3. Dual training: activities organised on company's demand. They are carried out partly at the Education Centre and partly in-company (factories, companies, labs, offices, etc.). They are specifically covered by a certain work contract, the so called "*Contrat de professionalisation*" established by the Law on Vocational Training (May, 2004). This contract replaces the contracts for qualification, adaptation, guidance
4. Integrated training: activities organised on company's demand. They focus on competences connected with specific professional circumstances, aiming to contribute to employees' professionalisation and immediate impact within their own job.

GRETA Centres provide several services, to adults and companies; amongst them: VET requirement analysis, "tailor made" customer activity planning, vocational guidance and education counselling, skills review making, selection test taking preparation. The services/support actions listed by the National Education Ministry GRETA specific website include:

- employed workers' VET in all fields of major interest;
- preparing to obtain educational qualification certificates, titles and certifications;
- defining the different forms of education delivery: alternate, integrated, customised, collective;
- defining educational plans;
- counselling, advisory, technical assistance;
- occupational placement analysis;
- skills review;
- vocational guidance and mobility;
- partnering within the European Framework Programmes;
- training trainers and tutors for alternate education.

Language learning within the Greta Centres

The GRETA Centre network activity in the area of adult language learning measures up to 19% of the service providers in this market, reaching 10% of all participants in this type of education. Over 200 GRETA Centres specialise in language learning provision. A few years ago GRETA's language learning services were placed under the coordinating responsibility of the Languages Inter-academic Group – GIL, which develops the activities commercially and implements them didactically. There are 2,500 GRETA trainers in this area: National Education teachers and contracted French and foreign trainers.

Language teaching, which may be both general and specialised, includes: the main European languages (English, German, Spanish, Italian, Dutch, Swedish etc.); several extra European languages (Chinese, Arab, Japanese etc.); French as a foreign language and regional languages (Corsican, Breton, Alsatian etc.). The offered types of VET include both linguistic modules, for use within various study certificate courses, and training pathways defined on the basis of company's or individual persons' demand. They meet several requirements: languages as working tools related to professional qualification and as communication tools for international exchanges. For all obtained linguistic competences, certificates are issued. The learning process participants may prepare:

- national study certificate's linguistic units;
- French language European or International Certificate: DALF, DELF and certificates issued by Cambridge University, Goethe Institute, foreign Chambers of Commerce;
- National Education linguistic competence diplomas (the *Diplôme de Compétence en Langue* - D.C.L.) concerning English, German, Spanish and Italian).

The adopted methodologies include those enabled by new technologies: distance learning and videoconferencing. GRETA Centres can count on trainer teams who specialise in dealing with learning supports.

Additional elements

Although continuing education is not the most important activity catered to by the Greta Centres, nor by the educational offer set up by National Education Ministry and by the Academies, their role in its context is highly important. A recent Educational System Report (Peretti, 2004) shows that out of 9 million adults (who attend training and education per year) one million takes advantage of the opportunities made available by National Education, i.e.: 500,000 in Greta Centres courses, 400,000 in universities, 100,000 in the National Conservatory of Arts and Crafts. This is the most sought-after type of vocational education by adults who, through continuing education, try to obtain a qualification or a recognised diploma. Interesting figures emerge regarding educational activity duration, as well. If, in general, company promoted activities, aimed at specific roles' competence update, do not last long (up to 50 hours), the average duration of Greta courses is up to 137 hours, while university courses last 121 hours in average.

Unemployed people participate consistently in Greta courses, since they cannot access the continuing education promoted by the social partners and can only achieve a minority presence in other types of educational offers: their presence in Greta reaches 39% of all enrolled participants, roughly four times their number in other adult education offers. About three quarters of the Greta participants are specialised workers or employees. Adult university courses score a 9% unemployed presence, and an 8% independent worker presence.

National Education has deployed its VAE mechanisms in upper secondary schools

and in universities. In 2002, out of about 150,000 people who have been involved with centres for the recognition of competences acquired from experience, 58,000 were motivated by the National Education initiatives; 12,830 were introduced to their reference qualification certificate and to the related application paperwork; 7,540 applications were actually submitted; 6,760 applications were positively validated.

3.2.3 Adult education for basic competence recognition and against illiteracy

The French lifelong learning landscape includes national policies, mostly defined and managed with local institutions involvement; these policies do not aim to achieve vocational qualification, they aim to achieve basic competence recognitions and an overall increase of the population educational levels. Such policies do not generate stable supply systems or subsystems, rather they generate the possibility for activities to be triggered by several parties, with resources coordinated and integrated from various supporters.

Starting from 2004 French regions have a general competence on a local level in the field of education and vocational training. Every year each region defines the Education and Training Plan (*Plan Régional de Développement des Formations* - PRDF) in deep cooperation with the State's organisations (DRTEFP) and social partners. This Plan mostly includes basic and linguistic skills both for young and adult users.

The Ateliers de Pédagogie Personnalisée - APP network (Individual Educational Workshops)

The APPs first appeared in 1983, in the Rhône-Alpes region, as an experiment in the context of the “young people aged 16 to 25” mechanism, promoted by the State to facilitate young people social inclusion and vocational placement; the APPs were later extended and regulated by circulars issued by the Ministry of Labour. The APPs are educational locations – 458 in 2004, with 29 of them in prison environments – with no legal status of their own. They exist because they have been activated by so called “APP carriers”, i.e.: public and private VET agencies, or any other structure or body with a commitment to provide local development, social inclusion and professional placement, continuing education.

The APP is, in practice, an *Institut National de la Propriété Intellectuelle* - INPI (National Institute of Industrial Property) - registered mark, owned by *Délégation Générale à l'Emploi et à la Formation Professionnelle* General - DGEFP (Labour and Vocational Training Delegation - Ministry of Labour); the APP is activated through a convention between a “carrier” organisation and a *Direction Régionale du Travail, de l'Emploi et de la Formation Professionnelle* - DRTEFP (Ministry of Labour Regional Delegation). The convention contains the APP annual pedagogic project, based on a local analysis of the educational demand, prepared by the local employment service and by the penitentiary administration, if such penitentiary establishments are located in the territory. The analysis is focused on needs of basic cultural and technological competence acquisitions. Vocational qualification activ-

ties are outside the APP's concern, exception made for territories where such activities are missing. An APP's Guidance and Accompaniment Committee has been appointed to support a DRTEFP when evaluating a pedagogical project, the territorial dissemination of the cultural antennas and the quality of all activities.

Pedagogical and functional features

The APPs, inspired by adult education experiences in Québec, are built upon a specific pedagogical approach – assisted self-education – and upon organisational solutions driven by seven essential principles:

- customised service provision;
- diversified target user base;
- aimed at general culture and basic technology learning;
- territorial anchorage;
- diversity of financial support providers;
- non-stop reception of prospective participants;
- network operation.

In the APPs flexibility is a must. Their organisation is expected to allow access to education at any time. Each participant is to be granted a tailor made educational pathway, based on individual requirements (customised educational contract). The educational supply must comply with the rule of demand proximity (there are about 800 cultural antennas on the national territory). Suspensions of the activities cannot exceed a six week period annually, and a four day period monthly; the timetable includes evening hours. Educational activities are of varying length, up to a maximum of 300 hours (80 hours in average); however, not more than 21 hours weekly. The antennas must be signposted on the territory to make them easily accessible to all prospective participants.

The objectives are:

- completion of basic education;
- preparation for professionalising education pathways;
- preparation for selection tests and exams;
- preparation for VAE pathways.

Three months after vocational training completion the APPs are expected to recall former participants for an assessment of their circumstances, with reference to their individual vocational pathway project.

Access to the APPs for participants aged over 16 is admitted, provided they have not completed compulsory school. Priority target users:

- low qualification unemployed people;
- young school leavers aged 16 to 25 holding no qualifications nor study certificates;

- mothers returning to work;
- prison inmates;
- employed workers in the frame of reference of an enterprise VET plan, individual training leave or alternate education contracts.

In 2003, vocational training hours were up to 840,000, with 196,000 people in training (+ 5,000 versus 2002):

- 74% women;
- 76% aged over 26;
- 63% at educational level between 6 and 5 (next to illiteracy: 12%);
- 68% job seekers;
- 45% entered vocational training to find a job; 20% to acquire sufficient competences entitling a VET pathway to be undertaken; 37% to prepare for a selection test or examination.

At the same time the APPs awarded 28,000 NSI (Internet Navigator Certificate), trained 2,800 convicted people, supported 2,700 CNED subscribers (*Centre National d'Enseignement à Distance* - National Centre for Distance Learning).

Financing

Resources are provided by: State (in relation with the APPs' ability to accept priority users), local communities, enterprises, continuing education peer bodies. The State grants from 30 to 60% of the expenditures.

The APPs may accept paying users as well, provided the total income from individual fees does not exceed 5% of their budget. No financial contributions should be levied from parties benefiting from public policies for social inclusion and vocational placement.

3.2.4 Agence Nationale de Lutte contre l'Illettrisme - ANLCI (Fight Against Illiteracy National Agency)²⁷

Actions against scarce mastering of basic knowledge have been carried out, traditionally, by organisations such as voluntary worker associations, movements and unions, which often triggered the establishment of private sector VET agencies, with special fight against illiteracy responsibilities. For a long time the expectation has been held for compulsory schooling to become a solution to the problem, progressively. Public policies in this direction were developed in the eighties, already. A "Permanent Government Seconded Group Against Illiteracy" – GPLI – was in operation from 1984 to 2000. In 2000 an inter-institutional "Public Interest Group" – ANLCI – was established.

²⁷ "Illiteracy" refers to the inability of individuals aged over 16, who have attended school for at least five years, to use basic knowledge (reading, writing, computational skills). Illiteracy is different from analphabetism (people who have never attended school, irrespective of their nationality) and from the inability of people, of different mother tongue, to use the French language.

According to official estimates there are about 2 million people, including youngs, with serious illiteracy problems. Social and vocational marginality relatedness to ill-literacy is made obvious by the figures accounting for people entitled to an indemnity called *Revenu Minimum d'Insertion* - RMI (Minimum Income for Placement): 33% cannot read and understand simple phrases (12% cannot read, 13% read isolated words only).

Mission and activities

The ANLCI aims to establish a “federation” of public powers, enterprises, civil society expressions. Without a budget of its own, it must facilitate the coordination of several and differing competences, integrating a number of resources in the fields of vocational education, guidance, social inclusion and vocational placement.

The priority intervention areas include:

- initial education (children, teenagers, families);
- employed and unemployed adults;
- young people aged over 16;
- senior people.

The ANLCI targets local and regional programme promotion, to ensure that basic competences are a strategic segment of all adult education policies. Equally important are the actions adding value to competence development in enterprise education plans.

Within the above outlined framework, the ANLCI has been promoting regional plans, under prefecture coordination, in eight regions (Alsace, Auvergne, Midi-Pyrénées, Martinique, Provence- Alpes, Côte d'Azur, Rhône-Alpes, Limousin); funding of company training plans, inclusive of basic competence education, has been arranged through an agreement with AGEFOS-SME (Financing Ongoing Vocational Training for SME's Employees).

The role of the Ministry of Labour

The Ministry participates in the fight against illiteracy plan with programme *Insertion, réinsertion, lutte contre l'illettrisme* - IRILL (Integration, reintegration and the fight against illiteracy (promoted in 1997, concerning prison inmates as well); its interventions are connected with the occupational placement contracts sustained by State resources (the “subsidized” contracts) and with the enterprise continuing education plans; the APPs are also involved.

In 2004, the economic commitment was of 9.56 million Euro, in addition to 1.5 from State-Region contracts and 6.64 from the ESF. About 23,500 people were involved (over 1% less than the previous year, due to a decrease of allocated resources), namely:

- 30% aged below 25
- 65% job seekers
- 20% inactive
- 15% employed – Employed people participate on an individual basis, mostly.

Only 5% of all participants were directed to this type of VET by enterprises.
For 2005, the IRILL programme aims to :

- achieve a greater integration of basic competences in continuing education, using the 2004 Law on Continuing Vocational Education
- achieve a broader usage of the “subsidized” contracts
- fully commit the reception and guidance services (Missions Locales, PAIO, ANPE) towards the requirement identification and opportunity information activities.
- The allocated resources amount to 18,18 million Euro.

The role of the Ministry of Education

National Education is active in the fight against illiteracy, with financial provisions aiming to support the “teams for educational success” in initial education; school leaving prevention is their main functional assignment.

On school and GRETA Centre premises the “Reading and writing centres” are often available, for adults’ use; they are managed by private sector social organisations, as well as by the APPs.

National Education has made available basic competence assessment tests, for use by the *Journée d'Appel de préparation à la Défense - JAPDs* (Assessment of the illiteracy state of young people and guidance to training).

The JAPD mechanism, introduced in 1998 after the abolition of compulsory military service, invites annually all young people aged 17-18 for an appointment with the State²⁸. They take a reading and writing assessment test. Those found in illiterate conditions are directed to the “Missions Locales” and to the PAIOs (Reception, Information and Guidance Offices) for a VET pathway initiative.

The JAPD mechanism involves the Ministry of Defense, of Education, of Labour and the private foundation *Fondation Caisse d'épargne pour la solidarité*.

In 2003, 9,6% out of over 800,000 youngsters were found disconnected from all educational circuits and affected by serious communication difficulties (11,5% men, 7,5% women). 4,6% of these (6,3% men, 2,8% women) suffered from severe illiteracy and were directed to take a VET pathway.

Municipalities and associations

Local communities and voluntary worker associations promote actions against illiteracy in many reality contexts; several initiatives are coordinated with schools, GRETA Centres, “Missions Locales”, civic libraries and cultural centres: among these the writing laboratories are outstanding.

For school leavers aged 18 to 21, who did not obtain any study nor vocational certificates, special “Placement Voluntary Programmes” are organised by the Municipalities; these programmes schedule educational activities on basic and vocational competences, lasting from 6 months to 1 year, in addition to a number

28 Credits for attending the JAPDs are necessary for the awarding of a driving license and of study certificates.

of voluntary social activities. Internships may be arranged by private sector social organisations, for the more disadvantaged or distressed young people. In these cases contracts are issued which include a remuneration of 300 Euro per month, paid mobility and other benefits, social security and health insurance coverage.

Enterprises

According to information published by the ANLCI, enterprises frequently object to the inclusion of basic competence recognition/consolidation actions in their own continuing education plans. However, a trend towards change is emerging from some experiences, including:

- an agreement between the ANLCI and the AGEFOS-SME;
- a number of trade specific contractual agreements (cleaners; retailers; private school employees), signed between 2004 and 2005, which include basic education actions in companies' educational plans or in the context of using the Individual Training Right – ITR (DIF) and the period of professionalisation;
- the ADIA experience – a network of temporary work agencies which has been using a special mechanism for the sake of their employees, since 1999: *Éclor, compter, lire, s'organiser pour rebondir - E.C.L.O.R.* (Writing, Counting, Reading and career management).

Pedagogical and organisational approaches

The ANLCI plans, centred upon several educational agencies - GRETA, APP, Reading Centres and Writing Laboratories, civic libraries, schools, people's universities etc., - place great importance on short educational pathways (normally not exceeding 120 hours), structured in modules, alternating study and work (especially for younger people). The pedagogical approach is typical of adult education; it is based on life experience valuing and on learning, achieved through the tools required by the social and working life.

An important aspect of the ANLCI plans is the operators' training; the operators of services such as reception, guidance, placement and social assistance, are trained to recognise critical situations and to provide information/motivation towards vocational training.

3.2.5 Educational policies for special categories

In the French case, several measures are available which facilitate the occupational placement of people in distress: these measures often include educational activities, which may be compulsory or optional. For some categories of distressed people – recently arrived immigrants; disabled; convicted – the educational policies take special significance, in addition to aiming for occupational placement.

Immigrants' linguistic VET

This type of education begins in the sixties-seventies, as an initiative taken by

unions, movements, associations. Demand has been growing progressively, motivated by survival needs, occupational placement, integration; it can be broken down into native languages, levels of acquired education, arrival date in France, etc. Catering to the different aspects of such demand called for specialisation and professionalisation of the operators who were initially involved with it. They often established educational agencies, working with municipalities and with several territorial services for cultural promotion and social inclusion. French as a second language has thus attracted academic studies and pedagogical/didactical work, often connected with the initiatives against illiteracy.

Immigrants' linguistic education is also dealt with by the many GRETA Centres which specialise in language learning. Adult education teachers, and the school teachers involved in such problems, often join professional associations, contributing with universities to maintaining operators up to date with the latest advances.

Immigrants' linguistic education as national policy

Immigrants' linguistic education is now addressed by immigration related institutional policies; immigrants' rights-duties, in their relationship with the hosting State, are an essential part of such policies. Points worth noting:

- *Diplôme Initial de Langue Française* - DILF (Initial French Language Diploma); it enables an assessment of first level linguistic competence, useful towards immigrants' occupational placements;
- the level A1.1 DILF, lower than level A1 of the Common European Frame of Reference for Languages, has been promoted by the *Direction de la Population et des Migrations* - DPM (Population and Migrations Directorate - Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity) and implemented by the *Délégation Générale à la langue française et aux langues de France* - DGLFLF (General Delegation for the French Language and for the Languages of France) -, with support provided by the *Fonds d'Action et de Soutien pour l'Intégration et la Lutte contre les Discriminations* - FASILD (Social Fund of Social Action towards Integration and Against Discriminations).

As of 2006, obtaining the DILF will be part of the "republican integration" criteria, towards the grant of the "permanent resident" card. The DILF will be used also in the French nationality acquisition procedure; immigrants with older date of entry into France, will benefit from the DILF in obtaining a better occupational placement:

- law of 2004 on continuing vocational education and social dialogue; it defines French language learning as one of the continuing education objectives;
- *Contrat d'Accueil et d'intégration* - CAI (French language for migrants – Integration and Reception contract), lasting 1 year, renewable only once; introduced and tested in 2003 by several regions (to be extended on a national territorial

scale as of 2006); eligible immigrants must hold a regular staying permit; linguistic education must be provided by the State to those requiring it.

The contract, signed by the immigrant and the prefect, states that:

- the immigrant must abide by the Republic Laws and values (gender equality, equal education access opportunity for boys and girls, physical integrity respect, monogamy) and must attend suitable social and linguistic education activities;
- the State must grant respect for individual immigrant rights, social service access, social-linguistic learning.

Learning includes:

- French (200 to 500 hours, in modules defined as per requirements);
- compulsory one day civic education;
- optional programmes covering rights and services (“*Vivre en France*”).

The procedure implies:

- reception;
- medical screening;
- contract presentation;
- social service interview;
- linguistic and vocational;
- educational assignments.

under regional prefect coordination and with FASILD support, aimed at financing skills review, vocational education, interpreting and cultural intermediation.

Over 35,000 CAIs (out of 100,000 regular entries per year) were signed in 2004, the first year of the trial period. Linguistic education was requested for 30% of all cases, while 66.4% of them obtained the certification called *Attestation Ministérielle de Compétences Linguistiques - AMCL* (Ministerial Certificate of Linguistic Competence).

3.2.6 VET for the disabled

The legislative provision context

- Law of 10.7.1987: definition of the supporting mechanisms for reception, occupational placement, disabled person vocational training;
- Law of 11.2.2005 (enforced as of 2006): revision of indemnities; introduction of the *Maison Départementale des Personnes Handicapées - MDPH* (Departmental Housing for People with Disabilities); unified territorial services for access to all available mechanisms.

The 1987 Law makes it compulsory, for public and private companies with over 20 employees, to:

- reserve 6% of all job vacancies for disabled people;
- negotiate personnel recruitments and working conditions with social partners;
- prepare work facilitation conditions and instruments;
- pay compensations (600 times the hourly wages for each employee; 1500 times if no disabled benefiting actions have been undertaken over the previous three years) to the *Association nationale pour la Gestion du Fonds pour l'Insertion Professionnelle des personnes handicapées* - AGEFIPH (General Agency for Vocational training and for Disabled People Placement), when they do not comply with the recruitment obligation.

AGEFIPH, in turn:

- collects contributions from companies;
- administers funds for disabled person vocational placement;
- facilitates access to employment and its protection by financing the placement projects.

The envisaged actions include:

- skills review and vocational guidance;
- vocational training;
- apprenticeship and professionalisation contract support;
- qualification and re-qualification for employment protection;
- recruitment support through indemnities to employees and to employers;
- interventions for work adaptation to people;
- enterprise making accompaniment.

Regional education programmes

In each region a steering committee is established, for the regional education programme addressing workers with disabilities; the Committee members are representatives of: Region, Ministry of Labour Regional Directorate, the AGEFIPH. The Committee is interconnected with the disability operators of first arrival and guidance services (*Missions Locales*, PAIO, CAP *Emploi*, ANPE) and with several vocational education agencies (GRETA, private education organisations, vocational education centres, etc.). The AGEFIPH pays contributions to the vocational education agencies, for the extra expenditures caused by training of people with disabilities.

Each region has public and private vocational education agencies – some participated by disabled person associations – which specialise in disability problems. Both the trainers and the operators of services to the disabled are specialists.

The occupational placement of disabled persons

The AGEFIPH and the State facilitate the occupational placement of disabled persons with financial support for people (accompanying person, personal au-

tonomy, technology and focused education indemnities etc.) and for companies (contributions, fiscal relief, etc.).

Disabled people may take advantage of ordinary contracts or of “subsidized” i.e.: State supported contracts. The AGEFIPH may provide additional support for any type of contract.

3.2.7 VET for convicted people

Legislative provisions and who they are intended for

The educational interventions in favour of prison inmates are motivated by:

- Law 22.6.1987, which sees a function of social “re-inclusion” in a punishment like serving a sentence of imprisonment;
- Law 9.3.2004: “The sentence to be served by the convicted facilitates social inclusion, or re-inclusion, and the prevention of recidivism, while respecting society’s interests and victims’ rights”.

For over 35 years, teaching in prisons has been mainly provided by National Education teachers, with additional distance learning interventions, organised by the *Centre National d’Enseignement à Distance - CNED* (National Consortium for Distance Learning) and by other bodies, and cultural promotion and development activities contributed by voluntary work associations.

A convention (1995), undersigned by the Ministry of National Education and the Penitentiary Affairs Department of the Ministry of Justice, established a Regional Pedagogic Unit (URP) in each Region, for resource coordination and intervention planning.

A second convention (2002), undersigned by DESCO (Scholastic Education Directorate of the National Education Ministry) and by DAP (Penitentiary Affairs Department of the Ministry of Justice), defined the general education trends in a penitentiary environment.

While in the past the educational interventions were limited to primary type of teaching, today secondary teaching is also provided, with preparatory teaching for higher education. The *Validation des Acquis de l’Expérience - VAE* mechanism (Validation of knowledge through experience) has been operational since 2002. Considering that, in most cases, detections are short timed (not long enough for course completion), using a certification “booklet” for competences acquired from VET activity participation is becoming a common practice.

In 2004, there were almost 85,000 convicted people. A mostly male (96%) population of very young people: at least half of them is aged below 30 and the average age range of prison inmates is 21 to 25. Minors aged below 18 count up to 1.1%. There are over-represented categories such as:

- inactive and unemployed: at the time of imprisonment the active people rate is 49% and the employed are 39.9%, while active males in the 15-64 age range are 75%, the employed are 69.4%;
- worker: 1 out of 2 inmates at the time of imprisonment is or was a worker, while 1 out of 3 overall inmates is a worker;

- non French nationals: 21.5%.

The convicted person educational status is systematically assessed through interviews with prison teaching staff since 1995²⁹. In 2003:

- 75% prison inmates left school before they were 18 (1/4 before they were 16);
- 64% have no diploma;
- 57% do not have more than one low level professional certification;
- about 30% have insufficient reading competences;
- 31.25% are illiterate under 18 minors.

Tuition activities

Tuition access is granted in all penitentiary establishments. It is compulsory for all minors who have not completed their basic education; it is a priority for all adults who cannot read, write, count correctly and/or do not have French language command. For everybody else it is on request.

In 2003, schooling was provided for 34,884 prison inmates, among which:

- 58.2% (20,310) basic education holders: literacy, anti-illiteracy actions, French 2, general education certificate alignment or preparation pathways (level 5 bis);
- 30.5% (10,641) prepared the lower level diplomas (level 5: CAP- BEP, Professional Patents);
- 8.7% (3,062) prepared level 4 diplomas: Bac and DAEU (university access diploma);
- 871 enrolled in higher education.

In 2004, about 20% of all convicted people attended courses every week³⁰.

The success rate of prison inmate examinations is very low, about 1 in 10. In 2003, about 3,500 inmates passed their exams: mostly those granting basic education certification and low level qualifications; 51 obtained the Bac diploma; 101 the university access diploma; 39 the partial *Diplôme d'Accès aux Etudes Universitaires* - DAEU; 30 the Bac+2; 20 a university degree.

VET activities

In addition to the tuition activities, leading in some cases to diplomas and qualifications with professional value, there are VET activities which may be connected to internal work (catering, cleaning, building and equipment maintenance) or to external work preparation (for convicted people who are approaching the termination of their im-

29 National Education teaching staff break down:

– primary school, 346 full-time (most of them specialised for teaching in prisons) and over 100 part-time
– secondary school, 36 full-time and indefinite contract; about 700 occasional.

30 In prison the school year is 4 weeks longer: 40 weeks instead of 36.

prisonment or are entitled to a semi-freedom treatment). Such activities are performed by VET bodies, within the framework of regional plans defined by the penitentiary administrations, by the National Employment Agencies (ANPEs) and by the Regional Directorates of the Ministry of Labour, of Employment and of Social Cohesion. In 2004, 3,586 convicted people obtained a professional qualification certificate ("professional competence booklet"), 185 obtained assistance in preparing their dossier for validation of knowledge through experience (VAE), 1,674 were prepared for professional selection tests.

Activity funding

In addition to the National Education Ministry resources, for prison teaching staff wages, prison inmates VET activities are funded by:

- Ministry of Labour (in 2004, 9 million Euro for operation expenditures + 8 million Euro for individual wages of those in training: 450 Euro for month);
- Penitentiary Administration: 14.5 million Euro;
- ESF: 7 million Euro;
- local communities, Regional Delegations for women's rights, FASILDs (Social Action Funds for integration and fight against discriminations and for immigrants' literacy) and other bodies.

R.E.L.E. Network – Réseau Espace Liberté Emploi The Space, Freedom, Employment network

An ANPE (National Employment Agency) Unit operates in the Ile-de-France Region, specialising in accompaniment actions for the professional reintegration of convicted people in semi-freedom or approaching imprisonment termination. A partnership of the ANPE Unit with the social inclusion Penitentiary Services started a network connecting 14 ANPE-Justice parties and 8 Regional Department parties; the network makes interventions in 15 territorial penitentiary establishments and in 8 socio-professional reintegration services for convicted people (12,362 people; about 20% of the overall convicted population).

The above mentioned interventions, comprising skills review, individual professional placement project making support, VET, (employed and autonomous) work accompaniment, are carried out taking into account the individuals' specific circumstances and use several supporting (economic and/or educational) mechanisms.

3.3 ROLE OF THE INSTITUTIONS

As it appears from the preceding points, adult education is characterised by:

- the very strong role of national legislation; its intervention covers the objectives, the supply organisation, the regulation of the accompaniment services and of specific mechanisms. In continuing vocational education as well, which is the outcome of agreements reached by social partners and is managed by bilateral bodies, the negotiation results are always turned into State Laws;
- an outstanding role of the Ministry of Labour, among the national institutions; this is in line with a feature of adult education, whereby the raising of the population cultural level and social inclusion is always connected with occupational placement, even if its activities address basic competence recognition. The Ministry of Labour's decentralised operations are conducted through its Regional Directorates and the territorial ANPE;
- a background role of the Ministry of National Education; however, the Ministry contributes to the definition of the education leaving certificates and of the reference educational standards, while organising some of the most important guidance services and in addition to its own well known network of educational agencies (GRETA Centres).

The National Education decentralised operations are conducted through the Academies, which control the schooling and higher education system, while hosting the operations of specifically appointed continuing education delegations

- Distinct employment bound vocational education and training assignments, to:
 - State, in charge of defining the national range of vocational qualifications; orchestrating the vocational education general policies with other institutional players (Parliament, Regions) and with the social partners; investing own resources on the vocational education of unemployed workers who are not eligible for Inter-Professional Fund benefits;
 - Regions, in charge of apprenticeships;
 - Bilateral System (companies - unions), in charge of employed worker VET.
- A Region and Local Community (Municipalities) growing involvement – the responsibility decentralisation process is on-going. Regions were assigned important responsibilities by the 2004 law: a collaboration with the State in the context of unemployed and poorly qualified people vocational education and professionalising apprenticeships; within the context of the State-Regions contracts, they operate on several types of VET activities, prepare programmes against illiteracy and in favour of disabled and convicted people; they enter agreements with agencies and educational bodies in the public, private and social sectors.
Municipalities are often associated with Regions in planning; they make projects and carry out activities autonomously or in collaboration with adult education

- systems, with a direct involvement in one of the most important social inclusion and vocational placement bodies for young people aged up to 25: the “Missions Locales”;
- promotion of performance, as coordinated and systemic as possible, for the various types of educational offers and the various services supporting and guiding/accompanying the VET and the employment demands; such performance should target: young adults (“Missions Locales” networked with GRETA Centres, ANPEs, VAE services), prisoners, immigrants, disabled;
 - presence of specific mission chartered bodies (such as the ANLCI, i.e.: the National Association Against Illiteracy) and of national mechanisms (such as the APPs, i.e.; *Ateliers de Pédagogie Personnalisée* - Individual Educational Workshops); the former are created in compliance with State Law provisions, to take responsibility for inter-institutional activities; the latter are validated at national level and implemented by decentralised institutional levels, controlling the activities of various public and private organisations;
 - progressively increased opening to private parties, individuals and businesses, although in a system marked by a strong institutional and public sector role.

3.4 SYSTEM AND ACTIVITIES

The system is made of a number of distinct parts, which will lead to additional parts, generated from their growing number of interactions; the presently distinguishable parts include:

- an employed workers' continuing vocational education subsystem, which appears to be solid and settled (born in 1971; revised and implemented as per the 2003 social partners' agreement; turned into the 2004 law) and which makes use of private and public VET supplies, in their various expressions (National Education GRETA Centres; vocational education bodies of public nature, such as CNAM – National Conservatory of Arts and Crafts, and University education);
- VET systems, services and mechanisms, specifically aimed at the education of unemployed and special category people;
- VET subsystems and mechanisms for:
 - general and technological basic competence recognition (APP),
 - illiteracy problem solution finding (ANLCI, Ministry of Labour's IRILL Programme),
 - immigrants' linguistic education (CAI contracts),
 - prison inmates and disabled education,
 - new technology competence acquisition (NIS, internet navigator certificate);
- a national mechanism, managed by several education sectors – VAE – addressing the Validation of knowledge through (vocational and social) Experience (non formal education);
- multiple networks supporting demand promotion, reception, information and counselling, guidance, accompaniment ("Missions Locales" for younger people, ANPE for the unemployed, PAIO for generalists, Regional Housing for the disabled, Cities of Crafts);
- requirement assessment mechanisms (JAPD for youngsters aged 17-18, CAI contracts for immigrants, skills review centres, general and vocational skills review for prison inmates).

In summary, the most important activities are:

- continuing vocational education for employed workers;
- professionalisation contracts for young people with an occupational placement;
- individually selected, employment targeted VET;
- adult education for basic skills recognition, illiteracy problem solution, linguistic education for immigrants;
- educational activities for special categories and the disadvantaged;
- demand support services;
- validation of knowledge through experience acquired by adults from informal experiences.

3.5 BODIES

The educational bodies which meet most of the demand (about 9 million people participate in adult education) are:

- the GRETA Centres: about 300, with 200 of them specialising in linguistic education; 6,500 institutions; used by 500,000 people every year;
- universities: almost all of them offer adult education courses annually, with about 400,000 enrolments;
- the Conservatory of Arts and Crafts: active in many territorial areas, with about 100,000 participants per year;
- public and private bodies which trigger the APPs into action: in 2004 they were 248, with about 200,000 users;
- public and private bodies, including several educational enterprises, which are used by the Inter-professional Funds; there are several thousands of them; about 6 million people per year get their vocational training from them.

The bodies which fund companies' and individuals' vocational training plans in the area of continuing education, called *Organismes Paritaires Collecteurs Agrées - OPCA* (Authorised Joint Collect Agencies); these agencies match with the national distribution of productive categories and specific missions.

The fund raising body for disabled people vocational education is the *Association nationale pour la Gestion du Fonds pour l'Insertion Professionnelle des personnes handicapées - AGEFIPH* (General Agency for Vocational training and for Disabled People Placement).

Among the bodies playing an important role there is *Agence Nationale de Lutte contre l'Illétrisme - ANLCI* (Fight against Illiteracy National Agency).

3.5.1 Association Nationale pour la Formation Professionnelle des Adultes - A.F.P.A. (ADult vocational training Association)³¹ *Association profile and history*

Prominent adult vocational training body, for both employed and job seeking individuals. Active on a broad range of topics, including:

- vocational guidance;
- vocational training;
- validation of experience based competence acquisition;
- business advisory service on human resource policies.

The training body long history starts unfolding in the long gone 1945, when the Accelerated Vocational Training Centres (*Formation Professionnelle Accélérée - FPAs*) where

³¹ Cf. www.afpa.fr

established, under the Labour Ministry sponsorship and the social partners' supervision. The Association was established in 1964, to be re-organised in 1985 when 22 regional agencies were set up, with their related pedagogical and technical supporting centres (*Centre Pédagogique et Technique d'Appui* - CPTAs). The first objective contract between the State and the Association was stipulated in 1991. A Framework Agreement with the Labour Ministry's National Agency was signed in 1996.

Presently, the Association operates across the metropolitan territory with 265 training and/or competence validation sites, coupled with 206 guidance sites; its overall staff of 11,000 employees includes: 4,900 trainers, 800 labour psychologists, 700 student lodging and catering facility operators.

The Association carries out the coordinating activities required by the European Union adult education public bodies and the community programme's trans-national project organisation. Recently, the Association has been taking responsibility for the validation, within the French Labour Market, of the vocational qualifications held by workers arriving from other EU countries.

Volume of activities

In year 2004 the following results were obtained:

- 155,000 trained people;
- 271,000 vocational guidance counselling customers;
- 64 million and 400,000 tuition hours;
- 32,400 professional diplomas awarded;
- 10,000 vocational competence certificates issued.

Out of 271,000 guidance counselling customers:

- 39% attended the training activities organised by AFPA;
- 26% AFPA external training activities;
- 34% were individual or ANPE supported job seekers;
- 1% obtained a favourable validation of their competences.

Out of 155,000 trained people:

- 104,400 were job seekers;
- 50,600 were unemployed;
- 23% attended introductory training activities, preparing for access to qualifying vocational education and training.

Reference principles and methodologies

The core mission addresses:

- Professional equality for men and women;

3.5 Bodies

- Professional inclusion for:
 - disabled people;
 - the unemployed;
 - military reconversion personne.

The Association code of ethics includes the definition of the following principles:

- professionalisation;
- respect for the individual;
- meeting needs and demands;
- working with others;
- equity.

The tuition methodology is centred upon learning in operational and/or workshop (Ateliers) contexts and upon customised learning pathways.

3.6 SERVICES

The most important services address: informally acquired knowledge validation; information, counselling, guidance, skills review services.

3.6.1 Validation of knowledge through Experience (V.A.E.)

The 2002-73 Law of 17 January 2002 established the *Validation des acquis de l'expérience - VAE*; since then, the right for all to access the VAE is covered by the Labour Code.

With this mechanism a certification of one's own acquired competences, entitling to become education qualification holder, may be obtained from an independent jury by anybody claiming it for:

- a working experience of at least three years;
- educational, social or cultural responsibilities of at least four years;
- serving one or more assignments as an elected member of a local government;
- responsibilities held in associative type of activities.

Article 35 of the Education Code makes provisions for the VAE to enable:

- access to certifications, similar to those obtained from initial education, apprenticeship or continuing education
- eligibility for partial or full enrolment in educational courses for study certificates.

Employed workers may benefit from VAE specific leave-of-absence periods, while all actions enabling people to have their own competence validated may benefit from continuing education specific financial support, within the enterprise educational plan or the individual study leave frameworks. VAE actions are among those deployed by employers to help workers at risk of losing their job.

The 2004 Continuing Vocational Education Law specifies the social partners' commitment towards the facilitation, and further development, of all workers' access to the mechanism for non formally acquired competence certification.

Validation candidates may obtain, if they apply for it, an accompaniment proposed by the academic validation mechanisms (*Dispositif Académique de Validation des Acquis - DAVA*). The accompaniment consists of personal help towards enabling

- one's own qualification project to be defined;
- one's own orientation in using the VAE mechanism;
- the identification of a study certificate best matching one's own vocational pathway and experiences;
- the correct submission of the application related paperwork.

People at greater risk of occupational discontinuity, and the culturally disadvantaged, find these accompaniment actions most useful.

3.6 Services

Within the VAE framework a National Repertoire of Professional Qualifications has been established. The classification of diplomas and vocational certificates is organised by activity sector and by level. State awarded diplomas and certificates have right of inclusion in the repertoire, in addition to those created by agreements between the employers' associations and the workers' unions. Inclusion may be granted to diplomas, professional titles and production sector qualification certificates, when so decided by the Professional Certification National Commission. The Professional Certification National Commission defines and updates the above mentioned National Repertoire. Its role towards the achievement of qualification transparency on a European scale, essentially, enables the perception of correspondences between national and European certifications.

3.6.2 The V.A.E. and lifelong learning

The OCDE Report – *National Certification Systems' Role Towards Lifelong Learning Promotion* – regarding the French case (OECD, 2003) highlights the reasons and the sequence of steps which have been leading to the deployment of the VAE mechanism. In France, like in other countries, initial education has a basic value in the global lifelong learning process (with the National Education Ministry taking responsibility for the education of children and young pupils aged 3 to 16); however, for several decades, and especially since a continuing education system was set up by the Law of 1971, all vocational education activities terminated with a certificate awarded by the National Education Ministry, or by other Ministries, had to be supplemented with professionalising education delivered by other parties: one such case is provided by the vocational education activities for employed workers and for job seekers, which are made available by public and private bodies, including the social partners.

The certification landscape, before the VAE mechanism advent, comprised three large tiers used by institutions and by education agencies:

- a major role was and is still played by the professional certificates awarded by the National Education Ministry and, most of all after the second world war, by those awarded by the Ministry of Agriculture. Some of these offer an approach to the classification of employees' types of work; they were used in collective work contracts in the sixties already (but their use is next to disappearing). The certificates awarded by initial education are still representing 85% of all educational certifications in France. Basically these certificates state that:
 - the holder owns the necessary professional ability to carry out specific activities; however, the activities must fit within a framework such that;
 - the general cultural education is more important than the specific professional competences;
- the second tier, which followed the development of continuing education and of young people alternating education, is made of professional titles and certifications awarded by several bodies and institutions, which in the seventies started dealing with:

- employees' vocational training;
- job seekers;
- young people lacking initial qualifications.

These certificates state that

- the holder owns knowledge and operational skills; however,
- the general knowledge is rated as already acquired or as a pre-requisite for vocational qualification eligibility

In 1972 an Inter-ministerial Commission was established (Technical Normalisation Commission), under Prime Minister responsibility, chartered with making connections between the directions set by National Educations and:

- diplomas and certifications awarded by the Ministries of Agriculture, Social Affairs, Health, Labour and Solidarity, Defence, Culture;
- titles and recognitions obtained from Chambers of Commerce and Industry, Crafts and Agriculture;
- titles and recognitions obtained from public and private educational institutions and bodies.

In 2002 the normalisation list included about 1,600 entries.

- the third tier is made of professional qualification certificates – CQP – awarded, after a State authorisation in 1986, by the production categories through the bilateral bodies. These certificates may be obtained by:
 - young people who complete an alternating vocational pathway;
 - employees who complete a continuing education process.

There are over thirty production categories, with over 200 CQPs in the metallurgical sector alone.

The value of certificates obtained as per above is sectoral only, while normalised diplomas and titles have an inter-professional validity. The competences they account for, on the other hand, are mainly operational; they are meant to be adapted to a specific production context.

The Law of 17 January 2002 does not modify this “three tiered” certification; however, its approach is based on a different paradigm, whereby:

- certification must be applied to competences, however and wherever they are acquired, rather than to the competence acquisition processes;
- certification is accessed “on demand”³²;

³² The “normalisation” procedure carried out by an adequate commission has been abrogated by Law and is now replaced by a procedure based on personal application. However, no normalisation application is possible any longer, since 26 April 2002, and the already granted normalisations’ validity expired as of 18 January 2005.

- each study title and professional recognition must be readable, just like the relationships of all people belonging to the same professional field, through its redefinition in competence units;
- the State has direct process responsibility: through the establishment of a Professional Certification National Repertoire and the nomination of a National Inter-ministerial Certification Commission.

The qualification certification process is based on four principles:

- educational process independence;
- educational system independent control by authorities and autonomous services, which are National Education administration dependent and use its staff;
- association of vocational education and enterprise world experts;
- process quality assurance criteria and procedures defined at national level, with regional authority responsibility for their application.

All this is bound to have a great impact upon lifelong learning. Presently, almost 40% of the active population holds no recognised qualification, notwithstanding the fact that specific competences have been acquired from working experiences. The possibility to have them recognised and, through such recognition, the possibility to shorten the duration of the educational process which allows to obtain a formal qualification, strongly motivates individuals to take responsibility for their own adult education. This should also fix the problem of professional qualifications obtained from bilateral structures (companies – unions), which are void of inter-professional and national validity.

3.6.3 The V.A.E. and lifelong education

Researchers and experts stress the possibility of obtaining some other results from the V.A.E. mechanism. Namely (Pinte, 2002), continuing education aimed at citizenship, self-accomplishment and personal growth, as contributions to the development of democracy; this would be a real breakthrough, in a context dominated by adult education performing as a strictly employment limited form of continuing education.

As a matter of fact, French lifelong learning is strongly structured and public policy supported while, on the contrary, continuing education appears to be weaker: even the GRETA Centres, which are sustained by public resources (for office space and key personnel) and by their own service fees, are mostly working for a professional competence acquisition target. Employers promoted continuing education is on the other hand usually short lived, aiming as it does to productivity improvement and performance adaptation: this type of education focuses mainly on workers holding average or average-high cultural and professional levels, while the low level holders are often excluded from growth opportunities.

The mechanism deployed in 2002 opens up a different horizon. Its objectives:

- enabling workers to develop and bring up to date their own competences, in a continuously changing economy with strong vertical and horizontal mobility;

- valuing individuals who learn “by doing”, forgetting about general and theoretical knowledge acquisition;
- reduce the importance of using a study certificate as a labour market filter, considering its thinning demand, experienced since the seventies;
- and the definition of the principle, whereby any kind of competence is eligible for certification, when acquired from professional, social and family life, make the continuing education culture stronger; this re-launches the correlation between employability and continuing education, which was defined by the European Commission “Memorandum on Education and Lifelong Learning” (October, 2000); the assumption to be made is that personal development and employability require not just a set of specific professional competences, but the ability to live and move with self-awareness in complex and interacting contexts: so, what is required is the full set of cultural tools which should be available to each individual.

However, these prospective possibilities have not been validated, yet. The VAE mechanism has been around too shortly for its impact to be measurable; also, the procedures and tools deployed so far, according to some experts (Presse, 2004), are still less than adequate for certifying competences acquired outside the formal approach. Specifically, the accompanying measures to be developed and fine tuned are: information, demand promotion, technical support for candidate application submission and for individual project definition. These things are decisive towards avoiding the risk that the VAE mechanism benefits people who are - education and qualification wise- already advantaged.

3.6.4 Major issues

A wealth of publications is by now addressing the VAE topic; they comprise specialised magazine essays and articles, written by experts for experts; user manuals; national and local daily press information.

The above mentioned documentation accounts for a distance – still rather noticeable apparently – between what public opinion and prospective users know about the basic principle, inspiring the mechanism and the practical ways leading to the VAE objective achievement. In several cases the VAE access process is presented as a true “obstacle race”, highly committing in terms of time and costs one must allow to it, and made difficult by the diverse validating bodies procedures for its use. Depending on which study certificate any individual user selects, as reference/objective for the validation of her/his held competences, there are specific validating bodies: in universities, in National Education scholastic and vocational training institutions, in Ministry of Labour Employment Agencies, in vocational training bodies. *“From one ministry to the next one, from a diploma to another one, the pathway to be followed may turn out to be noticeably different ... additionally, some validating bodies may adopt their own well proven procedures while other bodies may still be experimenting them ... while the National Education has a preference for dossier based validations, the Labour Ministry attaches more importance to validations performed in the context of specific professional circumstances”* (Lerouge, 2005).

3.6 Services

The preparation of a dossier of the experiences to be submitted to the validating bodies looks problematic, still; however, general information about the mechanism and bodies to be contacted, depending on one's target diploma, is well spread (VAE info points in all citizens' information centres, guidance services, employment agencies, Greta Centres, etc.). Gathering all the documentation required by a dossier, to certify activities carried out in possibly long periods of time, may turn out to be a complex and tiring task; it is anyway certainly difficult, most of all for low formal education people who are less familiar with writing, to present effectively one's own experiences and the competences acquired from them.

To this end a number of (optional) counselling and accompaniment services are envisaged, for a fee. A report published in 2003 by the Education-Economy-Employment High Committee – HCEEE, sets the cost of a VAE, depending on the required diploma type and level, within the 500 – 6,000 Euro price range. When universities are concerned, VAE candidates must pay the enrolment fee just like any student (about 150 Euro); the optional accompaniment cost varies between 300 and 1,200 Euro, according to a survey conducted by the University President Conference in 2004 (Lerouge, 2005).

Finally, one should know how to use the mechanisms made available for easier VAE access. Employed workers serving an indefinite (*Contrat à Durée Indéterminée* - CDI) or a temporary (*Contrat à Durée Déterminée* - CDD) contract are legally entitled to a 24 hour VAE leave of absence. The 24 hour wage and the full, or partial, cost of any accompaniment services may be charged to the employer or to the bilateral body responsible for managing the individual training leave applications (FONGECIF - Management Fund CIF, or other authorised bilateral body). Temporary workers may apply with FAF-TT, the social security body for temporary work companies. Employed workers may use the DIF (Individual Training Right). No legislative provisions have been made for inactive people and for job seekers. VAE and accompaniment services are free for unemployed people, when a Labour Ministry vocational title is required.

3.6.5 Information, guidance, skills review

Starting in the early eighties, when the youth unemployment issue became hot and the world market changes heightened the need to move from one job to another, from employment to vocational training, France has been discussing at length the political and professional aspects of vocational training, its role and its methodologies: the existing guidance services have been revisited – starting from those targeted to students – and new general and specific service provisions have been introduced, often locally and with an inter-institutional connotation.

Presently, several kinds of information and vocational guidance services are in place, addressing also vocational training opportunities and the job market, often featuring “proximity reception” and customised accompaniment actions. Notwithstanding the fact that national and local scale public administration strategies focus on the need for inter-institutional coordination, and for integrated operation of such services, the available documentation casts the impression

that “networks” are often more wished for, than effectively and fully implemented. Among the most important guidance services these are worth mentioning:

a. organised by the Ministry of Education:

- *Office National d'Information Sur les Enseignements et les Professions* - ONISEP (National Information Office on Education and Professions); it collects and updates useful documentation; it is mostly meant for teachers and education professionals (www.onisep.fr)
- *Centre d'Information et d'Orientation* - CIOs (Information and Guidance Centres); there are about 600 of them; any type of user is welcome, with higher attention for students and families; they offer:
 - information about scholastic pathways, diplomas and qualifications, vocational training
 - individual counselling (self-awareness, choice factor organisation, decisional support)
 - education system local change analysis and summary document delivery to students, families, educational teams, businesses
 - education system partner involvement in exchanges and observations (families, young people, local decision makers, economic actors)
 - self-consulting pathways, also with new technology support
- *Services Communs Universitaires d'Information et d'Orientation* - SCUIOs (Common University Information and Guidance Services); a university initiative; they offer information and advice on university studies, the profession world, the vocational placement pathways

b. locally promoted by inter-institutional partnerships or by local institutions:

- *Centre d'Animation, de Ressources et d'Information sur les Formations* - CARIFs (Vocational Education Information Resource and Promotion Centres); Regional Council initiatives, within the State – Region planning contracts, financed by both; they are available in each region, where they address the establishment, by education professionals, of local relations with social partners and other economic actors
- MIF Network – *Maison d'Information sur la Formation* (Information and Vocational Training Houses); a 1982 State initiative; they were inserted in the State – Regions planning contracts in 1994; there are 40 of them, across the national territory; they are open to all users from the education system; however, they specialise in reception, information, guidance, adult vocational placement support. They serve as territorial showcases for continuing vocational education and employment development actions, operating jointly with vocational training bodies, Regional Councils, employers’ associations. They offer customised counselling.
- *Maison de l'Education Permanente* - MEPs (Continuing Vocational Training Houses). Promoted by the municipalities, they offer information on adult education opportunities, mostly targeting people cultural development. They operate maintaining connections with the educational system, public and private population cultural development centres, libraries, bodies and

- agencies promoting music, theatre, cinema, etc
- *Missions Locales* – Territorial services established in 1982, under the responsibility of the Inter-ministerial Delegations for Youth Social Inclusion, targeting young people aged 16 to 25, who have left the educational system and experience social inclusion and vocational placement difficulties. There are over 400 of them across the national territory. Legally, they are an association among State, local communities, professional organisations and unions, with financial support provided by State and public bodies (35%), Regions (20%), Departments (6%), Municipalities (29%), ESF (10%). Their multidisciplinary teams can take responsibility for:
 - different types of youth related problem areas, such as lodging, health, employment, training, drug addiction, leisure time, etc. using a holistic approach;
 - actions and partnerships which aim at ensuring each young person may benefit from consistent education and placement pathways, social rights and employment;
 - skills review and special youth programmes, such as TRACE – Employment Access Pathway.
- c. A type of guidance structure is provided by the *Cités des Métiers* (Cities of Crafts). Presently they are four, with the first located within the frame of the City of Science and Industry at La Villette in Paris³³. They gather in the same place, with free access for everybody without appointment, all information regarding crafts, professions, vocational training, enterprise making. They may be asked for consultancies and informative-educational pathways by individuals and professional groups, including teachers, trainers, guidance operators. They form a network and operate jointly with ANPE, GRETA Centres, *Missions Locales*.
- d. By 2006 each department will be activating information and counselling Houses about rights, indemnities, support programmes and disabled occupational placement.

3.6.6 Skills Review

The skills review tool enables adults to review their own career, to outline their individual professional profile. It is meant for any person whose circumstances, at any point of a professional pathway, create a need to evolve towards other roles and activities, while forming a precise opinion about the issues involved.

Practically, 5 or 6 interviews with a specialised consultancy centre allow to focus on an individual's experience, for a project to be made. The skills review professional's approach is to invite a scholastic pathway biographical report, complemented by personal and professional experiences, family and social details, etc. A general self-awareness improvement is the first goal. Later, a "competence portfolio" is extracted from the analysis of all competences which have been:

³³ In addition to Paris, a *Cités des Métiers* is at Cotes d'Armor, Nîmes and Gard, Territoire de Belfort.

- professionally acquired;
- formally recognised;
- non formally acquired from daily and social life.

On this basis a person obtains consultancy support to outline an adequate project and to identify its milestones.

There are obvious analogies and connections with the VAE mechanism: not just because the skills review may lead to a possible milestone, such as accessing a full or partial recognition process of one's experience acquired competences, spread among the active or job seeking population, but also because the skills review service practice, introduced by the mid-eighties, has spread and consolidated a culture supportive of the VAE mechanism implementation, among the active or job seeking population.

Skills review first appeared as a tool, supporting changes imposed by company internal re-organisation processes and by return to work of employees on leave for personal or family reasons. In 1991, Law 1405 makes provisions for skills review to become one of the adopted mechanisms for continuing education implementation. In such a frame of reference, skills review access – with an average cost between 1,200 and 3,000 Euro – is a suitably regulated and supported worker's right for:

- employed workers serving an indefinite contract: budget making during working hours is possible and the employer's authorisation may be obtained; the activity may be financed (within the company internal education plan) by the *Organisme Paritaire collecteur Agrée gestionnaire du Congé Individuel de Formation* - OPACIF (Joint Body for Personal Training Leave), which includes the employer in question among its members; alternatively, a request for funding may be submitted in the framework of the individual training right.
An employed worker may refer to the OPACIF directly, whenever there is a preference for not informing one's own employer of a decision to use a skills review.
- Employed workers serving a temporary contract: same benefits, provided the applicant's experience totals two years, with at least 4 months with no interruptions within the last twelve months.
- Job seekers: a free, detailed skills review (*Bilan de Compétences Approfondi* - BCA), may be obtained from the Employment National Agency – ANPE or from the Association for Executives' Employment – APEC, within a Return-to-Work Assistance Plan (PARE).

The Skills Review Centres – CIBC are inter-institutional. There are 166, spread across the national territory and grouped in a National Federation. They make about 60% of all skills reviews and act as links to the territorial collectivities, the ANPEs, the *Missions Locales*. Some private structures operate in the same area, as well. Finally, skills reviews are made by the adult education structures (e.g.: the GRETA Centres).

3.7 DEMAND POLICY

According to a survey by CEREQ³⁴ - *Formation continue 2000* -, which addresses adult education from the individuals' viewpoint (rather than the employers' viewpoint) and independently from the educational objective³⁵, between January 1999 and February 2000 nine million adults participated in one educational activity at least, i.e.: 28% of the population aged less than 65 which has left the schooling system. In 69% of the surveyed cases, the educational goals may be classified under the adaptability category: continuing education aimed at bringing vocational competences up to date with changing occupational performance, due to technological and organisational innovation or to market dynamics.

In 10% of the surveyed cases, the educational goal is to find or change an employment. In 13% of the surveyed cases, the motivating goal is to increase one's own cultural level. In 8% of the surveyed cases, the goal is the acquisition of a diploma or a qualification. This a modest rate, when compared to the total cases motivated by employment related goals (79%), five points below the rate of cases with a cultural development aim; however, it represents a solid reality of 720,000 people, matching the annual number of young people terminating the initial and the vocational education pathways. Out of 9 million education participants, over 3 millions join more than one activity. The number of activities followed between 1999 and 2000 is slightly in excess of 15 millions: 75% of them classify as stages, courses, seminars, conferences; 20% are on-the-job training; the remaining 5% accounts for self-education activities.

34 The survey, prepared by the CEREQ Research Institute, jointly with DARES (Directorate for the Promotion of Research, Surveys and Statistics), DGEFP (General Delegation on Employment and Vocational Training), Ministry of Labour and Solidarity, DPD (Directorate for Programming and Development within the Ministry of National Education) and the Secretariat of State for Women's Rights and Vocational Training, interviewed a sample of 28,700 people aged less than 65, regarding the types of education experienced during their active life, using a detailed questionnaire for the Jan. 1999 to Feb. 2000 period. See: v. CREQ, Bref n.172 (Feb. 2001).

35 The vocational training activities here considered include:

- Stages, continuing education courses, seminars and conferences: training activities carried out by a trainer or an expert, outside the working premises
- On-the-job vocational training: training activities carried out in the working premises or equivalent location, with tutor support and using working tools
- Self-training: vocational training experiences where learning is mostly self-imparted, possibly by means of specific learning tools. Self-training includes open and distance learning
- Alternance training: ad-hoc work contracts; they envisage a compulsory vocational training and should be rated as qualification contracts, essentially.

3.7.1 Vocational training financing, timing and duration

Enterprises have been funding 2/3 of the vocational training activity cost. The remaining 1/3 is more often financed by families and individuals, followed by the State, the ANPE (National Employment Agency) or the ASSEDIC (Unemployment Insurance Fund), the local administrations, associations and clubs.

Although the number of training activities is high, each of them is allocated a relatively short time. Three quarters of them start and terminate within one month; only 4% last longer than 1 year. Their duration, i.e.: time actually spent in training, is short as well: two activities out of three take less than one week of attendance time. The self-training activities have the longest duration and timing of all other activities.

The longest vocational training activities, lasting over two months, are most often paid for by individuals or by the ANPE, while the shortest ones (from one day to one week) are largely paid for by the employer companies; the very short activities (such as one day conferences and interviews) often bear no costs or are paid for by suppliers or associations. Employers mostly pay for short activities, when their contents and/or objectives are closely related to the employee's job description; longer activities are mostly paid for by public and private parties.

3.7.2 Autonomous or agreed initiative

Over half of all vocational training activities, 58%, are arranged after an individual initiative – entirely autonomously, or because of an agreement with one's own employer company or with a public institution. Fully autonomous initiatives are:

- 59% of the unemployed workers' vocational training activities
- 23% of the employed workers' vocational training activities

When the training goal is of a specifically professional nature, only 1/3 of the activities can be related to a fully autonomous initiative. On the contrary, when the training goal is in preparation for a selection test or for obtaining a diploma, in almost all cases the initiative is fully autonomous. 72% of the training activities aiming for adaptation to one's own work may be related to fully autonomous employer's initiatives.

3.7.3 Vocational training costs

Sometimes the individual workers bear the economic cost of their own vocational training, even when professionalisation is its goal: this situation applies to 15% of the unemployed and to 4% of the employed workers.

Individual investment is frequent even time-wise: ? of the employed workers' vocational training activities which have a professional goal – most of all when they aim for the acquisition of a certificate or a qualification – are fully or partly carried out in their spare time. However, also 9% of the vocational training activities for the employee's adaptation to the working environment are performed outside working hours.

3.7.4 Inequalities of access

The variety of vocational training practices, and individual investment in training, do not hide the persistency of inequalities in access to opportunities. In France, the continuing vocational training system remains strongly dependent from the initial education qualification levels.

Vocational training access rates in relation to socio-professional categories vary as follows:

- over 50% for executives, free lance professionals and public sector intermediate staff;
- between 30 and 50% for chief executives, private sector intermediate staff, Public Function employees, companies' administrative employees;
- between 10 and 30% for farmers and agriculture workers, craft and trade workers, commerce employees and qualified/unqualified workers;
- between 17 and 22% for independent workers;
- between 22 and 23% for unemployed workers;
- between 9 and 11% for inactive people.

Sex and age are important variables too. Women's vocational training global access rate is close to men's access rate (public sector work affects considerably this situation, due to a wide spread training access and a majority of women); however,

- over 50ies hold low training access rates, most of all when they have low level study certificates (no diplomas or basic school certificate only);
- younger people, even if unemployed and/or holders of low level certificates, show a 30% training access rate.

Overall, vocational training benefits employed workers most of all; private sector workers less than public sector workers and, in the private sector, women less than men. School qualifications are the most important variable.

3.7.5 Inequalities of needs and expectations

Interesting data emerge from the CEREQ survey concerning vocational training requirements and expectations.

While one worker out of three has used VET, one worker out of four claims to have VET needs which have not been met; this is the outcome of a joint private and public sector analysis. However, unmet expectations are higher among executives, i.e.: workers with initial education at top levels and medium-high professional placement; the unmet expectation rate decreases considerably among low qualification workers. Similar distinctions apply to the perception of VET (8 executives out of 10 claim to be working for a company where "everybody is participating in VET" versus less than 1 worker out of two) and to VET access right information (59% executives and intermediate occupational placement employees know about their right to individual VET or skills review leave, versus 42% lower placement employees and 38% workers).

chapter 4

GERMANY

Debates and scientific literature, regarding Adult Education in Germany³⁶, essentially reference two basic concepts which are used – as it frequently happens in other countries – with interchangeable meanings:

- *Erwachsenenbildung* (literally “adult education”): this is the general concept which defines adult learning and the related social, institutional and cultural policy sector revolving around it. Such concept designates most of all the general vocational/educational activities, which are carried out to protect non professionalising citizens rights. In international documents it is used as a synonym of “adult education”, mostly in its meaning of *Weiterbildung* (continuing education, see further on);
- *Weiterbildung* (literally “permanent education, education which keeps going”; for simplification reasons our translation will be “continuing education”, even if we are aware that the concept has a broader meaning): this word designates the whole adult learning domain; it comprises adult education (*Erwachsenenbildung*) in its most specific meaning, continuous training (*Fortbildung*), re-qualification (*Umschulung*) and other forms of adult learning. It is often used, in practice, to designate the lifelong vocational learning sub-system.

36 The main sources used for the description of the lifelong learning system in Germany are:

- Pehl, K. (2005), *Das Bildungssystem in Deutschland* (2003/4), in Eurybase (www.eurydice.org/Eurybase/frameset_eurybase.html) im Rahmen von Eurydice (www.eurydice.org), Kapitel 7. Allgemeine und berufliche Weiterbildung für junge Schulabsolventen und Erwachsene (<http://www.eurydice.org/Eurybase/Application/gettext.asp?tablename=DE_V0_7&id=1&nparam=0>)
- Nuissl, E. - Pehl, K. (2004), *Portrait Continuing Education*. Deutsches Institut für Erwachsenenbildung - D.I.E., Bonn, 3rd revised edition
- BMBF - Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung (2003), *Bericht Berichtssystem Weiterbildung VIII, Integrierter Gesamtbericht zur Weiterbildungssituation in Deutschland*, Bonn (http://www.bmbf.de/pub/berichtssystem_weiterbildung_viii-gesamtbericht.pdf)
- BLK - Bund-Länder-Kommission für Bildungsplanung und Forschungsförderung (2004), *Strategy for lifelong learning in the Federal Republic of Germany*. Materials on educational planning and research promotion, Vol. 115, Bonn (www.blk-bonn.de/papers/volume115-english.pdf).

Highlights of the historical system development

In Germany, an institutionally organised adult teaching and learning process – i.e.: adult education – can be traced back to the early XIX century, in relation with several socially and politically driven initiatives (craft association, religious circles, unions and workers' societies) supplemented, at the time of the Weimar Republic specifically, by the State determined support for the *Volksbildung* sector (popular education), expressly mentioned by the 1919 Constitution, in article 148.

After 1945 Germany resumed the Weimar Republic tradition; the right to education, vocational training and adult learning, found its place in several constitutions or in *Länder* education laws.

In 1960, one of the first important dates, the *Commission for the educational and vocational system (Deutscher Ausschuss für das Erziehungs- und Bildungswesen*, active from 1953 to 1965) approved a report sanctioning the need to recognise and to support adult education as an “autonomous” part of the public education system.

In 1970 the process of defining adult education, as a sector with its own identity, gains momentum; the German Education Council (*Deutscher Bildungsrat* 1965-1975) approves the Education System Structural Plan (*Strukturplan für das Bildungswesen*) and adult education becomes part of a broader continuing education framework – jointly with continuous vocational training and requalification; this means sanctioning, for the first time, the existence of a real educational/vocational fourth level (after the primary, secondary and university levels), intended for “continuing or resuming an organised learning approach after completion of an educational/vocational phase of some duration”.

The introduction of the Continuing Education (CE) concept was meant not just to basically assume an interconnection of previously disconnected educational activities, it was also meant to formally and explicitly approve a broader State involvement in this sector.

The laws on CE which were made in the 70ies by the *Länders* are framed in this picture; those laws pinned down the public sector responsibilities regarding CE, paving the ground towards its rights to be economically sustained by the State.

In those days the preliminary laws on leave for studying or training, or leave of absence, were approved, and specific guarantee clauses were adopted for inclusion in collective work contracts and in corporate agreements.

By the late 80ies, the need for adult CE system to be founded on a renewed State endeavour was affirmed, and contributions were invited from economy actors and social partners (agencies and association). In 1987 the Federal Ministry of Education and Research launched the Continuing Education Concerted Action (*Konzertierte Aktion Weiterbildung* – KAW), a federal, regional and municipal communication and cooperation platform for CE private and public actors; the action's functions may be summed up as follows:

- CE policy consultancy and enhancement provision;
- enhanced information, opinion and experience exchange among KAW members;
- CE innovation repository implementation;

- promotion of CE social profile and relevance;
- CE sector relevant topic consultancy provision;
- assessment of significant international experiences.

Starting in 1992, CE laws were issued in *Länder* which created a legislative frame of reference, suitable for the State monopoly to be replaced by more market oriented CE offers, from several public and private agencies.

4.1 ADULT EDUCATION NATIONAL POLICIES

4.1.1 Highlights of the school system and of initial Vocational Education and Training (VET) system (“Dual System”)³⁷

Germany is served by an efficient education system, with 9 year compulsory schooling and diversified kinds of school, a well developed university system, well distributed in each *Länder*, but most of all is served by a specific vocational training system: the celebrated “dual system”, which has considerable influence on the Continuing Education system.

The German school system is among the most selective European systems. As a matter of fact, selection starts after four years in primary school and is based on performance, not on individual choice. Essentially, boys and girls are assigned to the differing studies addressed by a three-tiered systems - *Hauptschule*, *Realschule*, *Gymnasium*³⁸. *Gymnasium* is the only educational pathway entitling to university access. In the sixties and in the seventies the education system did not open up as much as other European Countries’ systems did: the *Gesamtschule* (a comprehensive school which avoids such a precocious selection) was introduced in some *Länder* only, with a somewhat marginal role.

In 2005, 8.3% of young people has no diploma (7.4% of them are German; 18.1% are foreigners); 25% leaves the education system having a *Hauptschule* diploma, 42.6% leaves the education system having a *Realschule*, 23% leaves the education system having a diploma and 1.2% has other diplomas when leaving the education system (*Fachhochschulreife*)³⁹.

The “main street” to employment, for youngsters holding a *Hauptschule* or a *Realschule* diploma (which does not entitle them to access university), is the dual system of vocational training in companies – an apprenticeship lasting between two and three and a half years, which combines practical experience at the place of work with lessons in a vocational school. Trainees enter a training contract with

37 The dual VET system in Germany has been downloaded from the *Bundesinstitut für Berufsbildung* - BIBB web site: Dybowski, G. (2005), *The Dual Vocational Education and Training System in Germany – Keynote Speech on Dual Vocational Training International*, Conference Taiwan / 25 April 2005. Federal Institute for VET (www.bibb.de/dokumente/pdf/a23_internationales_dybowski-taiwan_april-05.pdf).

38 At the end of the 4th year, children leaving the “same for all” primary school enter an orientation phase, attending classes in preparation for various types of secondary education:

- *Hauptschule* (school ending after the 9th or the 10th year, preparing pupils who envisage continuing with low theoretical content apprenticeships for manual professions – www.leu.bw.schule.de/bild/hs_1.html);
- *Realschule* (school ending after the 10th year, preparing pupils who envisage continuing with technical-administrative apprenticeships, at a more theoretical level than the *Hauptschule* but less demanding than the *Gymnasium* – www.leu.bw.schule.de/bild/rs_1.html);
- *Gymnasium* (school ending after the 13th year or - in some *Länder* - the 12th, and the only one preparing pupils for university access – www.leu.bw.schule.de/bild/gym_allg.html).

39 Cf. *Statistisches Bundesamt Deutschland* (2006), *Bildung, Wissenschaft und Kultur. Schulstatistik*, Wiesbaden www.destatis.de/themen/d/thm_bildung.php.

a company granting them a training allowance, with inclusion in the social security benefit system and in compliance with the contractual agreements negotiated with the trade unions. The “dual” adjective is meant to indicate that the vocational training pathway unfolds across two learning places: theoretical knowledge is mostly gained in vocational schools, while vocational skills are acquired directly at the place of work or in special training facilities. On-the-job training is financed by companies themselves, directly, while Municipalities and *Länder* finance vocational school costs. Around 70% of school leavers, every year, takes a road bound for a State-recognised vocational qualification, within the so called ‘dual system’. Such system is now undergoing a crisis (see further down); however, for a vast majority of German young people it provides a vocational training pathway which, still today, awards one of the qualifications among those envisaged by the recognised learner’s profiles. Vocational training in company premises is delivered by qualified trainers or by craftmasters; besides the on-the-job learning time, trainees spend a variable amount of time attending vocational school lessons. Candidates should apply with their employing companies directly, upon entering a training contractual agreement which entitles them to a monthly allowance (amounts payable vary according to trainee’s profile). Training contracts include social security insurance (covering sick leave, retirement, accidents, unemployment). Qualification exams should be taken at a sector specific Chamber (Industry, Commerce or Crafts). If necessary, in addition to the study grants (see further on: Measure *Bundesausbildungsförderungsgesetz – Bafög. Financial assistance for students under the Federal Training Assistance Act*), young people may obtain support during their in-company training time, such as extra lesson time and personal tutoring (see Measure *Support during apprenticeship training, abH – AusbildungsBegleitende Hilfen*). VET might be conducted in a company external structure, whenever an internal apprenticeship position fails to become available. When people with disabilities are involved VET is conducted in specific structures for vocational rehabilitation (European Commission, 2002).

Lately the dual system has been showing symptoms of crisis. At the forefront, vocational profiles are changing more and more rapidly, in high technology trades most of all. The good craftsman skill is not enough any longer; in addition, computer literacy and analytic thinking, communication competence and customer care, are required by many trades; in other words: good quality VET demand is higher and higher. As a consequence, companies have been developing a strong preference for young people holding leaving certificates (Eurydice, 2006) from the *Realschulen* or the *Gymnasien*, while the *Hauptschulen* (traditionally the main source of trainees) is progressively turning into a school where young people with learning disabilities (foreigners with linguistic problems in particular) reach a high concentration. The availability of more ‘educated’ trainees is, in any case, presenting companies with an increased demand for higher quality training delivery, which at times cannot be supplied by small and medium enterprises. Additionally, the drop-out rate for apprentices is increasing annually (now about 25% of all

contracts) mostly for those provided by the *Hauptschüler*, because of complexities and difficulties in the required vocational pathways.

In the German labour market, qualifications (that's to say the credentials provided by a regular dual system vocational pathway) are still a pre-requisite for obtaining a job placement: without the qualifications required by one of the dual system vocational profiles, *chances* of occupational integration are minimal. Because of this, several measures here analysed aim to achieve qualification for both the unemployed and for qualification-less persons who have an occupational status (Cf. Measures *Berufsvorbereitende Bildungsmaßnahmen – BvB. VET measures for employment preparation; Arbeitsförderung. Promotion of employment according to the Social Code – SGB II and III; Closing the skills gap and achieving a qualification while at work. Abschlussbezogene Nachqualifizierung*).

4.1.2 The German Continuing Education

German continuing education is less regulated by the State than all other educational sectors. The high number of agencies aims to meet the user base diverse interests and needs, as much as possible. The underlying principle of all CE activities is voluntary participation.

The State activities in the CE sector are limited to setting down its driving principles and to regulating its organisation and financial status, through norms embedded in several federal and *Länder*'s laws. The State regulations' goal, regarding CE, is to provide an optimal development platform for CE and lifelong learning.

The federal government competences include:

- extrascholastic professional CE;
- regulated professional skill updating;
- development of scientific CE general principles in university premises;
- framework norms protecting distance education users;
- CE civic and political aspects;
- CE research and innovation effectiveness, through model development, statistical surveying and research report publishing;
- CE sector' statistic data gathering;
- international CE issues, in the European Union context as well;

Germany's federal status has a significant impact on the educational and the vocational training sectors, which are managed firstly at the *Länder* level, with the exclusion of the federal government (for the *Länder* functions see further on: "LAWS AND REGULATIONS").

Special coordination bodies are responsible for the agreements on joint tasks and goals in the educational and vocational training sector, such as: the Ministries of Education Conference (KMK), the Government-*Länder* Commission for Education Programmes and Research Promotion (BLK), the Science Council (*Wissenschaftsrat*) and other national institutions.

4.1.3 Innovative programmes development at national level

Since the late 90ies, Germany has been striving greatly to achieve national and regional CE system adaptation to the changed requirements of the user base and of the labour market. A number of CE sector related Research and Development Programmes have been launched and financed, by means of the European Social Fund as well. Among these the most relevant is the “Lifelong Learning for All” Programme (*Lebensbegleitendes Lernen für alle*), funded by the Federal Ministry for Education and Research; its most important sub-programmes may be described as follows:

- a) the “Networks promotion - Learning Regions – Providing support for networks” Programme (Measure/Programme *Lernende Regionen – Förderung von Netwerken*); a core action which encourages the opening of territorial educational institutions to CE, while establishing networks for the interconnection of the most significant actors from the productive, scientific, social and cultural sectors (*Volkshochschulen*, including Commerce and Industry Chambers, Universities, schools, private educational institutions and the Economic Promotion Society, etc⁴⁰). In each individual network, financial provisions address one main project, which is aimed at network development and coordination. This involves a *central office*, which is also responsible for organising a parallel operator and user guidance service, coupled with an overall project marketing activity. A further central incentive is to provide user guidance services. Several connected sub-projects promote territorial services to provide lifelong learning measures, for example CE development, in connection with (regional) specific topics, i.e. centres for self directed learning, e-learning products, offers for people with migrational backgrounds, certification of non-formal learning etc. An average of four to six full time persons manage the required organisational work, while a number of additional professional roles are involved on a temporary basis. A stable collaboration among several parties, such as officially registered public utility capital ventures or foundations, is granted by network preliminary establishment activities – related to individual network aims. From 2001 to 2007, for the whole programme, funds have been allocated for an amount of 118 million Euro, with 65 millions awarded by the Federal Government and 51 millions by the ESF. A network actors’ increasing self-funding in the range of 30% is required.
- b) “School/Economy/Working Life” Programme (*Schule/Wirtschaft/Arbeitsleben*);

40 *Wirtschaftsförderungsgesellschaften*: These are companies, mostly owned by the *Länder*’s government, which are meant to provide assistance to German and foreign entrepreneurs’ investment and enterprise making projects, by way of:

- the region as an investment place; fiscal and legal information and advice;
- investment project analysis and identification/selection of an ideal placement for such projects,
- investor assistance in all contact phases with public and private economic parties (from area searching to administrative procedure management).

it deals with innovative projects aimed at young people education methods, based on individual and practice oriented approaches, which meet working environment needs and develop autonomous vocational competences; 41 projects have been funded; since 1999, financial contributions of 6.5 million Euro per year have been granted, with an increase reaching the amount of 10 million Euro in 2001 (European Social Fund co-funding)⁴¹.

- c) "Lifelong Learning" Programme (*Lebenslanges Lernen*); it aims at the implementation of new forms of educational cooperation in each *Länder* and between *Länder*, to enhance *Lifelong Learning*. A specific objective is for adult learning to achieve greater self-responsibility and self-direction, with a stronger cooperation between vocational education demand and supply. New goals were set, as from year 2001, which resulted in projects concerning educational structure quality and certification of qualification and competence. The experimental programme, promoted by the *Bund-Länder-Kommission – BLK* (similar to the State-Regions Commission), was a 5 year action (2000-2005) with 50% funding awarded by the Government and the other 50% by the *Länder*, for a total amount of 25 million DM (it is about 12,800 Euro)⁴².
- d) "Learning Culture and Competence Development" Programme (*Lernkultur Kompetenzentwicklung*); a research and development action aimed at stable learning structure development on territories, while increasing:
 - the effectiveness of workplace learning,
 - the importance of professional competence,
 - the importance of unemployed skill maintenance strategies.

The programme mostly aims to boost the professional learning cultures and to integrate learning in the working process. Additionally, the programme promotes projects for transparency and guidance enhancement; the quality certification for professionalism dedicated CE structures is also enhanced, with the experimentation of new approaches. Between 2001 and 2007 the envisaged amount of annual funding, made available by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research, reaches 20 million Euro for these sub-programmes: Work Process Learning (*Lernen im Prozess der Arbeit - LIPA*), Social Context Learning (*Lernen im sozialen Umfeld - LISU*), Continuing Education Structure Learning (see Measure/Programme *Learning in continuing education organisations for adults. Lernen in Weiterbildungseinrichtungen - LiWE*), Network and Multimedia Learning (*Lernen im Netz und mit Multimedia - LINE*) and Basic Research and Scientific Accompaniment (*Grundlagenforschung und wissenschaftliche Begleitung - GRUFO*).

- e) The Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) finances an experimental programme called "Promoting skills - Vocational qualification for target groups needing special support", from 2001 to 2006 (*Berufliche Qualifizierung*

41 See the following website www.swa-programm.de/

42 Cf. www.oanda.com

für Zielgruppen mit besonderem Förderbedarf – BQF - Programme); the programme supports apprenticeship workers and young adults with low qualifications, and/or with learning disabilities, towards the obtainment of a vocational qualification. The BQF Programme supports activities including: modelling, research and development, surveying of what is available, feasibility studies, best practice experience transfer enhancement, territorial actor and structure networking at local and regional levels. The State funded Programme (roughly 60 million Euro from 2001 to 2006, with about 50% contributed by the European Social Fund), breaks down into 4 innovation sectors:

- 1) Improvement of structures dealing with educational-vocational integration of disadvantaged young people,
- 2) Improvement and widening, and/or innovation, of the educational and the professional placement offers (see Measure *Support during apprenticeship training - abH AusbildungsBegleitende Hilfen*)
- 3) Initiatives regarding prevention (cooperation between education and firms, collaboration with youth assistance offices, etc.)
- 4) Improvement of immigrants' vocational skilling chances (CEDEFOP, 2002) (see Measure *Integration course for immigrants*). Within this sector the Programme funds 10 local and regional networks for foreigners' vocational qualification (*Berufliche QualifizierungsNetzwerke - BQN*). The BQN Network purpose is to make the main regional stakeholders (Chambers of Commerce, Municipalities, Employment Agencies, Schools, Immigrant Associations, Enterprises, Trade Unions, etc.) more proactive towards providing favourable target group access to vocational qualification pathways and placements.

The main targets of the BQF-Programme are to improve the efficiency of the widespread vocational training offers by a complete and integrated skills training for disadvantaged young people in cooperation with the German Federal Labour Office (*Bundesagentur für Arbeit - BA*) and to avoid the fail of access to the VET by precocious vocational guidance activities at school.

The network is supported by the “Initiative Unit for vocational of migrants” (IBQM – *Initiativstelle Berufliche Qualifizierung von MigrantInnen*) which carries out scientific research and counselling activities aimed at identifying, supporting and disseminating innovative model projects. The IBQM main task is the improvement of the overall conditions for immigrants' vocational qualification (including young people from immigrant families). To this end, IBQM grants the provision of counselling, scientific accompaniment and evaluation by the BIBB (Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training) of the above described network.

4.1.4 Laws and regulations

Regarding support for the VET of workers and disadvantaged persons, the most relevant legal provisions have been codified into the Social Code (Sozialgesetzbuch - SGB) – its Volume III (Promotion of employment) regulates all the provisions offered

by the Federal Employment Agency (Bundesagentur für Arbeit – BA), which is headquartered in Nuremberg, with local offices in many towns. The benefits to be awarded by the Employment Agency – sanctioned by the SGB III norms – address workers and job-seekers (both young and unemployed persons); specific (financial or support services based) benefits are meant to encourage apprenticeship, VET, job placement and replacement, workers rehabilitation (limited to disabled persons), requalification, vocational update, etc. . Among other things, the SGB III norms are particularly meant for:

1) Support measures addressed to employees:

- vocational guidance; vocational and occupational activity brokering service, coupled with financial support for such activities;
 - measures for subsidy eligibility assurance; training measures for integration prospect enhancement;
- support towards mobility and employment position appointment:
- subsidy for starting-up a self-employed activity;
 - subsidy for in-company training or participation in a training preparatory measure;
 - acceptance of costs for Continuing Education course enrolment and for cost attendance meal and accommodation expenditures (daily allowance);
 - working life participation support for disabled persons, namely: VET subsidy, acceptance of participation costs and transition subsidy;
 - unemployment benefit and partial unemployment benefit (in case of partial unemployment);
 - wage compensation funds;
 - cash benefits when employer is unable to pay (wage, salary or other compensation) due to insolvency.

2) Support measures addressed to employers:

- job market direction finding; VET and occupational activity brokering;
- wage payment contributions in cases of: unskilled worker recruitment, enterprise start-up, continuing vocational training support;
- apprentice wage and apprenticeship related expenditure contributions; additional contributions for disabled workers;
- trainee allowance reimbursements.

3) Support measures addressed to institutional structures mandated to provide VET for disadvantaged persons:

- contributions towards further in-company training measures;
- acceptance of costs for training in company external structures and for disadvantaged person vocational integration accompanying measures;
- loans and contributions for structures aimed at vocational and continuing ed-

- ucation or at occupational re-habilitiation, especially for young people in distress;
- contributions for job vacancy creation measures;
- contributions for Continuing Education measures;
- contributions for infrastructure refurbishing work.

Between 2002 and 2005, the third volume of the Social Code was modified by the controversial “Hartz” reform (named after the Head of the expert Commission which put forward the proposals later adopted as Law by the Government). The reform main objective was to get rid of a two sided job-seeker support system: social assistance and job placement support were “to flow” out of one and the same source, by joining Employment Agency subsidies and services (unemployment and placement subsidy) with municipality provided assistance. Municipalities retain responsibility for subsidies concerning lodgement and heating, child care, indebtedness prevention and remedy advice, psycho-social assistance. The Employment Agency delivers all forms of support actions addressing employment and VET of disadvantaged or job seeking persons (Part I – Chapter 2.5 “Services” describes the Employment Agency’s functions).

Relevant laws concerning Continuing Education at federal level:

- the Industrial Constitution Act (Betriebsverfassungsgesetz) make provisions for trade union representatives’ vocational leave of absence: especially and strongly significant for trade union specific VET. The same provisions are made for State Personnel by the Federal Law on Staff representation (Bundespersonal-Vertretungsgesetz);
- the Vocational Training Act (Berufsbildungsgesetz) makes provisions for all activities concerning CE structure and implementation, in addition to requalification. The responsible body is the Bonn based Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (Bundesinstitut für Berufsbildung – BIBB, see Part II – Chapter 4.5 “Services”); the Institute carries out VET sector research, development and consultancy activities (for both adults and youngsters), while working to identify future VET commitments, based on innovation transfer into vocational processes;
- the individual’s right to VET, for adults and young people, is granted by the Federal Education and Training Assistance Act (Bundesausbildungsförderungsgesetz): for what this document is concerned with, the possible recognition of the Italian School System credentials called “diploma di maturità” (the only Italian education certificate which entitles to University access in Germany) is granted to adults and youngsters who have completed compulsory education and hold vocational qualifications; the possibility of the “diploma di maturità” recognition is offered through the so called “second educational pathway”;
- the Higher Education Federal Framework Act (Hochschulrahmengesetz) sets the obligation for universities to offer VET pathways in collaboration with other struc-

- tures; they should also encourage their own personnel to participate in VET;
- the Distance Learning Act (*Fernunterrichtsschutzgesetz*) regulates rights and duties of distance learning agencies and users; it also provides for the State to issue an authorisation for this type of education to be delivered.

However, various additional Acts contain provisions for the promotion of CE activity participation.

There are also important regional laws at individual *Länder* level, aiming to achieve highly similar objectives, based on the subsidiarity principle, which differ only for the amount of financial resources allocated to regional CE systems. The most relevant principles of the regional provisions include:

- granting CE an institutional structure, through the promotion and the recognition of CE activities marked by suitable quality and availability levels;
- organisational self-sufficiency, i.e.: a clear definition of each agency specific circumstances (unions, employer associations, churches), with autonomous curriculum structuring and personnel recruitment;
- teachers' qualifications and their update;
- cooperation with other educational structures at regional and municipal level;
- free access for all individuals and all citizenship groups.

4.1.5 Financial provisions

The multi-tiered structure of the German CE system makes activity funding dependent from a number of diversified sources, such as:

- State (Federal Government federal and *Länder*) and Municipalities;
- Federal Employment Agency (*Bundesagentur für Arbeit*);
- European Union funds (European Social Fund, Programmes);
- Private sector;
- Institutional CE suppliers;
- Families and private citizens.

In 2000, German CE was financed with a total of 36.7 billion Euro⁴³.

They are estimations as it is hard and complex to make a general evaluation of direct and indirect costs aimed at the implementation of CE activities and the participation to them. The Table below gives an hypothesis of costs in this field.

43 While data provided by Government, *Länder*, Municipalities and Employment Agencies are documented and therefore reliable, all other data are just estimates, more or less accurate. These latter ones consist of an approximative estimation of direct and indirect costs (in terms of individuals and companies's investments etc. sometimes connected with the chance to get some subsidies and financial aids by the Federal Government or by *Länder*). A detailed description of these financial aspects are available in: Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung (2002), *Auf dem Weg zur Finanzierung Lebenslangen Lernens, Zwischenbericht*, Expertenkommission Finanzierung Lebenslangen Lernens, Berlin.

Table 4.1
Investments
for Continuing
Education
in Germany

Expenditure source	Billion EURO		
Reference Year	1992	1997	2000
EU funds (ESF, Programmes)	0,050	0,050	0,050
Federal Government, Länder and Municipalities	2,222	2,534	2,289
of which			
Federal Government	0,440	0,796	0,438
Länder	0,788	1,009	0,796
Municipalities	0,992	1,024	1,056
Federal Employment Agency	14,200	10,100	6,800
Private sector parties	18,700	18,000	(18,000)
Families / citizens	5,010	7,210	(7,210)
Institutional providers	0,050	0,050	0,050
Total	42,5	40,8	36,7

Source: Nuissl, E. - Pehl, K. (2004), *Porträt Weiterbildung Deutschland - Deutsches Institut für Erwachsenenbildung – D.I.E.*, Bonn, page 29.

In 2000, CE public funding (Federal Government, *Länder* and Municipalities) was 0.38% of the overall public budget (0.42% in 1992) and 0.11% of the GNP (in 1992: 0.42%). It appears that the public budget allocation for CE is far less than the allocations for other educational sectors (1.43%; in 1992: 1.20%), for university (3.18%; in 1992: 3.97%) and for schools (7.83; in 1992: 7.33%). It's true that, since 1975, CE public investment has been increasing more than the investment for any other VET sector (about 28 Euro per inhabitant in 2000); however, CE remains the sector of smallest investment (in 2000 again, primary education: 104 EUR, School: 569 EUR, University: 231 EUR).

4.2 ROLE OF THE INSTITUTIONS

See Chapters 4.1 “Adult education national policies” and 4.3 “System and activities” to have a complete role of the institutions scene.

4.3 SYSTEM AND ACTIVITIES

In Germany, the CE's institutional structure is extremely diversified. The number of (federal or *Länder* level) publicly supported structures is topmost: over 2000 agencies, including 1000 *Volkshochschulen*. The CE institutions of industrial and commercial companies, chambers of commerce and industry, and chambers of craft trades, are of a similar order of magnitude. Additionally, a number of private and commercially run CE institutions should be considered – ranging between 300 and 600 in some major cities such as Hamburg, Berlin, Munich, Frankfurt and Lipsia.

The most representative structures include:

- various kinds of mostly public scholastic institutes, offering recognition of some school leaving certificates (of pre-higher education – *Hauptschulabschluss* - or standard high school – *Mittlere Reife* - or senior high school - *Abitur*). Quite often, they are evening (*Abendgymnasien*, *Abendrealschule*) or day-time (*Kollegs*) schools;
- *Volkshochschulen* (VHS): municipal CE structures located in over 1000 German towns, municipalities and districts. These are usually State funded; their educational offer, delivered at evening or afternoon times, addresses the whole range of CE topics, for all population groups. They are members of regional umbrella associations or – at the national level – of the *Deutscher Volkshochschul-Verband* (DVV). Their inspiring principles may be traced back to the roots of *Volksbildung*, the term used for continuing education up to the end of the Second World War, which refers particularly to the liberal bourgeois tradition of general education; their very broad range of courses shows a preference for offering foreign language, general culture and in depth cultural courses, mostly. Other courses they offer are preparatory towards the recognition of foreign secondary school certificates, qualifying for access to higher education; these courses play an important role in teaching German as a second language for immigrants;
- *trade union CE*: the biggest CE structures in Germany are maintained by the two most powerful trade union umbrella organisations (DGB - *Deutscher Gewerkschaftsbund* and DAG -*Deutsche Angestellten Gewerkschaft*). Education centres are available in major German towns; besides CE, they conduct training for works council members and trade union representatives, or they organise political seminars for trade union members;
- *company based CE*, which grew enormously in importance in the '80s, particularly under the influence of changes in technology and in work organisation. Many large trades – chemistry and metallurgy prevailing among them – built up their own internal training centres;
- *religious CE*: run by the Evangelical and Catholic Churches. Both churches have their own nationwide network of family education and counselling centres, academies, residential adult education centres, with a wide course offer, mostly on general cultural subjects but also on psychology, philosophy, etc.

- *commercial CE institutions* have been growing in number over the past twenty years: they target those who can pay, particularly in the area of foreign language teaching and information technology, while taking an active part in competing for public funds, notably those falling under the provisions *Sozialgesetzbuch III* provisions (SGB III – covered earlier);
- *distance Education institutes*: their number suffered an impressive drop after the approval of legislation, in 1974, concerned with quality and correctness of their educational provision; however, they have been expanding their market share, recently;
- *chambers of industry and commerce, and chambers of craft trades and agriculture*: they offer a wide range of courses while contributing – through qualification recognition activities – to the workforce professionalisation and training
- *state CE structures for public employees*: they organise relevant training initiatives, such as: teacher vocational update seminars, or training and update courses held in public sector personnel academies, etc.;
- *vocational Centres of various trade enterprise*: they frequently organise vocational and industrial CE courses, seeking collaboration with small and medium companies;
- *universities*: about 30 among them now have their own CE centres, with differing structures, aims and profiles. Many universities offer CE courses in cooperation with trade union, enterprise and CE structures.

The *foundations of the political parties* sometimes maintain their own education centres; they concentrate especially on the provision of political education. An important role is played by charitable organisation educational establishments as well (such as: *Arbeiterwohlfahrt*, *Paritätischer Wohlfahrtsverband*, etc.); they provide a consistent educational activity addressed to operators and volunteers of their affiliate organisations, in addition to vocational initiatives addressed to citizens.

4.4 BODIES

The cooperation existing between Federation and *Länder* levels, in CE policy management and planning, has been mentioned in this analysis, already. As we know, the agreements between State and *Länder* on joint duties and goals are under the responsibility of ad-hoc coordinating bodies: the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education, the Commission for Educational Planning and Research Promotion (BLK), the Science Council (*Wissenschaftsrat*) and other national institutions.

However, functions concerning research, model development and CE sector innovation monitoring, are performed by a number of organisation and institutes, besides the above referenced bodies (see Chapter 2.1 “Adult education national policies” – INNOVATIVE PROGRAMMES DEVELOPMENT AT NATIONAL LEVEL). Among these the most relevant for this research are listed in what follows.

The Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (*Bundesinstitut für Berufsbildung* – BIBB) was established in 1970 under the provisions of the Vocational Education and Training Act (BBiG). Its present legal basis is the Vocational Training Reform Act (BerBiRefG) of March 23, 2005. The BIBB is directly financed from federal budget and is subject to the legal supervision of the Federal Ministry of Education and Research. Based in Bonn, the Institute has conducted the scientific accompaniment of various measures in this research analysis. Its main task areas include:

- studying the structural development of the VET and the CE market;
- observing and monitoring in company vocational and CE practices;
- exploring new VET and CE pathways;
- identifying projected vocational and qualification requirements in great advance;
- developing and renewing training and vocational update profiles;
- supporting in company vocational practices through modern material and media;
- elaborating in company train the trainer programmers;
- sustaining modern vocational training centres for innovation and for the integration of traditional in company CE and vocational training;
- assessing the quality of distance vocational education supply;
- providing assistance and accompaniment to national and international programmes for VET development;
- conducting VET compared studies at an international.

The German Institute for Adult Education (*Deutsches Institut für Erwachsenenbildung* - DIE) is an independent scientific service institute, located in Bonn, dealing with the entire CE sector. It carries out bridging activities, between CE theory and practices, by providing tools for best practice oriented research. Offered services (research, scientific accompaniment of programmes and project, consultancy) are

targeted not only to researchers and teachers, but to AE and CE actors as well. The analysis of several measures here considered has been carried out with its scientific accompaniment. Every year the DIE is updating a database with statistical information regarding AE sector structures, personnel, financial resources and initiatives.

The Commission of the Federation and the *Länder* (*Bund-Länder-Kommission* – BLK) is a permanent forum for the discussion of all education and research related issues, of common interest to Federation and *Länder*. Its recommendations on program launching and research funding are presented to federal government and *Länder* senior management. Its areas of work include the development of the general and the vocational education system, the improvement of equality and opportunity, the advancement of education applied technologies, the integration of disadvantaged young people, with learning and vocational difficulties.

Its interventions in the education innovation sector focus mainly on *pilot project* support, within the five-year programmes which aim at school innovation, VET, university and CE; its concern is the fast dissemination of project related knowledge and the practical use of their achieved results. Concerning CE, the BLK developed and promoted the “*Lebenslanges Lernen*” Program, as of late one of the most innovative programmes, which specifically addressed the enhancement of:

- adult learning self-responsibility and self-direction;
- VET demand and supply collaboration;
- educational structure quality;
- qualification and competence certification.

In 2004 the BLK published an important Report, in collaboration with the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BLK – *Bund-Länder-Kommission für Bildungsplanung und Forschungsförderung*, 2004); the report also includes a preview of realistic prospects for a not to be missed innovative development of German CE, in addition to:

- existing system description,
- results of a qualitative survey on lifelong learning, bringing in testimonies from important role players,
- examples of good practice.

The Commission for Further In-company Training Research (*Arbeitsgemeinschaft Betriebliche Weiterbildungsforschung* – ABWF) brings together researchers and experts who aim at to develop and increase research activities on competence acquisition, specifically in contexts of CE, personnel vocational learning, in-company learning organisation. The statutory objectives are mostly met by means of scientific debate, research projects, workshops, conferences, publications, etc. It is based in Berlin. Since 1992 ABWF conducts the QUEM Programme, financially supported by the Ministry of Education and Research and by the European Social Fund; initially, the programme aims to provide resources for

4.4 Bodies

the qualitative adaptation of the VET structures in new *Länder*. Since 2001, such aim has been modified and expanded in the “Learning Culture and Competence Development” Programme, for stable learning structure development on the national territory, with enhanced learning intensity in the workplace, more solid professional competences and unemployed competence erosion prevention strategies. The programme is basically focused on vocational learning culture enhancement, coupled with its integration in the work process. Additionally, projects are promoted for:

- improved guidance and transparency;
- certification of professionalising CE structure quality, performed also through new experimental approaches (see Measure/Programme *Learning in continuing education organisations for adults. Lernen in Weiterbildungseinrichtungen - LiWE*).

The Institute for Employment Research of the Federal Employment Services (*Institut für Arbeitsmarkt- und Berufsforschung – IAB*⁴⁴); on behalf of the Employment Agency this Institute conducts multidisciplinary researches for sound solutions to occupational problems. Additionally, the Institute works on projections, policy simulations, national and international benchmarks, sector and company analysis, occupational programme evaluation and joint demand and supply analysis. Data gathered by the Federal Employment Agency are prepared, organised and optimised with its cooperation. (see Measure/Programme *Unemployed placement support* and added provision reference in: SGB III, Chapter IV: Support measures to employees – Section II – Improvement of placement prospects).

44 Cf. <http://iab.de/iab/engiab.htm>

4.5 SERVICES

The *Federal Employment Agency* (*Bundesagentur für Arbeit* – BA) provides guidance services for young people, adults, workers, employers. It deals with employment brokering and apprenticeship placements; it is responsible for managing subsidies granted to: vocational education and training, continuing education (see the following Measures/Programmes: VET measures for employment preparation/*BvB - Berufsvorbereitende Bildungsmaßnahmen*. Promotion of Employment according to the Social Code - SGB II and III - *Arbeitsförderung*. Closing the skills gap and achieving a qualification while at work - *Abschlussbezogene Nachqualifizierung*) vocational placements of disabled persons, job creation and maintenance, unemployment.

The service provisions implemented in the last few years include counselling and guidance for young people who contemplate becoming school or apprenticeship drop-outs; competence budget and vocational redirection are envisaged. The BA is responsible for awarding vouchers which entitle to benefit from professionalising CE activities (see the Programme/Measure Vocational education and training vouchers – *Bildungsgutscheine*).

Recently, in the context of territorial networks promoted by the “Learning Regions” Programme (see the Programme/Measure Networks promotion – Learning Regions – Providing support for networks – *Lernende Regionen – Förderung von Netzwerken*), a number of territorial VET guidance agencies have been established; they play an important guidance role concerning qualifications, motivational support and availability of VET offers. It should be added that the network individual agencies act as counsellors for course identification and selection, competence assessment and certification, including individual and socio-pedagogical advisory services.

With regard to certifications, it has been stated already that the German VET system attaches the greatest importance to the official qualifications which are associated with the dual system vocational pathways and recognised profiles, as mandated by the Vocational Training Act and by the Crafts and Trades Code - *Berufsbildungsgesetz* (BBiG) and *Handwerksordnung* (HwO). This explains why the most implemented VET sector deals with “official” qualification recognition, i.e.: certificates obtained and vocational qualifications acquired within the so called “second chance, or pathway, to education” (*Zweiter Bildungsweg*). The recognition activities are conducted in various kinds of mostly public scholastic institutes – when concerning certificates (of pre-higher education – *Hauptschulabschluss* - or standard high school – *Mittlere Reife* - or senior high school - *Abitur*). Typically, these are evening schools (*Abendgymnasien, Abendrealschule*) or daytime attendance *Kollegs*. Vocational qualification recognition may also be offered by public and private professional institutes.

4.6 DEMAND POLICY

According to data published by a report of 2005, Germany displays a “to be worried about” situation, whereby low qualified or poorly educated people scarcely participate in CE formal and informal activities. Such trend, likely to be confirmed in future as well, emerges from the national statistics for the 2003-2005 timeframe. From these, a slump is also detected in foreign citizens participation to professionalising CE activities (13%) with respect to natives’ participation (27%), notwithstanding the high rate of foreigners among employed people with low qualifications (30%). A similar unbalance is shown by figures related to the, work place decoupled, self-motivated participation to self-learning courses/pathways/activities; the recorded participation rate in this interesting context is determined by a considerable number of people (35%). However, this type of learning mainly concerns educated and qualified persons, with just 1/4 of them having no school leaving certificates and poor education.

The statistics based study identifies these “professionalising CE” participation inducing factors: scholarly, professionalism, occupation and position. It is a well known situation, which has not been changing significantly in the past few years. Considering the on-going evolution of the labour market, and the foreseeable increase of both the vocational qualification level and the number of high qualification jobs, the study results enable the definition of the target “at risk of unemployment” worker base, which becomes entitled to the earlier described subsidies (Social Code – *Sozialgesetzbuch III*).

One of the most established and “traditional” demand supporting tools is provided by the grants under the Federal Education and Training Promotion Ac (*Bundesausbildungsförderungsgesetz -BAföG*); such tool was initially introduced in 1971 in the form of a (not to be paid back) subsidy for university students; by 1972 it was already used by 44,6% of the German students.

All along the ‘70s the number of support eligible applicants has been increased: young people in apprenticeship programmes and high school students, in addition to university students. In 1982 the Kohl Government converted the subsidies to repayable credit. To date, irrespective of various attempted modifications, based on price indexing or minimum income system requests, the Act has undergone practically no change, while the credit amount has been obviously updated. Nowadays the Bafög is used by about 14% of the student base. According to official sources, some 777.000 high school and university students were awarded grants in 2003, with a 7% increase over the 2002 figure. University students were granted a monthly average of 370 Euro; 303 Euro was the average monthly credit awarded to secondary school students. The grant amount takes into account personal income and financial status, including those held by parents and married people partners; the type of accommodation required or used (autonomous or parents’ house) and the place of residence (old or new *Länder*) are also considered. The awarded credit is by 50% a no interest repayable loan, while the remaining 50% is an non repayable contribution.

After the already reported “Hartz” Reform (Law provisions regarding “Modern Services for the Labour Market”), in 2003 an entirely new “professionalising CE” supporting tool was introduced: the Employment Agency CE vouchers, issued to benefit people at risk of unemployment (see the Programme/Measure Vocational education and training vouchers - *Bildungsgutscheine*). The expected education voucher benefits are in the area of the individual participant’ self-responsibility and ability to make choices, in a CE market context presenting more transparency and quality competition. However, the experiences made so far have been rated as “illusory” and “not up to expectations” by VET experts, employment agency operators, political and unionist decision makers; according to these analysts, the VET structures have not been prepared adequately, with insufficient worker guidance provision. In some cases the issued vouchers were not redeemed.

4.7 PERSONNEL

No reliable figures exist for the overall number of people employed by the CE structures, in educational offer project management and teaching positions. The German Institute for Adult Education (DIE) alone publishes, periodically, some *Volkshochschulen* staff statistics; based on these, and on its 2002 survey of structures offering adult education activities about civil and political matters, CE delivered by religious institutions,

a number of reliable estimates have been made available. The 2002 picture which emerges shows 205,000 *Volkshochschulen* employees and 78,000 people working in religious and political CE activities (trade union CE, political party foundation CE, etc.). Most of these (95%) serve part-time contracts, provide collaborations or carry out volunteer activities.

Table 4.2
*Personnel in
Volkshochschulen
and religious and
political CE struc-
tures in 2002*

Personnel	Volkshoch-schulen	Religious* CE	Political* CE
Full time managers	720	1,600	200
Full time pedagogical collaborators (positions)	3,740	2,000	600
Contracted pedagogical collaborators	197,000	60,000	11,500
Full time administrative collaborators (positions)	3,710	1,500	500
Total	205,170	64,820	12,900

* Projections from DIE (*Projekt Weiterbildungsstatistik*) partial surveys

Source: Nuissl, E. - Pehl, K. (2004), *Portrait Weiterbildung Deutschland - Deutsches Institut für Erwachsenenbildung - D.I.E.*, Bonn.

The *Volkshochschulen* personnel structure is unusual, with the actual teaching activities carried out by contracted members of staff or free lancers, and the operational, planning and managerial activities appointed to full time pedagogical staff. The above situation appears to be turned upside down in all other structures: e.g.: there is a small number of contracted members of staff in *company CE*. In trade unions, foundations and in similar institutions the number of contracted staff and of full time employees is roughly the same. In State structures (universities, technical secondary schools, teacher vocational update institutes, etc.) there are mostly full time employees who work with CE as well, among other things. In religious structures, besides a small number of employed members of staff, there are many (unpaid) volunteer workers. In commercial CE structures there is a balanced split between permanent appointments and contracted free lance professionals (with a growth trend for the latter).

No professional profile, valid for the whole CE sector, appears to exist, yet. Institutions differ too widely for educational objectives, contents, methods, size and

equipment. Two thirds of the teaching staff holds a university degree; half of these degrees have been obtained from faculties such as Education Sciences, Social Sciences and Languages. Very few degree holders, among members of CE teaching staff, obtained their title from an Adult Education university specialisation course.

In Germany, the debate on CE sector conditions and perspectives has been gaining momentum especially in the late '90s, because of structural changes, diminishing public funds, growing CE demand, increased need for quality standard conformance.

Presently, the CE personnel issues debated in Germany include:

- CE worker professionalisation: complaints about lack of a practical vocational channel, lack of effective vocational profile development and update programmes;
- insufficient social protection, especially for contracted personnel, often in need of achieving self sustenance through a proliferation of temporary teaching activities: the number of workers with these circumstances is considerably high in the public sector (mostly in *Volkshochschulen*);
- staff qualification in organisational sectors, such as public relations, publicity, organisational development, marketing and financial planning; aspects so far perceived as incompatible with pedagogical job profiles;
- quality certification achievement through CE worker qualifications, competences and persistence, coupled with adequate processes of structure internal organisation;
- knowledge capital management problem: it affects the pedagogical activities associated with guidance, motivation, tutoring and service functions; it requires a stronger connection between organised and self-directed learning.

However, innovative pilot programmes have been implemented lately in the CE operator and structure qualification sector as well; one among them is the LQW2 Programme (see Programme/Measure Certification and development of VET structures quality. *Lernerorientierten Qualitätstestierung für die Weiterbildung – LQW2*); its aim is the achievement of higher quality standards, a more focused demand and a better personnel professionalisation in CE structures.

chapter 5

SWEDEN

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The development of adult education has been ongoing throughout Sweden uniformly, since the 70ies. Between the 80ies and the early 90ies, a profound institutional change in education policies was prepared and introduced, with the launch of an administrative decentralisation process based on the role of Municipalities, including a management system built upon objectives defined by Government and Parliament, and control of related result achievement.

Since the late 90ies attention has been paid to the definition of Lifelong Learning and Life wide Learning strategies, aimed at educational policies integrated with labour and social policies, for the sake of citizenship-wide employability and continuous education. Formal and non-formal adult education systems operate directly – even today – in the fields of professional training and of general policies for employability.

The Swedish training policies' general principle is for individual citizens to enjoy the possibility of good quality education access, independently from sector, social and economic status or geographic area of residence. All costs coupled with such principle are to be rated as overall social investments. As an additional basic principle, Lifelong Learning is supposed to provide new knowledge and skills, while promoting personal development, democracy, equal opportunity, economic growth, employment and fairly distributed welfare.

5.2 ADULT EDUCATION NATIONAL POLICIES

5.2.1 Objectives and strategies

The Swedish adult education national strategy has been an ongoing and repeatedly updated development since 1968. The latest frame of reference, fine tuned in 2000, was the outcome of a definition process with a strong enough commitment, from all key actors, for the Education Law to obtain Parliament approval the same year. A new Education Law is prepared but has not passed the national parliament yet.

As of the 2000 Education Law, the overall objective is to provide all adults with the opportunity to broaden and deepen their own knowledge and skills, in order to promote personal development, democracy, equal opportunity, employability, economic growth and equitable distribution of wealth.

Accomplishing a mission with the above objective means to carry forward an *adult learning* organisation strategy in a *lifelong learning* driven society. A strategy in such a direction rests upon the following guiding principles:

1. all forms of formal and non formal education – when supported by public institutions and by civil society – must be implemented and provided within a democracy frame of reference, with due respect for all human beings' values and rights;
2. for the sake of granting adequate learning and competence growth opportunities for the individual, it is required that basic coordination and integration approaches are taken by politics in different sectors, through cooperation with and among public institutions, social partners, popular movements;
3. all social actors, from social organisations to enterprises and individuals are held responsible for meeting personal and group needs, both in the area of general education and of training;
4. educational environments and working conditions should be up to the individual's expectations, in terms of facing the knowledge society challenging requirements for extendable and modifiable competencies and learning;
5. supplies of training, tuition, *coaching*, tutoring activities and e-learning should be up to the differing requirements of different types of adults, and they should be adequate for each person's needs and learning conditions;
6. economic aids are made available to citizens in order to enhance adult participation in education and in competence development;
7. services supporting individual's learning pathways are provided, granting guidance, advice, acquired knowledge or competence assessment and recognition.

It is the new adult Education Law (being defined) main objective to ensure that a strongly decentralised system, based on Municipalities, adopts a set of nationally agreed and shared basic trends. This will prevent any individual Municipality's commitment to adult education from differing significantly with respect to others'.

The new national provisions will be guided by three basic principles:

1. flexible access opportunities, stating that the individual's education right should be based upon personal time, location and interest criteria;
2. equal opportunity age-wise, or the institutional commitment - even locally – to pay adult education the same attention paid to the ordinary school system while undertaking the same kind of obligations;
3. quality, or the guarantee that the activities funded with public resources are all featuring the same high quality level, in terms of infrastructures, personnel, equipment and demand policy measures.

Old law changes are urgently demanded by needs such as:

- aiming for targets beyond reach, because the adopted model is mostly limited to a counterbalancing function, required whenever the education offered to young people proves insufficient;
- drawing a boundary between adult education and the provisions / procedures in place for the ordinary school system, while granting equal value to the school leaving certificates;
- establishing a more flexible model in terms of study timetables, locations and contents, by meeting individual constraints and adult life patterns.

In a labour policy framework the employability objective is further supported by a set of educational measures. Contributions to this end can be found in industrial and fiscal policies, by means of measures that are intended to enhance competence development throughout a working life.

The Government's goal, stated by the Labour Law (2000:625), is for the 74% rate of regularly employed individuals, aged 20 to 64, to raise up to 80%. This is supposed to be coupled with a change in labour policy strategy, from one mainly concerned with employment to one built upon the principle of competence-based employment. The immediate consequence brought about by such change is for the unemployment passive support policies to be dismissed, in favour of measures enabling labour market placement for the unemployed, by means of competence development, and however aimed at attaching the greatest value to individual skills in the workplace. Lifelong learning policies are additionally promoted, which aim for functions to be implemented to meet the following needs:

- individuals should be prepared to enter the labour market and to find the most suitable job;
- labour demand should be stimulated and matching it with labour supply should be made easier;
- redundancies and labour market exclusions should be prevented.

Education oriented measures are also to be found in social policies, and those in favour of rehabilitation are funded by the social security offices.

Finally, on-the-job training is mostly managed and financed by the employer directly.

5.2.2 Laws and Regulations

List of main laws and regulations:

- a. Education Law (1985:n.1100);
- b. Bill on Adult Learning and the Future Development of Adult Education (2000: 01-72);
- c. Municipal Regulations regarding Adult Education (2002: 1012);
- d. Regulations regarding the Education Curriculum for the Non Compulsory School System (Curriculum 1994);
- e. Post-secondary School Objectives (1994: 27);
- f. Adult Education Regulations (1994: 21);
- g. Regulations regarding State Grants for “Popular Adult Education” (Folkbildning), (1991: 977);
- h. Higher Technical Education Law (2001: 239);
- i. Higher Technical Education Regulations (2001: 1131);
- j. Labour Law (2000: 625);
- k. Law regarding the Individual’s Right to Financial Provisions for Job Seeker’s Basic Competencies (2004: 1324).

5.3 ROLE OF THE INSTITUTIONS

Foreword

Adult education is a Government responsibility, shared by State and Municipalities. Regions and Provinces play a secondary role.

State role

Foreword

In addition to defining goals or basic regulations applying to adult education, the State has a legislative role. The promotion of special nation-wide programmes is also a State concern.

Constitutional rights to education and the equality principle are safeguarded by rules defined as one of the State duties.

The State caters to the monitoring and to the evaluation of the educational activities, as well as to the educational system development. Financial support to the individuals is a State responsibility.

The State functions are normally delegated to National Agencies, operating under Ministry supervision, which specialise in evaluation, in distance learning, etc.

The following are the Agencies involved:

- National Agency for Schools (*Skolverket*));
- Labour Market Central Office (*Arbetsmarknadsverket - AMV*);
- National Agency for Educational Institution Development (*Myndigheten för skolutveckling*);
- National Centre for Flexible Learning (*Nationellt centrum för flexibelt lärande - NCFL*);
- National Agency for Vocational Training (*Myndigheten för kvalificerad yrkesutbildning*);
- Assessment Delegation (*Valideringsdelegation*));
- Special Pedagogical Institute (*Institutet för special pedagogik*);
- International Programme Development Office for Education (*Internationella programkontoret*);
- Educational Activity Support Institute for specific target users;
- National Council for Popular Education (*Folkbildningsrådet*).

Objectives

The education and training system is managed, nation-wide, through the definition of programme and vocational training objectives, to be autonomously pursued by the municipalities responsible for local management.

The qualitative and the quantitative aspects of the above objectives address population targets, access levels, types of activity and the overall set of services (such as counselling, assessment, etc.), with the exception of demand oriented financial measures. Municipalities are responsible for the definition of suitable programmes and actions, for the objectives to be accomplished.

In formal adult education the objective definition is regulated by the Education Law, but also by guidelines regarding programme objectives, knowledge area syllabuses (*contents definition and structure*) and study level identification criteria. However, such guidelines are generic in nature, to allow the most ample freedom for municipalities and schools when their work plans are made.

An objective and achievement based system expects that the actors involved (State, Municipalities, Vocational Training Agencies) commit themselves to supervise and assess the matching of the activities to the national guidelines. Municipalities take responsibility for locally organised activities to meet the national objective requirements, so that vocational education supply standards are homogeneous throughout the country.

Whenever conformance to such standards is lacking, the National Agencies in charge take actions which aim to protect individual rights, while supporting the implementation of local plans, aimed at achieving the national objectives.

Non formal education objectives are autonomously defined by the various organisations in charge. However, they all share the general objectives; curricula may not be shared though, in cases of organisations active in formal adult education or within labour policies.

When vocational qualifications are considered, a State decision (2003:n.1096) tasks the National Assessment Delegation with the definition, by year 2007, of a national competence standardization system. Presently, each sector organisation (construction, metal mechanics, etc.) applies its own competence definition system to the individual job descriptions.

Programme launching and management

The local level planning terms of reference are provided by the State, through the objectives and strategy definition. National Plans cover a four year period, normally. They can be subject to annual revisions and fine tuning. Their definition is tightly coordinated with all possible actors and, specifically, with social partners. The Planning function is based on systematic data gathering activities, performed through a National Agencies' information system, jointly managed with the municipalities. Data so gathered provide the basis for periodic assessments carried out at various levels, including Parliament, and for fine tuning and reforming decisions.

One of the information system features is the periodic surveying of all different actors' opinions, including families and system end users.

Non formal education programmes are launched and maintained by sector specific organisations; however, the State's definition of the type of activities eligible for financial support, for the annual determination of grants allocated through the National Council for Liberal Education (*Folkbildningsrådet*), has a direct influence on such Programmes.

For labour market training the State defines the programmatic trends, while the definition of the programmes themselves is a territorial responsibility. In this sector

the State operates through the Labour Market National Office and its Provincial Committees, in charge of directing and planning the information provision activities regarding the labour market and the vocational training and retraining initiatives.

Financial information

State funding for adult education is provided out of the State budget.

Municipalities receive distinct contributions for all the public services they must provide, as an add-on to their fiscal income, which is meant to compensate for the lack of resources of less favoured municipalities. Specifically, resource distribution is decided according to factors such as the labour market status, the education levels of the population, the anticipated demographic changes, the number of upper secondary school dropouts.

The above financial support is not intended for adult education exclusively; municipalities may freely allocate resources, as they deem necessary, to the various services they provide. However, should a municipality fail to comply with the adult learning provision prescribed by Law, Government intervention is to be expected. Additional special funds for operators' on-the-job training and for the disabled are available.

A funding stream is allocated to adult education residential Centres and to study Centres.

Funds supporting labour market training are made available for provincial planning by the Labour Market National Office.

Programmes and Curricula

Municipalities and schools enjoy ample freedom in planning the supply of adult learning services and the programmes' contents.

The State is directly and globally responsible for special programmes only; one such programme is the "Adult Education" initiative (a five-year project which started in 1997), which is also the pilot phase of project Advanced Vocational Education (AVE) (1996-2001), which is now a component part of the system.

The State is responsible for the definition of formal adult education curricula, objectives and guidelines, which are approved by Government and by Parliament.

The competent National Agency is in charge of checking the compliance to national norms, including the municipalities' recognition of each interested individual's right of access to vocational training.

Non formal adult education curricula are autonomously defined by the sectoral organisations. For all matters regarding on-the-job training, the State only sets the general direction and promotes the launch of special programs.

Teaching staff

Following a 1991 Parliament decision, the teaching staff is employed by the municipalities. Teacher and manager vocational learning is a university responsibility, based on State approved curricula. Their on-the-job training is a National Agency duty.

Specifically, training of formal and non-formal adult learning operators (residential centres and study circles) is based on university level programs and curricula.

Regions and Provinces

The Swedish system revolves around two main actors: State and Municipalities. Regions have been provisionally established on an experimental basis and have no legislative power.

Regions and Provinces participate in various territorial Committees for labour policy and vocational learning management.

Their role in adult education, beyond providing financial support for formal and non-formal learning activities, may include taking responsibility of educational infrastructure development, in general through the promotion of partnerships among various types of regional and local stakeholders. Additionally, they may undertake the management of adult education residential centres. All labour market related vocational learning activities, when required, are planned and funded by the Provincial Labour Councils.

Municipalities

Objectives and Local Planning

The municipalities define autonomously a Local Plan for adult education which is meant as a response to local requirements and to individuals' needs; the Plan allows to specify the activities to be carried out and their organisational approaches. The envisaged approach to achieving the defined national objectives should also be explicitly stated by each Municipality.

The vocational learning centres make reference to the Local Plans to determine their own work plans, consistently with local priorities and with the national curriculum.

Educational objectives are jointly defined by teachers and participants, whose needs and education record are duly considered.

The municipalities undertake the obligation of monitoring and assessing each Vocational Learning Centre's Plan, in order to provide the state authorities with assessment reports and quality control audits. In 2006 this practice will be replaced by the adoption of quality management procedures, after the Plan definition obligation has been withdrawn.

Financial information

The municipalities contribute to financing adult education out of their own budget, from income sources such as local taxation and State funding.

Programmes and Curricula

The municipalities are responsible for programme definitions, according to national guidelines but also in relation to participants' needs. Each municipality plans individually its own programmes, with contents aligned to national curricula and to specific local requirements.

The National Agency for Education has functions involving inspection, support, monitoring and assessment activities.

For vocational learning activities coupled with labour policies, their overall coordination is performed in each municipality by the Labour Office Council, which gathers representatives of the trade unions, the enterprises and the Municipality.

Staff

Adult education staff recruitment is managed by the municipalities or by the centres operating on their behalf. Educational activities, in fact, may be carried out by public or by private bodies, indifferently.

It is up to the individual schools to make decisions regarding teacher recruitment and required teacher's qualifications and job description. A temporary, or indefinite, work contract is concluded between the school or the centre management board and the teacher.

The basic salary is either negotiated or determined according to the contract stipulated between the teachers' union and the individual municipalities. Additional agreements may be entered by individual schools or centres.

Teacher evaluations are performed by the school headmaster, directly, and by the students, indirectly.

The National Agency for Education has functions involving control, monitoring and teacher evaluation activities.

Private Bodies

In the latest years monopoly positions have been progressively reduced; this has been accomplished with the introduction of different types of *learning environments*, actors and bodies. As a consequence, private initiative has made its appearance in all branches of the system, opening the competition between the public and the private sectors, and among private parties. The presence of private entities is increasing and expanding, benefiting from the identification of new intervention areas and of new specialisations.

The municipalities are progressively withdrawing from direct educational activity management; they operate through the acquisition of the best offers on the vocational learning open market, based on procurement of the best educational organizer and performances about effectively and quality.

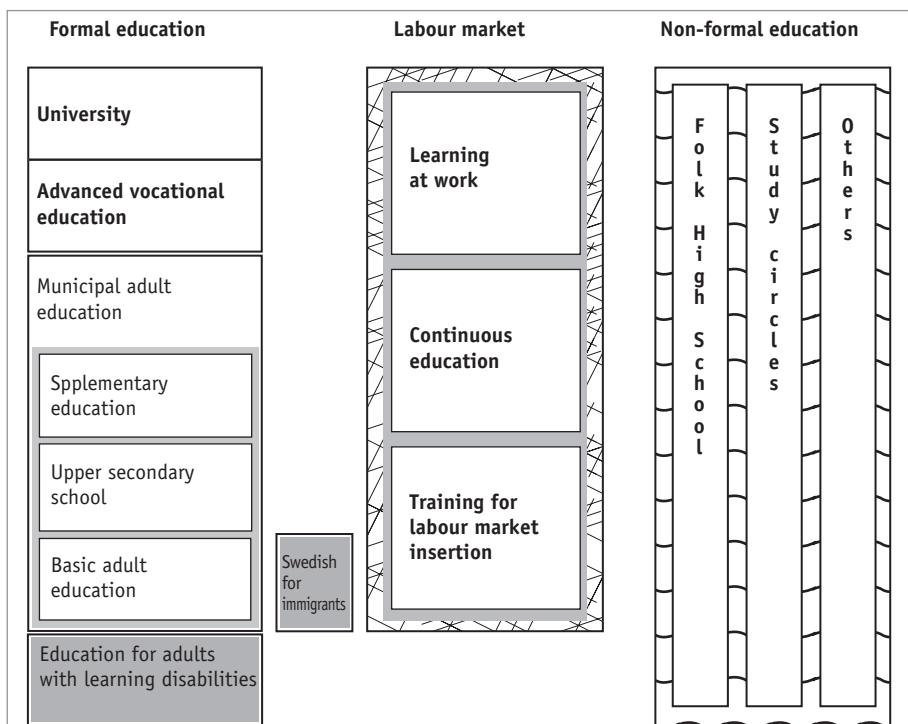
5.4 SYSTEM AND ACTIVITIES

System Description

In Sweden, the continuous education system is structured as follows (see table 5.1):

1. Formal adult education:
 - Basic adult education;
 - Upper secondary adult education;
 - Advanced vocational education;
 - University and institutes of higher education;
 - Transversal channels:
 - Swedish tuition for immigrants;
 - Education for adults with learning disabilities.
2. Adult vocational learning:
 - Supplementary education;
 - Continuous education;
 - Labour market training;
 - Learning at work and professional development.
3. Non-formal adult education.

Table 5.1
The Continuous Education System in Sweden



Basic adult education

Basic adult education corresponds to nine-year ordinary school education.

This type of education is intended to provide the students with the necessary competences, suitable for living, working and furthering their own studies. Each participant's preliminary requirements determine the entry level for such studies. Study completion time is set by the achievement of each individual program's objectives. It is up to each individual to select an intended study commitment, compatible with one's own other work commitments or *work experiences*.

The final certification is equivalent to the compulsory school level and it may be obtained after taking three subject matter tests successfully: Swedish, English and Mathematics. The municipality is due to offer basic adult education courses to any non-holder of the corresponding titles. Municipalities are in charge of all planning functions, even when plan implementation is not under their direct responsibility. Monitoring and evaluation functions are performed by the municipalities and by the National Agency for Education.

Basic adult education is offered in terms of:

- Courses lasting one or two years, with a primary school curriculum and the possibility to combine them with post-secondary schools, based on each participant's knowledge level;
- Didactical modules, suitable for individual needs and for the provision of missing competencies;
- Special programmes for special target audiences.

Upper secondary adult education

Since July 1, 1994, upper secondary adult education is equivalent to upper secondary education for young persons. However, contents, methods and levels of in-depth study are subject to occasional changes. A number of activities may be carried out individually. Normally, this type of education does not last longer than two years; it is brought to a close when a student has received 1,750 credits, determined on the basis of each individual subject's credit value (a single subject may grant up to 200 credits).

Municipalities are in charge of all planning functions, even when plan implementation is not under their direct responsibility. Monitoring and evaluation functions are performed by the municipalities and by the National Agency for Education.

Upper secondary adult education is offered in terms of:

- highly flexible study plans, to match the demand and each individual's participation conditions;
- courses lasting one or two years, with the possibility to combine them with basic education modules;
- possibility of courses not envisaged by the ordinary school system;
- vocational education objectives not achievable through ordinary school.

Advanced Vocational Education

Advanced Vocational Education (AVE) is an educational form of post-secondary education, stemming from close cooperation with the labour market (enterprises and unions) and among various educational providers (upper secondary schools, post-secondary schools, training companies, municipal adult education systems). All cooperating parties are motivated by the need to meet well identified labour market requirements, from all productive sectors, with no exclusions – including crafts and special professions – related to qualified workers demand.

AVE may last from one to three years. Courses may grant from 40 to 120 credits. One credit is received for each full time week of study. An AVE certificate may be obtained with 40 credits.

The course subjects are tightly coupled with the professional work environments and with higher education studies; the intended outcome is to combine productivity with good theoretical knowledge, in fields such as mathematics, natural sciences, ICT, economics, linguistics, society and culture; additionally, productivity should be combined with cooperation, self-expression and problem solving skills. One third of an individual's vocational education time is allocated to activities involving theoretical knowledge advanced applications in the workplace; analytic skills are therefore enhanced, and opportunities are provided towards applying one's own knowledge and towards learning how to take responsibilities. To this end, the AVE workplaces are open to external inspection, which may occur to obtain evidence of their educational adequacy. The enrolled participants may discontinue their attendance and resume it at a later time. They may apply for financial support, to cover direct and indirect expenditures, with the same procedure in use for university education.

AVE course promoters must comply with the objectives set in the general *syllabus (contents definition and structure)*, related to the individual courses. Specifically, they must clearly specify the following information:

- educational programme basic parts;
- programme structure;
- competences to be held by those involved in delivery of vocational education;
- *focus* and organisation of on-the-job training;
- eligibility requirements;
- participant knowledge level required for participant admission.

The municipalities are responsible for managing, planning and evaluating the necessary interventions. The State plays a monitoring and assessment role, through the National Agency for AVE, established since October 2002 with a staff of 20.

Universities and higher education

Universities do not have special adult education programmes. However, specific courses are organised by universities, jointly with other actors who aim to facil-

tate adult access. Access is in any case made easier by various demand policy measures, and by financial support made available for those entering university.

Swedish For Immigrants

The Swedish For Immigrants (SFI) Programme aims to lead its participating immigrants to the acquisition of an adequate knowledge of the Swedish society culture and language. The educational offer spans across 525 hours and has no cost. It is a transversal type of programme, a preliminary educational stage that may enable access to the different levels of the school system.

The municipalities are responsible for providing this type of educational offer to all immigrants over the age of 16 at the time of their arrival; possibly, they will adapt the programme contents and delivery to changing requirements.

Municipalities are in charge of all planning functions, even when the plan implementation phase is not under their direct responsibility.

Monitoring and evaluation functions are performed by the municipalities and by the National Agency for Education.

Adult education for participants with learning disabilities

Provision of adult education for participants with learning disabilities (SÄRVUX) unfolds in parallel with adult education provision and shares the same curriculum, until the upper secondary vocational education and training level is reached. However, fine tunings of its syllabus (*contents definition and structure*) and schedule are allowed.

Programmes are highly customised; they are awarded a specific grant, which may be subject to amount changes, based on needs to adapt them to changing participants' conditions.

Municipalities are in charge of all planning functions, even when the plan implementation phase is not under their direct responsibility.

Monitoring and evaluation functions are performed by the municipalities and by the National Agency for Education.

Supplementary education

Supplementary education is an upper secondary and post-secondary level educational channel; it focuses on subjects such as Arts, Crafts, Economics, etc. Most of the programmes take less than 6 months to over two years to complete. They may unfold at any time of the year (even in summer), with the most flexible delivery methods. This type of education is strictly coupled with working life; it normally includes work experiences.

The municipalities are required by law to provide their citizenships with the availability of supplementary education courses, responding to the perceived individuals' demand and to their needs. Citizens aged over 20, who have completed their post-secondary school studies, may request participation.

Participation may require payment of course enrolment fees.

Continuing education

Continuing education meets the functional requirements of updating one's own skills in relation to an on-going professional activity; additionally, it may provide training for new types of occupation. It normally lasts from 6 months to one year; upon its completion a professional qualification is awarded.

Continuing education may be organised in cooperation with labour offices and firms. Municipalities are in charge of all planning functions, even when the plan implementation phase is not under their direct responsibility.

Monitoring and evaluation functions are performed by the municipalities and by the National Agency for Education.

Labour market placement training (*Arbetsmarknadsutbildning*)

This training channel has been set up for the unemployed, specifically. It is meant to provide its unemployed participants with basic or specialist vocational training. The Labour Market National Committee, carrying forward the Parliament decisions, distributes the State funding for sector specific policies to the Provincial Committees and to the Labour Offices.

The local institutions then proceed with the acquisition of various kinds of formal and non-formal type of programmes, available from different public and private suppliers. This activity is performed in strict cooperation with firms and social partners.

This training channel absorbs a major part of the investments and employability in lifelong learning and employability.

Learning at work and vocational training

It is quite common for enterprises to make sure that a training opportunity is available for their employees. This type of learning may address any field, from theoretical study to the development of technical competences. Various kinds of public and private agencies cooperate to organise the activities involved.

On-the-job training is regulated both by agreements between social partners and by the State Laws. Since the 70ies all employees have been entitled by law to benefit from paid leave of absence for studying.

Based on enterprise demand, learning is also provided by means of "contracted training" (SFS 186:65 e SFS 1992:65), jointly performed by public and private bodies.

Non-formal adult education (*Folkbildning*)

Since the XIX century, in Sweden, "*folkbildning*" has not identified the adult education system, but the popular movement, which has been promoting all diverse adult education forms in the country. Still now, the movement is the most relevant system component in terms of participation, and the most significant in terms of awarded grants (almost twice the number of those assigned to formal education by the State), showing a constant growth rate, tightly coupled with all other Swedish popular and political movements, which are coordinated, nation-wide, by a single autonomous body (Folkbildningsrådet).

The vocational education activity performed by the *folkbildning* actors spans across all fields of adult education (basic education, education at work, higher education, non-formal education, cultural activities). Concerning non-formal education, the main activity is represented by the Study Circles (350 thousands for about 3 million participants) and by various types of cultural activity (200 thousands events for 15 million participants). The *Folkhighschools* as well (148 and spread all over the country) carry out non-formal education activities, although their main role is in the field of higher-level formal scholastic education and adult vocational education; their action addresses university access preparation and labour active policies in general. A specific feature of these schools is their adoption of highly flexible organisational and didactical models, quality assured by specifically selected and recruited teachers and by high level modern infrastructures.

5.5 BODIES

Sector related bodies

1. Formal adult education:

- basic adult education: centres, public schools and non-profit organizations;
- upper secondary adult education: centres, public and private schools, non-profit organizations and non-profit organizations to Swedish for immigrants;
- higher education and training: centres, public and private schools, associations, enterprises;
- university and higher education and training institutes: Universities in co-operation with adult Residential Centres (*Folk High Schools*), Study Circle Associations, private organisations;
- transversal channels:
 - Swedish for immigrants: centres, public and private schools and non-profit organizations;
 - Education for adults with learning disabilities: centres and public schools.

2. Adult vocational training:

- continuing education: centres, public and private schools, enterprises;
- labour market training: centres, public and private schools, enterprises;
- on-the-job training and professional development: university, public and private centres, enterprises.

3. Non-formal adult education:

- adult education Residential Centres (*Folk high schools*), non profit organisations;
- study circles – study circle associations, non profit organisations.

5.6 SERVICES

Motivation

A motivational service provision is granted by all kinds of educational system organisations; public and private schools, employment centres, adult education centres, *folkhighschool*, unions. These providers are responsible for developing interventions which aim at motivating adults to enrol in vocational education; structured pathways are also provided, to facilitate education access and leveling, to be achieved over periods ranging from 2 to 6 months; State funding is granted and is distributed through the employment centres.

Information

Information services are meant to provide information regarding the different types of vocational education and support measures available, at various levels and in various fields.

The municipalities are held responsible, by the School Law, for reaching and encouraging activity participation of all individuals entitled to basic education, and to the educational measures in favour of immigrants.

The service is provided mostly via Internet and, additionally, through the arrangement of visits of workplaces and of education centres. Information service provision is granted by all kinds of educational system organisations; public and private schools, employment centres, adult education residential centres, unions. Information regarding individual subsidies is the responsibility of the National Agency for study loans.

For the information services themselves there are several funding sources.

Guidance

Guidance services serve the purpose of providing assistance to individuals, when they try to lie out their own educational pathway and need to identify the most suitable educational offer. To this end, the most diverse methodologies are adopted: short term educational activities, tests, informal method based guidance, etc. Guidance activities may be carried out by means of courses as well; such courses may be generic, alternatively they may be specific for guidance needs related to a productive or an educational sector.

Guidance service provision is granted by all kinds of educational system organisations; public and private schools, employment centres, adult education residential centres, unions. Each one of these bodies hosts a guidance service with a guidance expert (normally a university graduate with a 4 year study background). Several funding sources are used. The municipality grants the basic financial support.

Assessment

By means of the assessment service individual knowledge and competences are identified, approved, documented and recognised, independently from their places of acquisition.

As a specific example, employed workers' career development norms and procedures are defined and managed by reaching agreements with the social partners, who may take advantage of the assessment services for matters of their concern. The Swedish Government appointed a Commission, tasked with developing the quality of the assessment process and methodologies. By now, that Commission has become a State Agency, carrying forward the definition of measures to be enacted, for a new assessment system which is due to become operational in year 2007. The anticipated trend is for assessment to become an exploratory function; by means of such a function, a stiff, classification based, automatic system would be avoided.

An Assessment Centre takes the service management responsibility, through the availability of a network of "assessment operators" (professional competence companies, experts, agencies, schools, etc.).

Financial support is in relation to the number of service users, with costs charged to the parties requesting the assessment process (enterprises when career advancements are concerned, employment centres, unions on behalf of their members, municipal adult education service, etc.).

Certification

The certification service function is twofold: education level certification related to the ordinary school system, or description of competences held by an individual for professional, non-scholastic, objectives.

Certification concerning study certificates is an ordinary school system responsibility, under the control of the Education National Agency. Certifications, relative to annual course leaving examinations and to study completion, are obtainable from a team of teachers, which welcomes interested adults to participate in discussions.

The relevant educational activity organising body issues all other certifications.

Certification costs are a budget item for any individual educational body.

Flexible Learning

The National Agency for flexible learning is in charge of managing a support service for all adult education bodies and of promoting among them use of distance learning and of all technologies which make learning flexibility easier. The Agency offers distance learning courses and guidance activities based on the use of Internet. Such an offer is always complementary to other territorial bodies' activities; its main purpose is to disseminate and use materials produced by the various bodies. The Service is also concerned with the development of new methods, techniques and flexible learning tools, which enable the provision of training and professional advancement activities to the service operators.

Additionally, the Service promotes and supports the establishment, in municipality premises, of technologically advanced Learning Centres. In such cases, the Service supplements its technical assistance with financial resources aimed at funding projects for distance learning infrastructure development.

5.7 DEMAND POLICY

Individual rights

Adult education is a right for any citizen aged over 20. The municipalities are responsible for younger citizens to complete upper secondary education, in public or private schools.

Anybody lacking the completion of compulsory school education (9 years) is entitled to take courses enabling the issue of such certification. The municipalities are held responsible for granting the availability of the above educational offer, for all concerned individuals. The right here described is sanctioned by law (*Education Law, chapter 11 par 19 and Förordning om kommunal vuxenutbildning kap. 3, paragraph 2*)⁴⁵.

Childhood services are a component of the demand policies; their inclusion in the programmes aims at facilitating parents' access to learning.

Formal adult education is free of charges.

Main types of demand policy measures

Demand policy mainly addresses the following parties:

1. *Individuals*, measures in the shape of several kinds of financial support (for direct and/or indirect costs) granted by the State permanently, while their studies last, irrespective of their age and social status. The Municipalities compile grant/subsidy priority lists, based on the State provided amount of financial support. Grant/subsidy allocation criteria take into account contribution requirements motivated by the need to overcome barriers, which may be preventing vocational education access and the employability level growth that would be granted by the vocational education undertaken. The above mentioned financial support envisages a joint "scholarship and long term loan" system, with loans to be repaid by the interested parties. These measures may apply to both full time and part time students. Unemployed persons may be granted scholarships for amounts not exceeding their unemployment bonuses. Scholarships are mainly used for people at risk, dropouts, etc., aged between 25 and 50. Loans may be granted to any person aged between 20 and 55.

The following are the main demand policy measures:

- a. *Svux*, special support to adult studying;
- b. *UBS*, scholarships for adults;
- c. Contributions to participants (aged below 45) in any kind of adult education. Funds are awarded to all relevant bodies in amounts reflecting the number of enrolled people.

45 Regulations for popular and municipal education.

2. *Employed workers.* All measures addressing the individuals may be applied to employed workers as well. Additionally, leave of absence for studying (SFS 1974:981) has been available to them since the 70ies, but scarcely used (1% of the workforce). Employees who have served a work contract for at least 6 consecutive months are entitled to a total of 12 months of training, to be spread across two years. However, employers may postpone the training period starting date by at least six months from the date of submission of the request. Any type of training content is admitted, including subjects aimed at seeking a new job. At study period completion time workers are entitled to take up again the same job.

In some productive sectors the individual's right to vocational guidance and career development interviews, once a year, has been introduced.

A Commission established in 2000 by the Ministry of Industry has studied the individual's competence budget, after a trial period in some Swedish companies.

5.8 PERSONNEL

The system operators' main profiles are the following:

- Teachers
- Residential centre teachers
- Trainers
- Adult trainers
- Tutors
- Employment service operators
- Guidance operator/advisor
- Manager.

Trainers' training is a State responsibility.

Formal education teachers of any kind and level are university degree holders (4 years including 2 year basic education and 1.5 year specialist education). Additionally, they have qualified from one year's education on teaching theory and practice. Specially qualified teachers are responsible for post-secondary vocational education. They hold degrees in economics and in technical disciplines; alternatively, they have qualified from studies on theory and practice of vocational and technical education. Normally, they also have a long professional track record.

Teacher and managers working in education residential centres have their own trade union (SFHL).

chapter 6

THE UNITED KINGDOM

6.1 INTRODUCTION

Our work deals with this topic: *measures deployed to work with adults at risk of social exclusion or, more generally, those adults with poor experiences of schooling and few qualifications.* Provision in the UK has concentrated its resources in this direction since the start of the new century, with specific programmes and strong financing controlled by national funding bodies. The key feature of all these policies is their strong focus on economic competitiveness and their connection to *nationally recognised certificates, to be used in the labour market.*

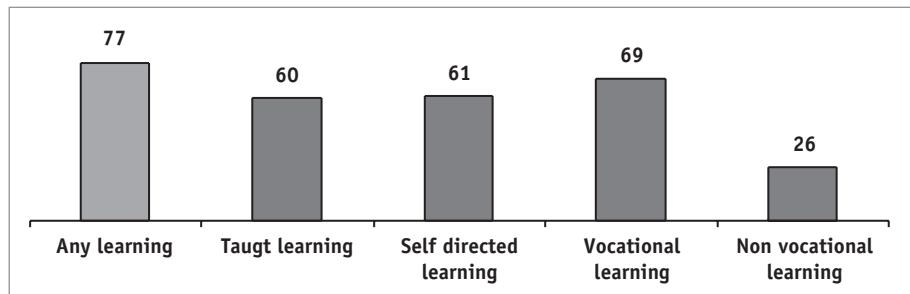
These policies identify *different target populations* and select programmes and actions for each of them:

- 16-19 year olds who don't continue their studies after compulsory school;
- low qualified employed adults;
- subsidised unemployed people;
- foreign natives with difficulties in English language communication;
- native people lacking the basic ability to understand, communicate and participate in the work and life of a changing and complex society (literacy, language and numeracy, ICT);
- specific disadvantaged groups (*lone parents, ethnic minorities, disabled, prisoners and ex-offenders, etc.*)

Our attention will focus on these policies, with their related specific programmes and ad-hoc measures. It should be remembered that adult education in the UK attracts a wide popular participation: *in 2002 over 24 million individuals benefited from some form of tuition (77,3% of the adult population).*

This participation, in terms of learning sectors, appears to be broken down as follows:

Figure 6.1
Adults engaged in learning (% over a population of 31 millions - England and Wales - 2002)

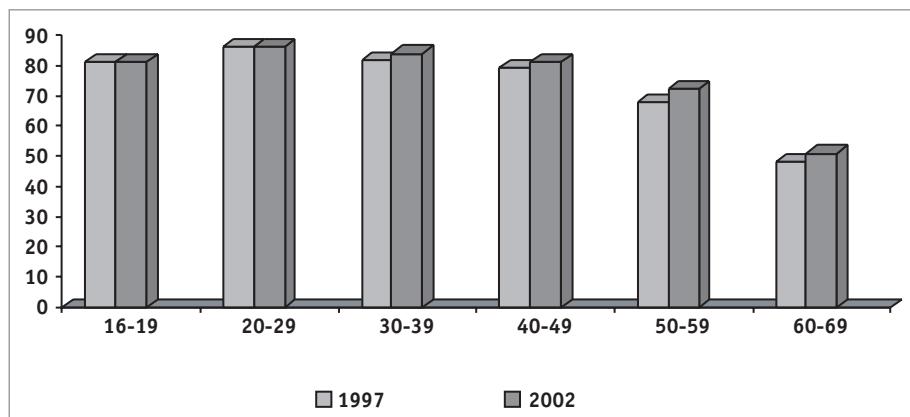


Source: National Adult Learning Survey⁴⁶, 2004

The term “adults” concerns, in the figures 6.1 and 6.2, all individuals aged between 16 and 69, with the exception of those in full-time education .

Participation is growing: by three percentage points in 2002 versus 1997. The growth concerns adults aged over 30, youth presenting no variations.

Figure 6.2
Adult participation in learning by age group: 1997-2002 (Val.%)



Source: NIACE, 2005

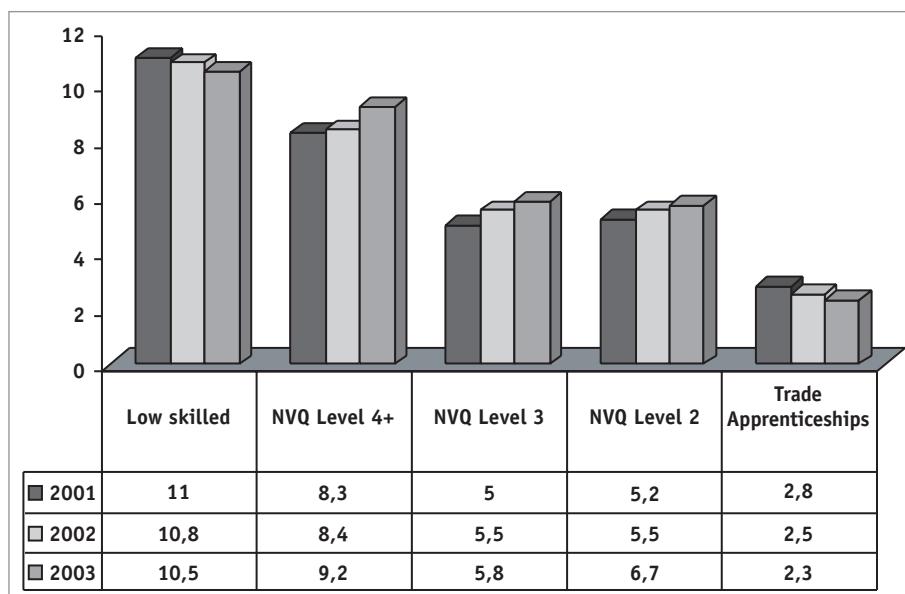
Surveys (DfES – Department for Education and Skills, 2004) indicate that the motivations towards the undertaking of “taught and self directed learning” are mainly vocational: to acquire new technical-operational skills linked to one’s field of work, to develop one’s career path, to gain added satisfaction from work.

As far as “non vocational” activity participation is concerned, the main motivations are: a desire for increased knowledge and skills, curiosity for a given topic, the idea of doing something interesting.

⁴⁶ Cf. The Department for Education and Skills - DfES/Research and Statistics Gateway' web site www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway

Surveys show that participation is affected by a strong social and cultural polarisation. The majority of participants strongly reflects people with upper secondary school certificates, jointly with people in stable and well paid positions. Non qualified manual workers, poorly educated members of the population, the unemployed, ethnic minorities, ageing adults (over 60), and the disabled show a smaller participation. Surveys highlight the nature of the obstacles to participation for these groups to be both *objective* (lack of time, inability to pay for vocational training, lack of vocational training proposals near home, poor information regarding the available opportunities) and *subjective* (lack of self-esteem, fear of failing and showing one's weaknesses: vocational training participation is perceived as a questioning of one's values and habits, vocational training is rated as stiff and formal, training venues are rated as worthy only for the young or for those holding knowledge and competences).

Even though vocational training is undertaken by many, it should be pointed out that, in the UK, the number of people with poor qualifications, or none at all, is still very high. Specifically, all people below NVQ Level 2⁴⁷, or holding no qualification, are considered "*Low Skilled*". Hence, in 2003 we have *10.5 million low-skilled people*, mostly among the working age population. The chart shows the decrease of the "*low skilled*" and the increase of higher qualifications, between 2001 and 2003.



Source: Labour market survey⁴⁸, 2004

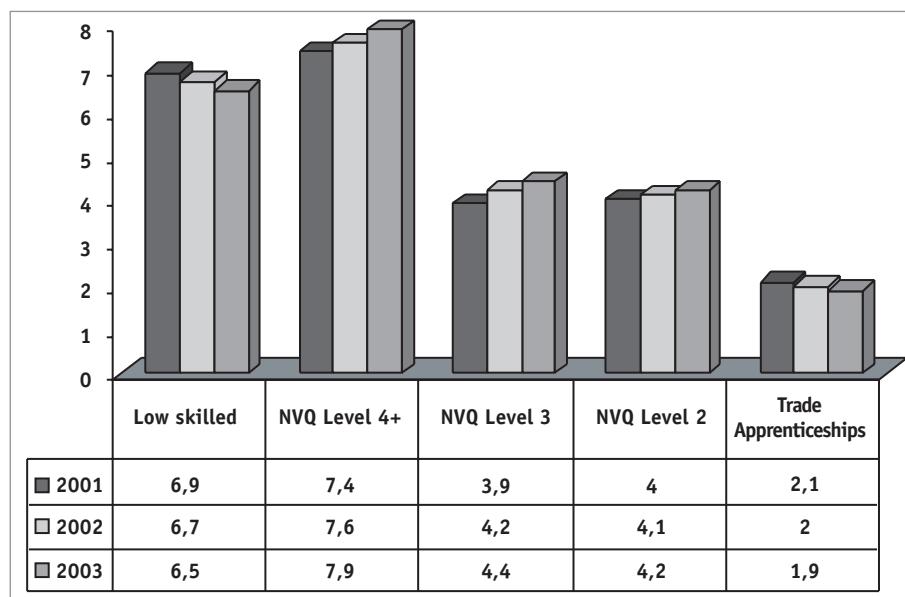
47 The following tables refer to the NVQs because they are employment related qualification levels; the NVQ level 2 is rated as the minimum acceptable qualification level.

48 Cf. The National Statistics' web site www.statistics.gov.uk/ssd/surveys/labour_force_survey.asp

Out of 10.5 million *low-skilled* workers found amongst the population, employed people are 6.5 millions.

Among the employed, the largest group gathers people with middle-high qualifications. The presence of low-skilled employed people is mainly detected in: *manufacturing, car component production, health and social sector, wholesale and retail, transports, logistics and communication*. Further analysis shows a significant presence of *low-skilled foreign immigrants* in agriculture, in the hotel, catering, and domestic collaboration sectors.

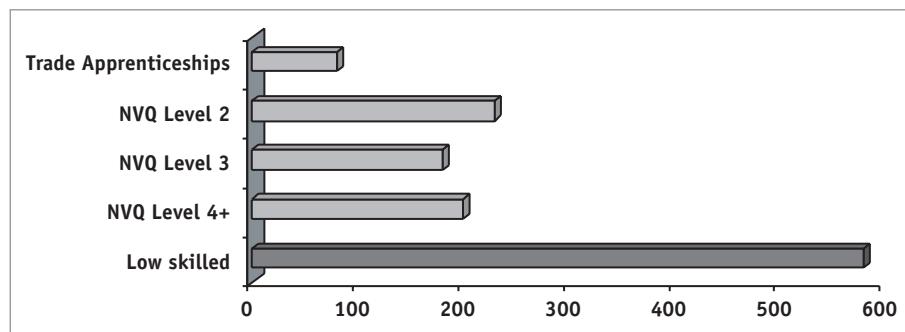
Figure 6.4
United kingdom:
employed
population qualifi-
cation levels
(16-64 years)
figures in millions
(2001-2003)



Source: Labour market survey, 2004

The presence of *low-skilled* people is much higher among the unemployed; their number, even if decreasing in the past few years, is 2 or 3 times their number in the other groups.

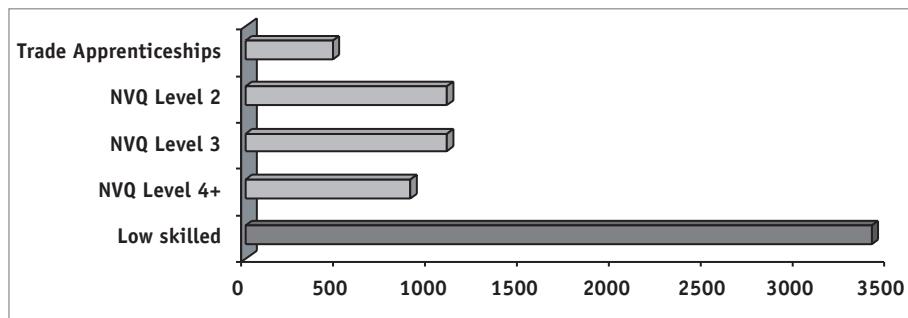
Figure 6.5
United kingdom:
unemployed popu-
lation qualifica-
tion levels; figures
in thousands
(2003)



Source: Labour market survey, 2004

Among the non-active population, *low-skilled* people are in excess of 3 millions, thus representing the largest group.

6.1 Foreword



Source: Labour market survey. 2004

Figure 6.6
United kingdom:
inactive popula-
tion qualifica-
tion levels
figures in
thousands (2003)

6.2 ADULT EDUCATION NATIONAL POLICIES

In 2003 adult education policies became even non-concerned with economic outputs when the labour government launched the “*National Skills Strategy*” (*White Paper, 21st Century Skills - Realising our Potential – Individuals, employers, nation*, 2003). This strategy aims at eliminating, or at least reducing, the human resource qualification differences, in comparison to the levels experienced by the main UK’s economic competitors. The government and its operational structures are challenged to organise the acquisition of competences, identified by the perceived *industrial system’s demand* and recognised by a *reformed certification system*. This strategy aims not just to increase the number of adults who participate in education, most of all it aims to find ways and actions for bringing poorly qualified and poorly educated adults to participate (“*Successful Participation for all*” May 2003)⁴⁹.

By the adoption of this policy the “*National Skills Alliance*” was born, with 4 ministries (*Department for Work and Pensions* - DWP, *Department for Education and Skills* - DfES, *Department of Trade and Industry*, and the *Treasury*) operating jointly with employers’ organisations and workers’ trades unions.

The DfES and DWP ministers are in charge of the above operations’ management. The *National Skills Strategy* defines the government’s plans to improve the nation’s professional and cultural heritage, its aim is to help each individual to achieve better employability, to assist businesses improving their results and to increase national productivity.

The *National Skills Strategy* follows 5 action lines, designed to address the already highlighted problem of people with low levels of skills:

1. *skills for individuals*: basic skills and competences for each individual’s employability;
2. *skills for employers*: basic skills and specific technical competences for employers;
3. reformed qualifications (study certificates, certifications);
4. *Further education* and vocational education and training reform;
5. introduction of tests and result evaluation.

A first step towards its implementation is the adoption of a series of initiatives aiming at:

- removal of barriers to vocational education and training access;
- provision of people support services;
- identification of territorial areas and economic sectors with highest vocational education and training requirements;
- redirection of investments towards courses leading to “*level 2*” or “*level 3*” qualifications in specific areas.

⁴⁹ Cf. www.successforall.gov.uk

For individuals, this means:

- introduction of free vocational education and training for all insufficiently employable adults, helping them acquire an adequate qualification (*Level 2*);
- introduction of new adult opportunities, towards obtaining technical, high craftsmanship and commercial qualifications, through *Level 3* type of qualifications in regional areas or in economic sectors where they seem to be particularly lacking;
- a £30 weekly allowance to support the studies of priority target group adults, while they are taking full-time *Further Education* courses;
- further development of the “*Adult Basic Skills*” campaign, with the inclusion of Information and Communication Technology as fourth “*skill for life*”, in addition to literacy, language and numeracy;
- age limit increase for *Modern Apprenticeship*, providing people who are over 25 with opportunities to learn a qualified trade on-the-job;
- safeguarded cultural, community and leisure types of learning available to prisoners, low income and those in receipt of state benefits;
- reformed information, counselling and guidance services, facilitating adult education access, with an opportunity to understand what to learn, where to learn and what one's own rights are.

For employers:

- widened *Sector Skills Council*⁵⁰ network set out to identify, map and address the vocational education and training requirements in several employment sectors;
- acquisition of the *Employers training Pilots*⁵¹ results, towards the development of an employers' national programme ensuring that vocational education and training meets their requirements, aimed at *low-skilled*⁵² employees specifically;
- reformed qualifications, closer to employers' reach and more respondent to occupational needs; introduction of vocational education and training programs, with content units developed by employers for the different vocational sectors;
- broader employers' participation in *Modern Apprenticeships*⁵³ design and supply;
- support services to employers for vocational competence issues, enabling them to know who they should refer to; service provisions based on the combined action of a broader number of suppliers and resources, integrated through the work performed by *Business Link*⁵⁴, the local LSCs and *JobCentre Plus*;
- publication of an “*Employers Guide to Good Training*”⁵⁵, with clear information

50 For the SSC nature and assignments see www.ssda.org.uk/ssda/default.aspx?page=2

51 For the ETP nature and assignments see further on.

52 For a definition of *low-skilled* and related information see further on.

53 A description of *Modern Apprenticeships* may be found visiting: www.delni.gov.uk/index.cfm/area/information/page/ModernApprenticeships

54 Cf. www.businesslink.gov.uk

55 Cf. www.lsc.gov.uk/National/Employer/Goodtraining.htm

- concerning what employers need to know in order to improve their workforce's competences;
- introduction of new management and *leadership* guidelines, through a joint work effort with "*Investors in People*"⁵⁶.

The *Learning and Skills Act 2000*⁵⁷ is the reference legislation for the organisation and implementation of this strategy; it assigns roles and functions to the organisations operating in the system.

With the "*Learning and Skills Act 2000*" and the adoption of the "*Skills Strategy*", LSCs are chartered with planning, coordinating and financing secondary and continuing education; education provision is shared by several organisation and agencies nationwide. LEAs play an important role, in close collaboration with trade unions, voluntary and social private organisations.

6.2.1 Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland's Vocational Education System Details

Educational policies and targets apply to the whole of the UK, but the UK features a strong territorial autonomy, controlled by different bodies working for the central government's policy implementation.

While England has no separately elected institutional bodies and is directly ruled by the kingdom's central government, the other national States have specific legislative assemblies: both Wales⁵⁸ and Northern Ireland⁵⁹ have National Assemblies and Scotland has a truly independent Parliament⁶⁰. These institutions receive the central government's directives, make them their own and apply them on their territory through their bodies, with variations that meet national needs.

56 Information and news regarding "*Investors in People*": www.investorsinpeople.co.uk/IIP/Web/default.htm

57 Cf. www.niace.org.uk/Organisation/advocacy/LSBill/ActSummary.htm

58 *Welsh Assembly*: the assembly was established by a referendum (18 September 1997); it became operational as of 1 July 1999. The Assembly is made of 60 members elected by the whole Welsh population every four years. The assembly decides on its priorities, gets and allocates the funds made available to it from the Treasury. It develops and implements policy required by local circumstances autonomously; among the required ones: *education, training and lifelong learning*; information and communication technology; social services. Welsh deputies are accountable to voters for policy achieved results (www.wales.gov.uk/pubinfaboutassembly/index.htm)

59 *Northern Ireland Assembly*: born after the Belfast Agreement of 10 April 1998, and ratified by a referendum held on 22 May 1998. The Assembly is made of 108 directly elected members. It was suspended as of 14 October 2002, due to region's political circumstances. From that date the UK's Parliament is the legislative reference, while policy implementation is still performed by the Irish Departments (www.niassembly.gov.uk)

60 *Scottish Parliament*: established by the 11 September 1997 referendum, ratified by the UK's Parliament *Scottish Act of 1998*: it has been operational since 1999. The Parliament is the first independent Scottish Parliament since 1707. It is made of 129 members elected every four years and holds direct responsibilities for several matters, such as Education, Health, Social Services; however, its policies regarding Foreign Affairs, Defence and National Security are UK's Parliament dependent. The London's Parliament can issue laws regarding Scotland in any area; however, it does not legislate on "devolution issues" without the Scottish Parliament's consent. The government is held by the *Scottish Executive*, led by a prime minister who nominates the government's ministers (www.scottish.parliament.uk/home.htm)

In what follows we provide an account of the education and vocational training assignments, and of the political and technical bodies⁶¹ in charge for each of them, in the four UK territories, in 2005.

England	Wales	Northern Ireland	Scotland
<i>Department for Education and Skills (DfES)</i>	<i>Welsh Assembly Government - Department for Training and Education</i>	<i>Department for Employment and Learning Northern Ireland (DELNI)</i>	<i>Scottish Executive: Enterprise, Transport and Lifelong Learning Department (inc. HE but not schools)</i>

Source: NIACE, 2005

Table 6.1
Policies for education, vocational training and competence development

England	Wales	Northern Ireland	Scotland
<i>National Learning and Skills Council (National LSC)</i>	<i>ELWa (Education and Learning Wales)</i>	<i>Department for Employment and Learning Northern Ireland (DELNI)</i>	<i>Scottish Further Education Funding Council (SFEFC).</i> <i>Scottish Enterprise and Highlands and Islands Enterprise finance the work-based learning</i>

Source: NIACE, 2005

Table 6.2
Vocational training funding (further education colleges, adult learning colleges, work-based learning providers), national priority determination

England	Wales	Northern Ireland	Scotland
<i>Local Learning and Skills Councils (local LSCs) in collaboration with Regional Development Agencies</i>	<i>Regional ELWA offices</i>		<i>Scottish Enterprise (SE) e Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE) in collaboration with local offices</i>

Source: NIACE, 2005

Table 6.3
Local priority determination at regional level and provision rationalisation

61 A detailed description of these bodies, and their related websites, will be found in the following paragraphs.

Table 6.4
Inspection of work-based training activities and provisions

England	Wales	Northern Ireland	Scotland
<i>Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI); inspections for the 16-19 age group are carried out with the Ofsted (Office for Standards in Education) school inspectors</i>	Estyn (<i>Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales</i>)	DENI (<i>Department of Education Northern Ireland</i>) on behalf of DELNI	HMIE (<i>Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education</i>) for the Scottish schools. Local offices of the <i>Scottish Enterprise (SE)</i> and <i>Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE)</i> for <i>work-based learning</i>

Source: NIACE, 2005

Table 6.5
Personnel research and development

England	Wales	Northern Ireland	Scotland
<i>Learning and Skills Development Agency (LSDA)</i>	Dysg (<i>Welsh arm of LSDA</i>)	LSDA Northern Ireland	Scottish Further Education Unit

Source: NIACE, 2005

Table 6.6
Publicly funded qualification recognition

Inghilterra	Galles	Irlanda del Nord	Scozia
<i>Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA)</i>	ACCAF (<i>Qualifications, Curriculum and Assessment Authority for Wales</i>), ma per gli NVQs il solo ente responsabile è il QCA	CCEA (<i>Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment</i>), ma per gli NVQs il solo ente responsabile è il QCA	SQA (<i>Scottish Qualifications Authority</i>)

Source: NIACE, 2005

Table 6.7
Employment policies and New Deal

Inghilterra	Galles	Irlanda del Nord	Scozia
<i>Department of Work and Pensions</i>	<i>Department of Work and Pensions in collaborazione con Wales Employment Advisory Panel</i>	<i>Northern Ireland - Department of Employment and Learning</i>	<i>Department of Work and Pensions in collaborazione con Scottish Executive</i>

Source: NIACE, 2005

These bodies face significantly different economic, social and cultural situations. Some data regarding the Scottish, Welsh and Northern Irish situation are now considered.

In Scotland there is a relatively high adult participation in vocational education and training, with no regular pattern, though: the unemployed, manual workers, non qualified and temporary contract worker participation is by far lower.

As a matter of fact, while employed non-manual workers participate massively, and 86% of them took some form of vocational training in the last 3 years, manual worker participation reaches a smaller 70% and non-qualified workers an even smaller 53%.

The basic literacy and numeracy problem is relevant, as it is estimated that 23% of the adult population (800,000 people) holds an insufficient qualification level.

The 2002 *Lifelong learning strategy for Scotland*⁶² follows the English policy guidelines, and stems from a tight and constant collaboration between the *Scottish Executive* and the English DfES and DWP; the strategy aims mainly at raising the literacy levels of at least 150,000 adults by 2006, bringing them to achieve the SVQ2⁶³ level, which in the Scottish qualification system is the minimum education level entitling to a job and granting a living, with no risk of social exclusion.

The percentage of the 25 - (59)64 age group population, with qualifications below the SVQ2 level, has fallen, moving from 33% in 1997 to 21% in 2002. However, the difference in qualifications between the employed and the unemployed population remains significant, as shown by the following chart:

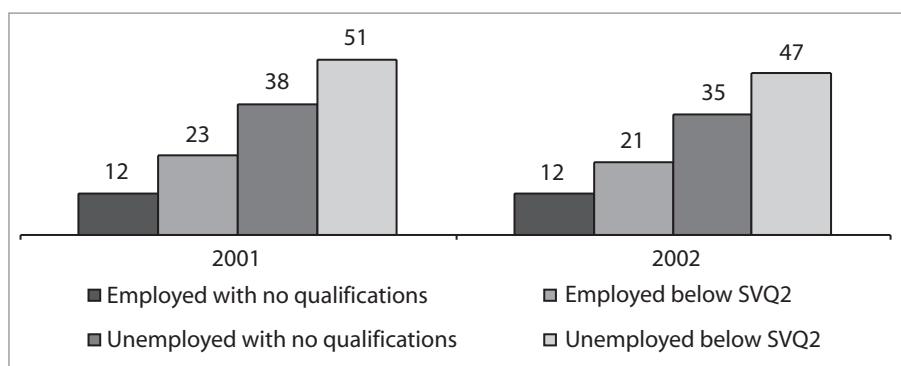


Figure 6.7
*Scotland:
employed and
unemployed by
qualification level
2001 and
2002, val. %*

Fonte: Labour Force Survey⁶⁴

Wales' situation, regarding the adult population competence levels, is worse than the rest of the UK. Out of about 1.8 million people aged between 16 and 65,

62 Cfr. www.scotland.gov.uk/library5/lifelong/llsm-00.asp

63 The Scottish qualification system differs from the system adopted by other UK's territories. A description may be found in PART II Chapter 6.4 "System and activities".

64 Cf. www.scotland.gov.uk/library5/lifelong/llsm-04.asp#2

440,000 people (25% of the population) hold serious literacy competence problems. This situation is even more alarming concerning numeracy, with 990,000 people⁶⁵ with problems (53% of the population).

Table 6.8
Wales: adult population (16-65) by competence level - 2004

Competence	Linguistic	Numeracy
Missing	4%	7%
Minimal	3%	20%
Insufficient	18%	26%
Sufficient	37%	25%
Adequate	38%	22%

Source: National Assembly for Wales (2005), *Words Talk – Numbers Count. The Welsh Assembly Government's Strategy to Improve Basic Literacy and Numeracy in Wales, Circular No 15/2005*

The insufficient level group is the target user base of the *National Skills Strategy* in Wales: 18% for linguistic competence, and 26% for numeracy. These are the two groups with the highest chance of rapid improvement thanks to targeted training. The fact that vocational qualification policies in Wales aim at *NQF level 1* for larger parts of the population instead of *NQF level 2*⁶⁶, (considered as being the minimum educational level to avoid social exclusion in the rest of the UK) explains the difficult Welsh situation. Implementing the *skills strategy* in Wales means aiming at level 1 qualification achievement by 80% of the working age population in linguistic literacy and by 55% in numeracy by 2010. Northern Ireland has a slightly different situation, as only 20% of the adult population has literacy problems. The number of people holding a sufficient competence level (*Level 2*) is greater than the UK average; however, there is a strong shortage of people holding a medium high competence level (*Level 3 and above*) versus the employers' demand. Therefore, the implementation of the *National Skills Strategy* in Northern Ireland aims at increasing the number of people holding higher qualifications (*Level 3 and above*), without neglecting the reduction of the unskilled or insufficiently qualified people number.

65 Source of quoted figures: www.learning.wales.gov.uk/scripts/fe/news_details.asp?NewsID=1853

66 The National Qualification Framework (NQF) is described in the Chapter 6.4. "System and activities".

6.3 ROLE OF THE INSTITUTIONS

The British system is characterised by a strong decentralisation.

There are two institutional bodies managing the vocational education and training policies: the *Department for Education and Skills* and the *Department of Work and Pensions*.

The two departments set priorities and objectives within the “*Public Service Agreement (2005-2008)*”⁶⁷, within the funding limits made available by *HM Treasury*.

As far as the vocational training policies are concerned, here are their goals:

a. **DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION AND SKILLS**

Objective IV: Addressing the adult skills gap.

Increase the number of adults holding the competences required for employability and for their progression towards higher vocational levels, through:

- improvement of basic skills for 2.2 million people in 2010, by the complete implementation of the “*Skills for Life*” programme, which was launched in 2001;
- achievement of the 1.5 million threshold by 2007, for people holding good *Basic Skills*;
- 40% reduction of the workforce with no Level 2 (NVQ2 or equivalent) qualifications by 2010;
- achievement of level 2 qualifications by 1 million (employed and unemployed) adults, at least, between 2003 and 2006.

b. **DEPARTMENT OF WORK AND PENSIONS**

Objective II: Promote employment as the best form of welfare for working-age people; protecting those in greater need.

As part of a broader full employment objective in each region, in the three years ending Spring 2008, and taking the economic cycle into account:

- improve the general employment rate;
- significantly reduce the difference between the disadvantaged group employment rate and the general rate;
- improve the disadvantaged group employment rates (lone parents, ethnic minorities, people aged 50 and above, low-qualified people, people living in local authority housing holding a weak and precarious position in the labour market).

Through the priority targets set by the PSA, the Departments promote the guidelines and provide the guidance for all activities to be aimed for. However, the operational role is left to other bodies, often in the private sector.

The main NSS planning and funding body is the *Learning and Skills Council*.

⁶⁷ The PSA is structured in chapters listing each ministry's objectives. A comprehensive view of the PSA 2005-2008 is available: www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/spending_review/spend_sr04/psa/spend_sr04_psaindex.cfm

Learning and Skills Council⁶⁸ (L.S.C.)

Established with the *Learning and Skills Act 2000*, this is a Government Agency which replaces and extends the role and functions previously held by the *Local Education Authorities*. The LSC's executive body is made of 15 members representing the employers, the trade unions, the education and training providers and various community groups.

The LSC is directly financed by the DfES and is responsible for funding and planning education and training for over 16-year-olds in England, from basic skills onward, with the exception of higher education (Level 4 and 5 of the national frame of reference). The target is to increase the level of youth (16-19 year olds) and adult skills, leading to the achievement of one of the highest rates of knowledge and competences in the developed world by 2010, for a really competitive workforce to be created.

The LSC is responsible for planning and investing in vocational education and training quality, towards the achievement of the government's objectives, working jointly with a vast number of public and private actors, such as: employers organisations, workers unions, local authorities, schools, Further Education colleges and voluntary organisations.

The LSC's national operations are headquartered in Coventry, with nine regional directorate branches in 47 Local Learning and Skills Council offices. In 2003-2004 its budget was £ 8.8 billion (about 13 billion), with an over one billion £ increase versus 2002-2003. About six million people attended vocational education and training activities financed by these resources, from April 2003 to March 2004. The LSCs are in the process of being reorganised to constitute a smaller number of regional bodies.

The LSC's financial resources were allocated as follows:

- £4.8 billion (53,9%) for 16 - 18 year old youths;
- £2.866 billion (32,5%) for (19 year old and above) adults.

The breakdown of adult programmes' expenditure is as follows:

68 See www.lsc.gov.uk

Table 6.9
*LSC: adult
 programmes
 financed
 in 2003-2004*

Programmes	(£) finances
FE 19+ including Basic skills	2,088,061
WB Training Modern Apprenticeship	293,867
Adult discretionary support for student	94,327
Adult & Community Learning (Local Education Authorities)	172,129
Adult Information Advice & Guidance	34,872
Workforce Development	52,425
Neighbourhood Learning in Deprived Communities	26,849
Employer Training Pilots	32,718
Family Literacy and Numeracy	23,129
Family Learning & Adult Learning Promotion	10,869
Union Learning Fund	10,037
Small Firms initiative	7,045
New Entrepreneur Scholarships	5,841
Other Programmes	14,063
Total	2,866,232

Source: *Learning and Skills Council (2004), Annual report and Accounts for 2003 – 2004.*

6.3.1 Institutions in Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland

The Department for Education and Training is Wales' political reference; it operates through *ELWA*⁶⁹ (Education and Learning Wales), a public body established under the Learning and Skills Act 2000 and supported by the Welsh National Assembly. It has a parallel role to that of LSC in England, it manages the financial allocations to the vocational education and training activities for the Welsh over 16 population, except in relation to higher education. ELWa's main objectives are:

- ensure that Welsh citizens achieve sufficient Essential Skills competences by 2010;
- encourage the population to take, or retry taking, a vocational training and continuous education pathway;
- make the regional knowledge capital effective towards enhanced local development;
- facilitate labour world's and educational institutions' joint provision of vocational education, meeting labour needs adequately.

69 Cf. www.elwa.ac.uk

6.3 Role of the institutions

To the above objectives a number of transversal issues are added, such as respect of:

- equal opportunities for the whole of the population;
- bilingualism promotion⁷⁰.

ELWa is responsible for planning and investing in education and training quality, towards the achievement of the government's objectives, by working jointly with a vast number of public and private actors, employers organisations, workers unions, local authorities, schools, *Further Education* colleges, and voluntary organisations. ELWa has a national headquarter in Cardiff and 4 local offices in Wales' 4 regions (North, Central, South-east and South-west). In 2003-2004 its budget was about £496 millions (about € 744 millions).

WALES EMPLOYMENT ADVISORY PANEL⁷¹ - The Panel was set up in 2004 to provide independent advice to the Welsh Assembly Government on the development, implementation and delivery of the New Deal and other Welfare to Work programmes, which are controlled by the UK's Department of Work and Pensions. The Panel's work is tightly liaised with the activity of Wales' Jobcentre Plus.

For Northern Ireland the *Department for Employment and Learning*, operating through *DELNI*⁷², a Northern Ireland Assembly internal body, plans and finances the education activities for the Northern Irish population aged over 16, towards the achievement of the governments' objectives in collaboration with public and private bodies. Even though the Assembly has been suspended, the Department has maintained its operational status, according to DfES directives and Westminster Parliament guidelines. Its main tasks address the promotion of competence acquisition, helping:

- people to achieve social inclusion and to enter the labour market;
- employers to become more competitive on the global market.

For Scotland, the *Enterprise, Transport and Lifelong Learning Department* of the Scottish Executive acts since October 2005, through *SFHEFC*⁷³, the *Scottish Further and Higher Education Funding Council*, a public non ministerial Scottish body. It is made of 16 members nominated by the Scottish Parliament First Minister, and it operates on its behalf. Its main functions concern:

70 Bilingualism is a relevant issue for Wales. The *Welsh language Act* of 1993 grants equal treatment for Gaelic and English language on the Welsh territory and requires that all the Crown's public offices and institutions should provide their services in both languages; in schools pupils should have the choice of attending classes in Gaelic, English or in a bilingual environment. This is why a part of the funds in ELWA's operational plans is specifically allocated to initiatives, also for the adult population, helping and promoting the maintaining, the tuition and production of high quality didactic materials in Gaelic (www.elwa.org.uk/elwaweb/elwa.aspx?pageid=4203).

71 Cf. www.wales.gov.uk/themesmergers/content/responses/wales-employ-panel-e.htm

72 Cf. www.delni.gov.uk

73 Cf. www.sfc.ac.uk

- advising the First Minister on vocational education financing and other matters;
- granting vocational education provision high quality levels;
- develop action vocational education strategies consistent with government priorities.

The Department is responsible for planning and investing in education and training quality, towards the achievement of the government's objectives, by working jointly with a vast number of public and private actors, employers organisations, workers unions, local authorities, schools, *Further Education* colleges, and voluntary organisations.

SCOTTISH ENTERPRISE⁷⁴: Scotland's main economic development agency, funded by the Scottish Executive, headquartered in Glasgow, operates through a network of 12 local offices spread across the Scottish southern territory. The *HIGHLANDS AND ISLANDS ENTERPRISE⁷⁵*, a similar organisation headquartered in Inverness, operates in northern Scotland and on the islands through a network of 10 local offices.

Both these agencies play an important role in supporting Parliament's identification of priorities and of local education and training needs. Their actions target the territorial economic development (by means of: support and services for Scottish industries; promotion of Scottish enterprises on the international market; workforce skills development and capitalisation. For this last point, they are responsible for funding *on-the-job learning activities* carried out locally, on Scottish companies' premises.

Local Education Authorities (L.E.A.)

Since 1944 the *LEAs - Local Education Authorities* have been operating as the strategic government bodies responsible for financing, managing and maintaining the UK's primary and secondary schools. Each *City Council* dependent *LEA* has been receiving financial support directly from the DfES, towards education and training provision arrangements in its own area of territorial competence.

The government's education reforms, starting from 1988 and up to the "*Learning and Skills Act 2000*" which saw the birth of the *Learning and Skills Council* as the government's strategic body for training issues, has determined a drastic decrease in the *LEA*'s role and the interruption of the DfES' direct funding.

Their present role is to organise and manage the primary school education system; besides it, they deal with part of the *Adult and Community Learning* provision, via formal and non-formal courses. In its annual planning, the LSC determines the amount of financial support to be allocated to the LEAs for their *Adult & Community learning* initiatives.

74 Cf. www.scottish-enterprise.com

75 Cf. www.hie.co.uk

Jobcentreplus (J.C.P.)

The DWP's operations body is called *Job Centre Plus*⁷⁶. The *JobcentrePlus* were first set up in April 2002, bringing together the *Employment Service* which used to manage the *Job Centres* and those *Benefit Agency* sectors which offered services for people receiving state benefits. It is envisaged that the JCP network covering the UK territory will be completed by the end of 2006, with at least one office in all major cities.

The JPC's main goals are:

- facilitate access or return to work for the largest possible number of people;
- help employers find the employees necessary to fill the vacant positions;
- provide support and help towards occupational placement of working age persons, with specific attention to those receiving subsidies.

The *JobCentrePlus'* organisation is such that their service provisions may be performed

- directly, through face to face interviews;
- through a telephone line, operational 7 day a week;
- through a web site.

Additionally, JCPs rely on a constant and active collaboration between *Learndirect* and their service provision, either on-line or by telephone.

People directly enrolling at a JCP, are assisted by a guidance worker who follows them through all the stages of finding a job and applying for the award (or the renewal) of a government subsidy. Their approach values the achievement of a job seeking users "active" behaviour, by trying to motivate their participation in vocational education and training.

The *Adult Learning Inspectorate* is another important body, created under the "Learning and Skills Act 2000".

Adult Learning Inspectorate⁷⁷ (A.L.I.)

The British education system reform, launched as a result of the new policies, attaches the highest importance to the improvement of standards, in terms of results achieved by students, of educational infrastructures and of teaching staff competence.

Vocational education control and assessment is therefore a key element for the implementation of the above mentioned reform framework. Assessment results are vital for

- the financing and coordinating bodies of any vocational education provision proposals, particularly the LSC,
- the understanding and the careful consideration of the delivered education quality.

76 Cf. www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk

77 Cf. www.ali.gov.uk

Bearing the above in mind, the “*Learning and Skills Act 2000*⁷⁸” reviewed the British inspecting system and sets the foundations for the establishment of two new bodies:

- *Office for Standards in Education (OfSTED)*⁷⁹,
- *Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI)*.

ALI is a government body, chartered with the improvement of adult education standards; it caters to quality inspection of education provision which targets over 19 learners and 16 to 19 year old post compulsory school leavers.

Among *ALI*’s main tasks, control of the following activities is outstanding:

- On-the-job training;
- Education of over 19 year olds in *Further Education Colleges*;
- Adult and community education;
- University for Industry (Ufi) e-learning, provided through *Learndirect*;
- Employability targeted vocational education, financed by *Jobcentres Plus* and *New Deal* programs;
- Prisoner targeted vocational education;
- Private body provided vocational education, based on employers’ demand.

ALI also provides advice to government departments and to the LSC in policy planning phases, highlighting best practices and identifying trends on key issues which could be relevant for adult education policies.

The inspection results are public⁸⁰.

Presently, *ALI* employs 140 inspectors and 14 leading inspectors; about 600 associate inspectors collaborate with *ALI* as experts in specific fields .

Her Majesty’s Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales⁸¹ (ESTYN)

Headquartered in Cardiff, it’s an independent body directly financed by the Welsh Assembly. It is in charge of inspections of all types of schools, Local LEAs, teachers’ training, JobcenterPlus activities, *Careers Wales*’ guidance services. Its operations are performed by own personnel, including about 98 inspectors; sometimes it also operates through external inspectors.

ESTYN’s operations are scheduled on a three year basis through a Corporate plan; the plan outlines the goals to be achieved, the checkpoints and their schedule.

78 Cf. www.niace.org.uk/Organisation/advocacy/LSBill/ActSummary.htm

79 *Ofsted*: www.ofsted.gov.uk is a non ministerial government department, established under the “*Education (Schools) Act 1992*”, with the task of inspecting all of Britain’s private and public schools. It’s duties include the inspection of the LEA, of the teacher training institutes and of the youth services. Since 2001, Ofsted is in charge of the inspection of all educational bodies for 16-19 year olds (including colleges and all services for youths aged 14 to 19) and for child care regulatory provisions.

80 Cf. www.ali.gov.uk/htm/reports.asp

81 Cf. www.estyn.gov.uk

Department of Education for Northern Ireland – Education and Training Inspectorate⁸² (D.E.N.I.)

As opposed to Wales and England, in Northern Ireland inspections are carried out by a division of the Department of Education; an Irish National Assembly government body initially, it operates under British DfES direct control since the Assembly was suspended. This division operates through 4 sectors:

- a) Planning and improvement policies,
- b) Community learning, youth targeted activities, cultural events and entertainment;
- c) Over 16 year olds education, Further Education, Higher Education, Teacher Training;
- d) pre16 primary schools, kindergartens.

These sectors are directed by 4 Chief Inspectors, coordinated by a general Inspector. The Inspectorate itself publishes the inspection plans and the reports from the undertaken controls.

Her majesty's Inspectorate of Education Scotland⁸³ (H.M.I.E.)

Executive agency of the Scottish Ministries, it operates independently and impartially, but must report on its activities to the Scottish ministries. It is in charge of inspections to check the qualitative standards of all types of schools, and of all private and public vocational education organisations, except for on-the-job learning initiatives, which are inspected by the Scottish Enterprise and by the Highlands and Islands Enterprise. HMIE has 5 general departments, each dealing with the different aspects of vocational education and training. The inspections are conducted by in-house personnel, except on some occasions where associate inspectors and external evaluators are used. HMIE is headquartered in Edinburgh.

Qualification and Curriculum Agency⁸⁴ (Q.C.A.)

It's a DfES sponsored public body, directed by an executive body whose members are nominated by the Secretary of State for Education among senior officials from the vocational education and training sector and among enterprise representatives. The QCA is in charge of defining education national standards, the study courses and the organisation of the public examination system which is required to achieve them; it is also responsible for charting an equivalency map of the different existing certificates and the newly identified standards.

Qualifications, Curriculum and Assessment Authority for Wales⁸⁵ (ACCAC)

Non-ministerial Public body, sponsored by the Welsh National Assembly; respon-

82 Cf. www.deni.gov.uk

83 Cf. www.hmie.gov.uk

84 Cf. www.qca.gov.uk

85 Cf. www.accac.org.uk

sible for the development, accreditation, assessment and certification of the Welsh territory Further Education qualifications, exception made for the NVQs (under the QCA authority). The ACCAC is in charge of defining education national standards, the study courses and the organisation of the public examination system which is required to achieve them; it is also responsible for charting an equivalency map of the different existing certificates and the newly identified standards. Additionally, the ACCAC develops and edits Gaelic language publications to support bilingualism. An administration board, nominated by the National Assembly and counting up to 10/15 civil servants, runs the operations of the Authority.

Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment⁸⁶ (C.C.E.A.)

Non-ministerial public authority funded in 1994 by the Department of Education Northern Ireland, headed by a president and 17 administration board members, nominated by the Department of Education. It provides advice to the local government on the subjects to be taught in Northern Irish schools, taking responsibility for accreditation, assessment and certification of Northern Irish Further Education qualifications, exception made for the NVQs (under the QCA authority).

Scottish Qualification Authority⁸⁷ (S.Q.A.)

Non-ministerial public authority sponsored by the Scottish Executive Department of Education, responsible for development, accreditation, assessment and certification of non-academic qualifications. The SQA is in charge of defining education national standards, the study courses and the organisation of the public examination system which is required to achieve them; it is also responsible for charting an equivalency map of the different existing certificates and the newly identified standards. A civil servant administration board nominated by the Scottish Executive runs the operations of the Authority.

86 Cf. www.ccea.org.uk

87 Cf. www.sqa.org.uk

6.4 SYSTEM AND ACTIVITIES

6.4.1 Foreword

In order to launch the *National Skills Strategy*, and to achieve its goals, it is of vital and preliminary importance to specify which certifications and which *skills* provide a minimum acceptable standard; in other words, the threshold which allows us to distinguish, between *low-skilled* and *non-skilled* persons, must be defined. To this effect the work of the QCA - *Qualification and Curriculum Agency* has proven and continues to be essential.

The term *Skill* is a concept, literally meaning ability, competence, proficiency, which spans a broad range of individual capacities, personal characteristics and experiences; therefore, “skill” can only inadequately be measured by school certificates or by specific professional qualifications.

In the making of the *National Qualification Framework* all *skills, professional and non-professional education and training, certificates and work experience* have been considered and integrated with one another.

The framework components were integrated using three approaches:

- competences: abilities workers hold that can be proven but not necessarily certified, organised in 5 levels corresponding to 5 types of work: *professional/managerial, technical/specialist tasks, employee and craftsmanship type of work, semi-qualified work, non qualified occupations*.
- study certificates: the broad range of existing diplomas has been broken down in groups and confronted with 6 levels (see figure 6.8, first column): *level 5* and *level 4* (highest academic or professional education certifications); *level 3 -advanced level* - (more or less equivalent to upper secondary school diploma), *level 2* (5 AC GCSE; end of the compulsory school⁸⁸ with entitlement to continue education); *level 1 (lower, basic qualification*, end of compulsory schooling without entitlement to continue); *entry level* (referred to the end of *Primary School*)
- assessment test results: use of the score achieved with tests of basic literacy and numeracy competence, referenced by “*Skills for life*”⁸⁹ and adopted by the *Jobcentre Plus*⁹⁰ certificates of courses which target the unemployed benefiting from the JSA- *Job seeker allowance*⁹¹, for comparisons with the 6 previously mentioned levels.

⁸⁸ Please note that compulsory school terminates at 16 in the UK.

⁸⁹ *Skills for life* is a program launched by the DFES in 2001, to raise the basic skill level and to lower the population's neo-analphabetism. For a more detailed analysis of this program see further down.

⁹⁰ A detailed analysis of *Jobcentre Plus* commitments and functions is further down.

⁹¹ This is a specific form of subsidy which is allocated after six months of unemployment, only to active job seekers who enrol in training/work programs promoted by the *Jobcentre Plus*.

The end result is the establishment of a national framework; it may be used as the official reference for the education requirements of both the employers' system and of the individuals, and it provides the *Skills Strategy* guidelines.

Figure 6.8
National Qualifications Framework

National Qualifications Framework Levels	General Academic	Vocationally Related	Occupational	Key Skills	Basic Skills	National Curriculum
5	Higher level qualifications: Post Graduate, Degrees, BTEC Higher Nationals		NVQ Level 5	Level 5		
4			NVQ Level 4	Level 4		
3 – Advanced Level	2 A levels	1 Vocational A Level (Advanced GNVQ)	NVQ level 3	Level 3		
2 – Intermediate Level	5 GCSEs Grades A-C	Intermediate GNVQ	NVQ level 2	Level 2	Level 2	
1 – Foundation Level	5 GCSEs Grades D-G	Foundation GNVQ	NVQ Level 1	Level 1	Level 1	National Curriculum Level 5
						National Curriculum Level 4
Entry Level	Entry Level Certificate			Entry 3	National Curriculum Level 3	
				Entry 2	National Curriculum Level 2	
				Entry 1	National Curriculum Level 1	

Source: Qualification and Curriculum Agency, 2005

"Level 2" qualifications (*NVQ2*; *5GCSE grades A-C*; *Intermediate GNVQ*) have been identified as the minimum acceptable standard level of vocational education. All key adult education programs⁹² aim for the achievement of this level.

Special attention should be paid to the professional qualifications rated as *National Vocational Qualification (NVQ)*; they identify trades requiring specific competence and knowledge to be performed effectively. For these, certification applies to people who have a position in the labour market already, or who are about to enter it. These qualification are for those already on the job market, or that are about to enter it. NVQs represent national standards recognised by employers all over the country. NVQs are entirely different from the *General National Vocational Qualification* learners may chose to achieve after age 16, as an alternative to academic course enrolment (*General Certificate of Education, A Level*).

Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework⁹³

The qualification framework adopted in Scotland is different: it comprises twelve levels, including academic degrees and professional qualifications ranging from the to secondary school access level (Entry level 3 in the National Qualification Framework) up to research doctorates (NQF Key Skills level 5).

⁹² "Adult education" in the United Kingdom targets also the 16 to 19 year olds who do not participate in a regular educational pathway; as we shall see, a large amount of the available resources is allocated to them.

⁹³ Cf. www.scqf.org.uk

Figure 6.9
Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework, versus NQF levels

SCQF level	SQA National Units, Courses and Group Awards	Higher Education	Scottish Vocational Qualifications	Basic Skills and Key Skills of National Qualification Framework
12		Doctorates		Level 5 (Key Skills)
11		Masters	SVQ 5	
10		Honours degree Graduate diploma		
9		Ordinary degree Graduate certificate		Level 4 (Key Skills)
8		Higher National Diploma Diploma in Higher Education	SVQ 4	
7	Advanced Higher	Higher National Certificate Certificate in Higher Education		
6	Higher		SVQ 3	Level 3 (Key Skills)
5	Intermediate 2 Credit Standard Grade		SVQ 2	Level 2 (Basic Skills/Key Skills)
4	Intermediate 1 General Standard Grade		SVQ 1	Level 1 (Basic Skills/Key Skills)
3	Access 3 Foundation Standard Grade			Entry Level 3 (Basic Skills)
2	Access 2			Entry Level 2 (Basic Skills)
1	Access 1			Entry Level 1 (Basic Skills)

Source: Qualification and Curriculum Agency, 2005

The *identification of educational standards for each course level* has been a most important action of the educational system reforms and of the *National Qualification Framework* making (this is true also for the *Scottish Credits and Qualification Framework*): key competences learners should hold for each certification level have been defined. Such competences are decisive factors at initial assessment time, when they may allow recognition of educational credits; additionally, they are the very objectives teachers should be able to transfer to learners. To this end a curriculum and a teaching staff⁹⁴ reference text have been developed and adopted on a national scale, where the required key competences are specified, for each level and for each education subject (literacy, basic mathematical skills, linguistic skills, etc.); competences are specified for courses leading to *Basic Skills* and for ESOL courses; these materials grant a clear understanding of everybody skills, based on the certificate held, while allowing course management to be freely performed with their teachers' choice of method.

94 These materials are described on the DfES website: www.dfes.gov.uk/readwriteplus/teachingandlearning.

6.4.2 Education system

For the adult education system a distinction should be made between *Adult & Community Education* and *Further Education*.

In the UK *adult education* has a different meaning, compared to what it means in Italy. Broadly speaking, one may say that AE points to a set of adult targeted courses and educational activities, which may or may not lead to the achievement of a professional qualification.

These educational activities are delivered as:

- *Adult Education College* classroom courses;
- *Learndirect* distance courses;
- *Family learning*.

In particular, *Family learning* is an initiative, first deployed in 2001, which aims at widening adult participation in education, by bringing educational opportunities as close as possible to the individuals' homes. Educational initiatives are hosted by centres, municipalities, public spaces, where the entire family may join the activities, often involving interaction and collaboration of adult and younger participants. *Family learning* activities are often used by voluntary worker organisations and by cultural associations, to bring together groups "difficult to reach" from the most deprived UK territories. *Family learning* access is free and open to everybody.

All educational leading to the achievement of level 2 professional or academic qualifications, namely "*NVQ 2*" and "*5 GCSE grades A-C*", or higher (excluding *higher education*), may also fall into the *Further Education* domain.

"*Further Education*" is meant to be full time or part time tuition, starting after compulsory school, for the cultural, vocational and social education of young people and adults.

The provision of these educational activities includes:

- *Further Education College* or *Sixth Forms College* classroom courses;
- *Learndirect* distance learning courses;
- *Employers Training Pilots* on-the-job courses.

It should be noted that British continuing education follows two separate tracks:

- Educational pathways in the LSC frame of reference, that's to say the *Department for Education and Skills* and its programmes;
- Specific pathways and programmes leading to the *Jobcentre Plus*, that's to say the *Department of Work and Pensions*.

6.4.3 Programmes financed by the LSC

Skills for Life

Since 1997 the British government has been focusing its attention on literacy and

numeracy problems in the population; the *Basic Skills Agency*⁹⁵ president, Sir Claus Moser, was tasked to conduct research into the problem of poor basic skills and on its possible solutions. “*A Fresh Start - improving literacy and numeracy*” (Moser, DfEE 1999)⁹⁶ provides an alarming picture: over 7 million British adults possess a literacy level inferior to *level 1*, the level expected of an 11 year old pupil. The problem is even more dramatic when numeracy competence is concerned. On the basis of such worrying data *Skills for Life* was launched in March 2001, as the first national programme trying to come to terms with the literacy and numeracy needs of the (over 16 and no longer in the school system) adult population; the programme introduced educational activities which differ from the traditional scholastic pathways and allowed for the participation of people with learning difficulties and disabilities. In 2003 *Skills for Life* became one of the integrated programmes of the *National Skills Strategy*, which has produced results in 4 directions:

1. *wider education demand* through capillary promotion channels: solid local and national government agencies commitment, towards the identification of population needs; employers actions towards meeting the needs of their employees⁹⁷;
2. *wider education provision* through the allocation of adequate funds, planning coordination and use of education to meet target population needs;
3. *higher teaching quality* through a national infrastructure for teaching, learning and assessment;
4. *higher number of adults who achieve a national qualification* with a smaller number of education entry barriers.

The *National Skills Strategy* is addressing two committed initiatives:

- the first one in favour of people lacking basic competences (*Basic Skills*), who cannot grasp any educational opportunities leading to the achievement of level 2, yet;
- the second one, *ESOL* (*English for Speakers of Other Languages*)⁹⁸, to meet the specific needs of the UK resident foreign population speaking little or no English, thus experiencing:
 1. difficulties with occupational placement and social inclusion;
 2. job keeping problems;
 3. lack of mobility in the labour market.

⁹⁵ Small not for profit independent body, responsible for the identification of existing best practices towards *basic skills* development; provides advice to the LSC and the DFSE for strategic planning (www.basic-skills.co.uk).

⁹⁶ The results of the research conducted by Sir Moser have been published on the Internet: www.literacytrust.org.uk/socialinclusion/adults/moser.html#Findings

⁹⁷ Most significant is the initiative “*Skills for Productivity*” (www.dfes.gov.uk/employers).

⁹⁸ News and details of ESOL programme on the DfES website (www.dfes.gov.uk/curriculum_esol).

Basic Skills

The commitment to the *basic skills* development, an essential building block towards the achievement of any other objective (workforce qualification level increase leading to a more competitive economic system), produced some important results, such as:

- revised educational levels;
- revisited educational pathways;
- identification and definition of new basic competences;
- identification of new didactical methods.

Specifically:

- *entirely free courses* (just like level 2 courses);
- *vast marketing campaign* using all media, with capillary channel dissemination, to make people aware of what they miss and to facilitate their taking an educational pathway;
- *alternative didactical systems* based on greater use of new information and communication technologies, to ensure provision of more flexibility over traditional methods;
- *availability of the Learndirect portal and “toll free” telephone number*: portal based provision of on-line vocational education and training courses, from basic levels up to advanced levels, open to anybody using internet and a telephone *help line*, to obtain course selection information and guidance from expert support operators;
- the introduction of a *National Test* with recognised method of assessment and validation, leading to the award of a certificate.

ESOL

The same initiatives apply to *ESOL* courses, with substantial content extensions. As a matter of fact, the *ESOL* courses combine basic competence education (literacy, linguistic and quantitative competences) with British civilisation and culture elements, to support the unfolding of a social inclusion pathway with an understanding of its social and political context. Starting September 2005 the above aspect will be emphasized by the adoption, on a national scale, of educational modules developed, tested and assessed by the National Institute for Adult Continuing Education (NIACE), to be used by foreign UK residents who intend applying for British Naturalisation after a 3 year stay. These modules enable teaching staff to use them flexibly, according to the learners' knowledge level; they leverage the essential components of an active citizenship, combined with a perception of the UK system as exhaustive as possible: British history highlights, legislative background, roles, institutional public services and functions, details of available citizenship services⁹⁹.

⁹⁹ The authors of this Report were pleased to meet Ms Chris Taylor at the time of their study visit; Ms Taylor was the NIACE appointed project leader for the ESOL educational module development.

In quantitative terms *Skills for Life (and ESOL)*, with their ultimate goal of basic skill improvement for 2,2 million people by 2010, reached 800,000 successfully educated participants by the end of 2004 (beyond the 750,000 target).

6.4.4 Programmes financed by the Department of Work and Pension through the Jobcentre Plus

New Deal

New Deal¹⁰⁰: programme launched in 1997 by the British government; it was implemented by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to facilitate unemployed or inactive population moving out of welfare into employment. The operational approach is to enhance employability by supporting individual involvement in optional work experiences or educational activities. For government subsidy recipients, participation in the envisaged activities is *compulsory*; offenders' subsidies are suspended. The success of the initiative is proven by the steadily decreasing number of unemployed people eligible for *Job seekers Allowance* (subsidy for active job seekers), since May 2003. A significant portion of the no longer subsidy eligible people joined the *New Deal* programme activities.

New Deal breaks down into various sub programmes aimed at specific target groups, with differing eligibility criteria, objectives and supporting actions.

New Deal Young 18-24, for young people aged 18 to 24, unemployed for 6 months at least. Programme participation is compulsory and it starts with an initial support and guidance assisted period, after which one of the following 4 options must be taken:

- subsidised work;
- full-time vocational education course;
- voluntary work;
- environment protection and safeguard work.

There were 90,900 participants in March 2003: 72% men and 12% disabled people. Among the available options 33% of all women opted for voluntary work (17% of all men), while about 25% of all men opted for the *Environment Task Force* (18% women). About 70% ethnic minority participants joined some educational activity (ESOL primarily), while the same choice was opted for by 16% native people only.

New Deal 25+: targets adults aged over 25, unemployed for at least 12 months (in some regions 18 or 24 months as well). Participation entails an information and guidance period, after which a choice may be made between:

- subsidised work;
- education entry.

100 Cf. www.newdeal.gov.uk

New Deal for Lone Parents: targets lone people with children, especially subsidy recipients for at least 6 months. Participation in this case is voluntary, after an initial interview with a *Personal Adviser*, before each individual case is taken on board with an employment search objective, to be followed by an on-the-job support service. Additional target groups involved in specific *New Deal* programmes are: disabled people, prisoners, over 50ies, unemployed people partners.

A programme worth noting is the **New Deal for Community**: a long term (10 years) programme launched in 1998 which targets the population of the most deprived UK territories, where:

- employment opportunities are scarce;
- micro-criminality is strong;
- school drop out rates are high;
- health problems are widely spread;
- adequate housing is lacking.

The *New Deal for community* initiatives are planned and coordinated by local authority partnerships with education agencies. Investments reach £ 2 billions, shared by 39 partnership networks.

People applying with JCPs obtain an initial phase of individual counselling and guidance, followed by a range of educational opportunities, based on the applicants' skill and knowledge profile. The educational needs of *Job Seekers Allowance* recipients for longer than six months are carefully considered, aiming to identify any existing *basic skills* shortages.

JCP users are directed towards the following educational activities:

1. *Work Based Learning for Adults (WBLA)¹⁰¹* - *Basic Employability Training (BET)* – for individuals holding the lowest competence levels (same as or lower than *Entry Level*; expected level for children aged 7). This type of education provides a blend of basic skills, social skills and work experience. Participation is voluntary, education is full time and lasts 26 weeks.
2. *Basic Employability Training (BET)* – designed for *New Deal 25+* users who have not achieved *Entry level 3*; tutors may direct to this type of course people holding a higher qualification level, when their social skills prove to be less than adequate. Education lasts 13 weeks; however, in special cases and subject to tutor's advice it may be extended to 26 weeks.
3. *Full-Time Education and Training (FTET)* - for users participating in the *New Deal for Young people 18-24* programme; it is one of the optional choices and it lasts 1 year.
4. *ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages)* – for users who speak English

¹⁰¹ Cf. www.direct.gov.uk/EducationAndLearning/AdultLearning/TrainingAndWorkBasedLearning/fs/en

6.4 System and activities

- as a second language; available as BET module (26 weeks) and a FTET (1 year)
5. *Short Intensive Basic Skills courses*¹⁰² (SIBS): designed for people holding higher competence levels than BET course users. SIBS courses are structured according the already achieved skills; they focus on their users' immediate occupational needs. Education is *full-time* and lasts 8 weeks.

102 Cf. www.seetec.co.uk/seetec-449

6.5 BODIES

Body type by sector

1. Adult &Community Education

Adult Learning Colleges: formal and non formal education centres, mostly available in cities and major centres, where a broad range of educational subjects, including basic skills and ESOL courses are offered. All over 19 adults are eligible; costs are course dependent, with the exception of ESOL and *Basic Skills* courses, which are free.

2. Further Education

- 2.a Further Education Colleges provide a broad range of vocational courses. GNVQ and NVQ certifications may be obtained by part-time learners in specialist sectors;
- 2.b Sixth Form Colleges require *full-time* attendance by 16 -19 year olds; they lead to the GCE A Level, which entitles to higher education enrolment.

3. Distance education

*University for Industry (UFI)*¹⁰³: a not for profit organisation which helps making enterprises more competitive and individuals employable. It provides many on-the-job courses via distance education and e-learning particularly. Within this context it operates the *Learndirect* web portal and telephone line:

Learndirect Courses: the Ufi (*University for Industry*) provides its users with a vast range of activities, through the *Learndirect*¹⁰⁴ web portal, towards the achievement of NVQ vocational qualifications; some other provided activities lead to *Adult and Community learning (including courses for basic skills and ESOL achievement)*.

103 Cf. www.ufi.com/home/default.asp

104 Cf. www.learndirect.co.uk

6.6 SERVICES

National Test introduction: when the minimum educational standards for certification achievement were introduced, a tool for their assessment and validation was added: the *national test*. Study titles awards are based on the outcomes of this test. To take the test one must apply with the accredited education centres or, when participating in *Learndirect* courses, one can do it *on-line* through the *Learndirect*¹⁰⁵ web portal.

IAG service Reform – Information, Advice and Guidance for Adults: the IAG service, financed by the LSC on a national and a local level, targets adults aged over 20 who are, or would be, willing to start participating in education; the service helps them finding information on available educational provisions, obtaining guidance and accompaniment.

The 2003 document “*21° Century Skills: Realising our Potential*” marked the start of the National Skills Strategy; the document already underscored the decisive importance of an adult service for Information, Guidance and Accompaniment, to facilitate education entry and to increase its demand, by helping individuals understanding the available opportunities and their supporting services; the document also stated the government’s commitment towards reforming the service with the definition of:

- which services adult users are entitled to expect;
- the provision standards.

Work done jointly by the national LSC and the UfI (*University for Industry*) produced the “*National Policy Framework and Action Plan*”¹⁰⁶, which defines policies, objectives and detailed features to be granted by the service, with an action plan towards its implementation.

Among the main features the service is expected to grant, the following ones should be highlighted:

- easy service access;
- exhaustive provision of necessary information;
- flexibility and availability of an appointment based user helpdesk service, also outside normal working hours.

In addition to granting national standards, the service may present regional aspects, based on specific local requirements. The IAG service may be provided by all kinds of bodies, schools, private organisations, employers (for their own employees) and specialised agencies, after their accreditation based on confor-

¹⁰⁵ For further information about the *National Test*, including examples, see the *Department for Education and Skills* website: www.dfes.gov.uk/readwriteplus/Learning or the *Qualifications and Curriculum Agency* website: www.qca.org.uk/5396.html

¹⁰⁷ For further details: www.matrixstandard.com ed: www.ento.co.uk

mance to the national standard “*matrix quality standard*”¹⁰⁷ certified by EMQC (*East Midlands Quality Centre*)¹⁰⁸.

Finally, the “*National Policy Framework and Action Plan*” recommends that the IAG service provided by accredited centres is integrated with the services provided by the *Learndirect Helpline*, the *JobCentre Plus* and the *Worktrain*.

Regarding the above mentioned services, it should be noted that:

Learndirect Helpline is a free phone service for Information, Counselling and Guidance. The number to be called from any UK location is 0800 100 900¹⁰⁹.

JobCentre Plus information, guidance and accompaniment services target unemployed and inactive people who are income subsidy recipients.

Worktrain is a Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) website; it provides information and guidance regarding the available employment and vocational education opportunities¹¹⁰.

Careers Wales¹¹¹: launched in 2001 with the supporting help and the commitment of the Welsh Assembly, it assembles in just one national body seven regional organisations, which provide information, guidance and advice to people of any age across the Welsh territory. Its services are provided to individual, schools and colleges of all kinds and levels, employers. They address vocational education and training, vocational guidance, matching work demand and supply. Careers Wales operates jointly with: ELWA, Jobcentre Plus, Learndirect, civic services, schools and employers, be them individuals or trade associations.

Small Business Service¹¹²: a DTI (*Department of Trade and Industry*) dependent government agency; it provides support and advisory services for commercial and industrial planning and for the organisation of educational activities, according to an action plan developed jointly with ministries and institutions which play key roles in the British economic policy.

Embedded Learning¹¹³: its goal is the improvement of the literacy level, through the unfolding of activities carried out within its own community or as part of leisure time non formal activities. The programme envisages the production of didactical materials which, moving off from the specific skills and knowledge coupled with the topic which led a group of adults to provide an educational activity, introduce adequate elements enhancing the development of essential transversal competences. Materials are produced thanks to the collaboration of expert professionals; by June 2006 they are expected to cover 20 thematic contexts, typical of *Adult and Community Learning (ACL)*.

108 Cf. www.emqc.co.uk

109 Cf. www.learndirect.co.uk

110 Cf. www.worktrain.gov.uk

111 Cf. www.careerswales.com

112 Cf. www.sbs.gov.uk

113 See the website: www.dfes.gov.uk/readwriteplus/embeddedlearning/

6.7 DEMAND POLICY

Individual rights

“Level 2 entitlement”

Level 2 entitlement, (the “right” of each individual to hold a minimum acceptable education level, enhancing labour market mobility and reducing the need for government subsidies) it’s not just a declaration of principle for the *Skills Strategy*: it is a diversified set of initiatives which target the demolition of the main barriers preventing education eligibility.

Specifically:

1. *provisions are made for education to be free* when “level 2” is to be achieved
2. *courses are set up with employability as their operational focus*
3. *a recognition system is set up for competences professionally acquired*: they provide an educational credit towards the achievement of “Level2 – NVQ2” qualifications.

The same initiatives are extended to the achievement of “Level 3 – NVQ3” qualifications, in some sectoral areas and/or in some regions, where shortage of these certifications is so high that they need to be defined as priorities. Wherever this type of intervention is necessary *Regional Skills partnerships*¹¹⁴ are established; they are highlighted as important intervention areas for the bodies in charge of financial allocations to educational activities. In 2004 these initiatives were launched in 2 regions (*North East and South East*); later, they were adopted on a national scale and became one of the main mechanisms towards the achievement of the (*Public Service Agreement*)¹¹⁵ objective.

Main demand policy measure types

Adult Learning Grant (educational grant awarded to individuals): launched in September 2003 as a pilot project in 10 UK areas, their number was extended to 19, to help people overcome the financial obstacles preventing them from participating in education. This contribution is paid, on request, to adults aged over 19 attending courses for level 2, with no age limit. For the achievement of level 3 qualifications the ALG eligibility is limited to people aged between 19 and 31. The maximum grant amount is £30 per week (depending on income and/or subsidies)¹¹⁶.

An initiative similar to the *Individual Learning Account* was launched in 2001, to be suspended a few months later because of serious problems of bribery. The ILA

114 Cf. www.dfes.gov.uk/skillsstrategy/subPage.cfm?action=progUpdates.viewUpdate&i_progUpdateID=72

115 See the DfES objectives: www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/spending_review/spend_sr04/psa/spend_sr04_psaindex.cfm

116 Various factors concur towards the determination of a contribution’s amount: applicant’s annual income (summed to any cohabiting partner’s income), other subsidies reciprocity, etc. For additional information see: www.learndirect-advice.co.uk/featured/alg/

offered the possibility of paying for a considerable part of the education costs, independently of study levels and of personal income.

The *Adult Learning Grant* has made the founding ILA principles its own; however, the eligibility system was revisited to make it more restrictive, allowing more privileges to the socially less advantaged.

Career Development Loans: low interest, deferred repayment bank loan, intended for making vocational learning or education entry easier. This type of loan stems from partnership work and agreement made among the UK Government and four high street British banks: *Barclays, The Co-Operative, Clydesdale and the Royal Bank of Scotland*.

The *LSC – Learning and Skills Council*, pays for interests accrued on a loan while a course is lasting, up to one month after its termination; the trainee repays the loan to the bank over an agreed period of up to five years at affixed rate of interest. *CDLs* may cover up to 80% of the vocational learning or education costs (100% in case of people unemployed for 3 months and over), including books and any other required materials, travelling and child care; in special cases, such as full time courses, daily allowances (accommodation, meals, etc.) are also covered. Individuals can borrow anything between £300 and £8,000; the borrowed amount is credited on the learner's bank account on the basis of certified evidence, issued by the training centre at course start time¹¹⁷.

ETP - Employers Training Pilots¹¹⁸: these pilots were launched in September 2002 in 6 local LSC areas (*Birmingham and Solihull, Derbyshire, Essex, Greater Manchester, Tyne and Wear, Wiltshire and Swindon*) to encourage employers' investment on own personnel vocational training. The main objective is the workforce skill level increase, higher market competitiveness and positive fallouts on productivity. These pilots target all employers, while taking into account the difficulties experienced by SMEs when required to approve personnel leave for training.

The arguments supporting this programme are explicitly stated in the HM Treasury's 2003 Pre-Budget Report:

- “The UK's investment in workforce training has historically been low, and has been inhibited by a range of market failures. Businesses, particularly small business, are unwilling to release valuable staff for training, and may be unable to gain the full returns of training. Individuals may face financial barriers or be poorly informed about the value of training. Although voluntary approaches have increased participation in workplace training, they have not been sufficient given the scale of the problem.”

¹¹⁷ For additional information see: www.lifelonglearning.co.uk/cdl, or the *Barclays* bank website in the “Personal Loans” section: www.barclays.co.uk/personal

¹¹⁸ Cf. <http://etp.lsc.gov.uk>

The purpose of these actions is to deploy “*low-skilled*” personnel training initiatives, such as:

- paid time off for taking training courses lasting from 35 to 70 hours per year and leading to a *level 2* qualification or a basic competence certificate (*Basic Skills*);
- compensation for wage costs paid to employers (up to 150% of the wages, varying according to pilot area and size of firm);
- free course;
- free information, advice and guidance services.

The *Small Firms Training Loans Programme*¹¹⁹: an additional SME support service launched by government in 1996 ; interest free training loans for businesses employing no more than 50 people, repayable over a period of up to seven years

- “*Small Firm Training Loan*”. Training loans cover:

- course fees;
- up to 90% of personnel information, advice and guidance service costs;
- up to 90% of training consultancy costs (personnel training requirements and activity planning);
- required books and materials.

The above initiatives stem from an agreement between the UK's government and some banks: *Barclays, The Co-Operative, Clydesdale, HSBC, Lloyds TSB, NatWest and the Royal Bank of Scotland*. The loan amount, anything between £500 and £125,000, is credited to the applicant's bank account one month before the training course starting date or, when the guidance service has been applied for, on the day the consultancy period starts.

The loan is repaid in instalments, starting 6 to 12 months after the award date, as per the negotiated interest rate and taking into account: training course completion date, loan amount, business size and financial status, type of activities justifying a loan application, financing bank special conditions.

Interests related to the training period are paid by the DfES.

*Widening Adult Participation Action Fund*¹²⁰ (*WAPAF*): launched and financed by the LSC since April 2004 as a replacement for the *Adult and Community Learning Fund (ACLF)*¹²¹: today's major UK programme among those providing financial support for initiatives aimed at widening adult participation. The WAPAF resumes the ACLF's objectives:

- distribute funds for developmental projects in order to discover what works in widening adult participation;
- identify effective practice and make best use of its impact locally, regionally and nationally.

¹¹⁹ For additional information: www.strategy.gov.uk/downloads/su/loans/report/appendix03.htm and www.aztectraining.com/training/small_business_loans.htm

¹²⁰ Cf. www.niace.org.uk/Funds/WAPAF/Default.htm

¹²¹ Cf. www.lifelonglearning.co.uk/aclf/front.htm

6.8 PERSONNEL

Post-university specialisation for teacher education: previously, a teacher could autonomously decide to work in adult education on subjects for which her/his qualifications held a teaching habilitation; since the advent of the *National Skills Strategy* this is no longer possible. Teachers must hold a specific adult teaching specialisation for their own teachers' discipline, to be obtained with a 2 year post-university course. The achievement of this new vocational education level applies to already existing adult education practitioners as well; a recognition system for previously held experience awards credits, after assessment of the competences acquired by this type of teachers. The specialisation includes an "*induction*" period of initial teacher training and continuing professional development, when the newly specialised teacher is accompanied by a "tutor", in charge of monitoring and assessing the teaching progress against national induction standards, before issuing a recommendation regarding eligibility for employment in adult teaching.

chapter 7

ITALY

7.1 MAIN MEASURES OF LIFELONG LEARNING POLICY

Individual rights to adult education and training

In Italy, the path of adult education has been anything but straightforward. Historically, in fact, adult education didn't originate from an organic framework of legislative regulations in the fields of education, culture and training, but from the movement of the civil society that promoted a wider access to education (in the broadest sense of the word), with all the conflicts, tensions and contradictions that such a process could generate.

After world war 2, access to education as a lever to promote a wider participation to the new democratic lifestyle is the topical subject in the rising Italian Republic. It is during this period that various associations strongly characterised by their work towards the expansion of civil and political rights are established: the Social Guidance Centres; the Community Movement; the Movement for Public Cooperation; the National Union for the battle against illiteracy. The statutory objective of these associations, except for the very last one, is not adult education; in any case, they contribute to outline a general commitment framework on the subject of education.

In those years, the development of adult education runs parallel to the development of the right to education for workers students. The acknowledgement of this figure takes gradually place in the national employment contracts, starting in 1957 with the contract related to knitwear factories through to full recognition in 1970 in the Workers Statute of Rights. This is a foothold that led to several benefits being introduced in the various national contracts, ranging from the workers' right to take unpaid time off work, to be exempt from working overtime or during weekends/bank holidays, to have paid days off to take exams, to favourable shifts, to flexible working hours, through to the provision of extras in the shape of book vouchers. The seeds leading to the recognition of 150 paid hours to dedicate to education are being sown. Significant, with regard to this historical evolution, the renewal of the metalworkers' national contract in 1973. In this contract it is stated for the first time that the employers commit themselves to provide the

workers with 150 paid hours to be used for educational purposes. By the end of the 1970s, the “right to the 150 hours” was included in the Collective Labour Agreements for almost all professions. Such an achievement marks an important step in the Italian education system in terms of lifelong learning, because of the strict and direct relationship that is being established between the educational and the working world.

Finally, in 1988, with Decree No. 395 issued by the President of the Republic, the precept is wholly recognised and finds an application in all sectors of the Collective Labour Agreements for the public employment.

Article 3 of the above-mentioned Decree regulates the right to education: “1) With the aim of granting the right to education, workers are entitled to a maximum of an extra 150 hours’ paid leave per person per year. 2) The leave mentioned in paragraph 1 is to be taken in order to attend courses leading to the achievement of one of the following qualifications: degree, post-graduate qualification, primary education certificate, secondary education diploma, vocational qualification. All courses are to be attended in public or officially recognised schools, or in other institutions if qualified to issue legal educational or vocational qualification, certificates and diplomas fully recognised by the Public Regulations.” It is important that the significant improvement in the individual’s professionalism, documented by a school qualification or a professional diploma, is referred to as “a service qualification to be evaluated according to the regulations in place in the pertaining administration.”

The following step towards the affirmation of an extended right to education is the possibility of benefitting from educational leave, as stated in Law 53/2000 (Right to Education and Training).

In article 5, the possibility to ask for a study leave is granted to “all employees working in the public or private sectors, with at least five years of service in the same company or public body”. Employees may request a temporary work stoppage for study leave “for a maximum of 11 months, to be taken non-stop or in more stages, during their entire working life. During the time spent on study leave the employees keep their working place and they are not entitled to receive a salary. Such time does not contribute to calculate the length of service, cannot be combined with holidays, sick leave or other kinds of leave (...). The employer has the right to refuse the leave, or to postpone it, in case of proven organisational needs. The collective agreements regulate the terms of enjoyment of the leave, identify the maximum percentage of employees entitled to apply for a leave, regulate the different scenarios for denial or postponement of such applications, and establish the period of notice, that in no instance can be shorter than thirty days.”

Law 53/2000 regulates continuing education leaves, too. Article 6 specifies that the learning offer object of the leave should allow for individual pathways, certified and acknowledged as vocational credits at a national and European level. “The education/training pathway can be freely chosen by the employee or may be organised by the company, in compliance with internal or territorial development plans agreed between the social parts.”

With strict regard to adult education, a first enforcement of the European directions about the implementation of an adult education system is to be seen with Ministerial Ordinance No. 455 of 29 July 1997, "Adult Education – Education and training in Primary and Secondary School", issued by the Ministry of Education, University and Scientific Research (*MIUR – Ministero dell'Istruzione, Università e Ricerca scientifica*). In Italy, as a matter of fact, the major objective of adult education has always been the attainment of a certificate: hence the provision of literacy courses in primary schools leading to the achievement of a primary school certificate and of special courses for workers leading to the achievement of a secondary school diploma (linked to the 150 hours). The Ordinance, through the implementation at a district level of the Permanent Territorial Centres for Adult Education (*CTP - Centri Territoriali Permanenti per l'Educazione degli Adulti*), establishes a first important form of cooperation between schools and public/private agencies operating in the field of education and training. *CTPs* are "places where needs are interpreted" and provide a wide range of services, including guidance, training, basic and functional literacy, language courses, computer science. They work both with schools and external education and training structures. In the following years, the cooperation between educational and training systems and other social parties is more and more intertwined, in the respect of each actor's competencies. A fundamental political step in this direction is represented by the Unified Conference held on 2 March 2000 between State, Regions and Local Boards. During the conference two important documents were approved: the Enclosure "Reorganisation and enhancement of lifelong adult education", in accordance with Law 59/1997 (*Legge Bassanini*), and Legislative Decree No. 112/1988 about the functions devolved on the Regions and Local Boards. The Enclosure describes the field of intervention with regard to adult education: "the whole of the formal (qualified education and vocational training) and non-formal (culture, social and health education, interpersonal relations, physical and motor education) education and training opportunities addressed to adult citizens, having as a main objective the development of basic personal abilities in different areas and of certifiable and transferable skills".

The indicated priority of intervention are:

- To support the re-entry in the formal education and vocational training system;
- To support the acquisition of specific competencies related to work and social life

In an integrated system, the subjects involved in the implementation of the various activities are: the education system; the regional system for vocational training; employment agencies; public networks for adult education; cultural infrastructures (museums, theatres, libraries); the entrepreneurial world, professional associations, universities.

The system organisational framework involves three levels of functions and competencies: national, regional and local.

The main lines drawn in the Enclosure approved on March 2000 outline a lifelong educa-

tion and training strategy at a national level, aimed at improving knowledge, skills and competences in the transition to a knowledge-based economy and society. Moreover, in agreement with the Social Parts, the Regions and the Local Boards, the Enclosure establishes the implementation of an adult education system as a means for confrontation and research. According to this, adult education activities will need to develop on the basis of an integrated approach, involving the participation of the various systems and having modularity, interdisciplinarity and flexibility as its main features for the successful development of individual training pathways. To this respect, the Enclosure envisages the possibility of introducing an integrated certification, together with the recognition of credits that can be used both in educational structures and in the working world. Such prospects, some of which very progressive and in line with the European directions, will later come to terms with the lack of provision for professional figures in the adult education field and with the scarcity of funds allocated for such activities.

On 6 February 2001, the Ministry of Education, University and Research issues Directive No. 22, highlighting how it is essential for the education system to work together with the vocational training system and with the non-formal education system in order to "follow the individual's development, thus granting lifelong learning" and access to full citizenship rights. In line with the Directive, new projects for lifelong education and training are designed and implemented, in addition to the 150 hours courses and functional literacy already in place.

Financing education and training demand through the European Social Fund

In Italy the ESF has always had - and still has - a key role in planning and managing the vocational training activities.

In particular, starting from the six-year planning period 1994-1999, the ESF has helped develop the public offer for continuing education, addressed to the unemployed but also to the employed and to those at risk of unemployment.

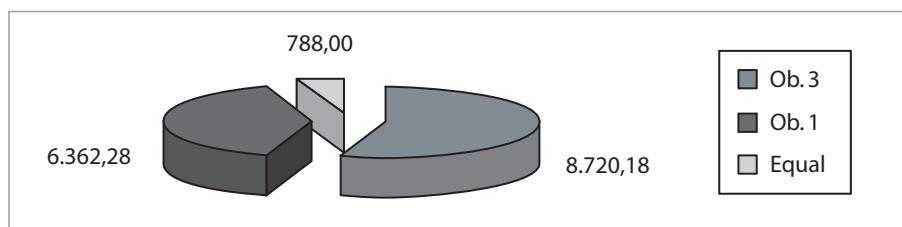
The planning period (2000-2006) has used the ESF to extend the interest field of education and training to all of the active employment policies.

In the 2000-2006 plan, the managing authorities, i.e. the institutions in charge of the design and implementation of the activities, have been identified as:

- Self-governing regions and provinces, through the production of ROP - Regional Operational Plans (*POR – Piani Operativi Regionali*) and related planning Complements;
- Ministry of Labour, in charge of a NOP - National Operational Plan (*PON – Piano Operativo Nazionale*) within the Objective 3 framework, for the implementation of system activities;
- With strict regard to the regions related to Objective 1, i.e. characterized by a slower development rate: Ministry of Education, University and Research, (*NOP: A School for growth and NOP: Scientific Research, Technological Development, Higher Education*), Ministry of internal Affairs (*NOP: Certainties for the development of Southern Italy*), Ministry of Industry (*NOP: Local Entrepreneurial Development*), Ministry of the Treasury, Budget and Business Planning (*NOP: Technical support and system activities*).

Among the projects supported by the ESF is *Equal*, a community initiative whose aim is to promote transnational cooperation in order to fight all forms of discrimination and inequalities still present in the labour market, also through the provision of vocational training activities.

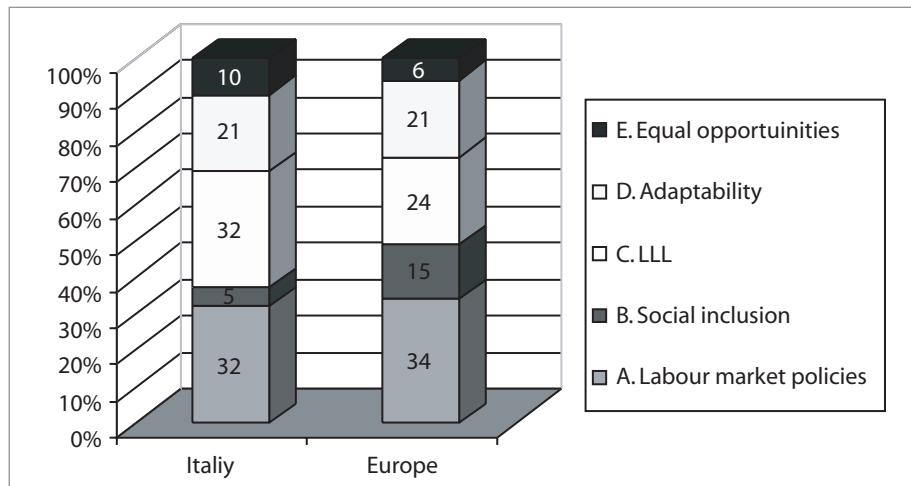
For the 2000-2006 plan, the ESF is commanding resources for a total amount of 16 billion Euros, to be allocated as follows: 6.4 billions to the regions related to Objective 1; 8.7 billions to the regions related to Objective 3 and 0.8 billions to the EU Initiative *Equal* (Chart 7.1).



Source: General Accounts Office – Igriue – monitoring data

With regard to the measures and policies supported by the ESF, 32% of the total resources allocated to the areas pertaining to Objective 1 and 3 is employed to support labour market policies (Priority A); another 32% is employed to develop the education and training offer in a lifelong learning logic (Priority C); 21% is employed to develop Continuing Education, pursuing employers and employees adaptability to economical, social and technological change (Priority D); 10% is employed to fight socio-economic discrimination against women (Priority E, equal opportunities); 5% is employed to fight socio-economic discrimination against other disadvantaged individuals (Priority B, social inclusion). (Chart 7.2). In comparison to the European average, the Italian system shows that a great deal of emphasis is placed on the policies focusing on the improvement of the training offer (in Europe the ESF impact on Priority C is 24%, in Italy is 32%) and of equal opportunities (Europe: 6%; Italy 10%). In Europe, on the other hand, the largest share of resources is allocated to Priority A: 34%.

Chart 7.2
*Policies' priorities
 – European Social Fund, objectives 1
 and 3*



Source: Ministry of Labour and Social Policies - Ucofpl

An analysis of the CSF - Community Support Framework (Qcs - *Quadro comunitario di sostegno*) Objectives 1 and 3, and of the Equal Initiative, has outlined the following annual financial distribution:

Table 7.1
*Total annual funds allocated for
 2000-2006 ESF
 planning (in millions of Euros and
 in%)*

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	Total
Obj.1 (*)	825.90	853.27	914.44	1,070.42	876.93	911.25	944.27	6,396.48
Obj.3	1,223.87	1,248.31	1,273.26	1,298.86	1,201.06	1,225.13	1,249.69	8,720.18
Equal		120.60	133.22	133.08	133.57	134.20	134.13	788.80
Total	2,049.77	2,222.18	2,320.92	2,502.35	2,211.56	2,270.59	2,328.10	15,905.47
Distr. %	12.9	14.0	14.6	15.7	13.9	14.3	14.6	100.0

(*) The total is different from chart 1 because the financial plan provided by the CSF is not final.

Source: Isfol elaborations based upon Community Support Framework data

The financial monitoring data stress a commitment of about 50% of the resources available for the whole seven years, with a total amount of about 8,000 million Euros for Objective 1 and for Objective 3.¹²²

122 Cf: *La spesa per la formazione professionale*, I libri del FSE, Isfol 2005 (*The cost of vocational education and training*, The ESF Books, Isfol 2005).

7. 2 MEASURES TO (RE) ENTER EDUCATION AND TRAINING SYSTEM

Social and working inclusion of youth people

The right-duty

During the last few years, the Italian educational system has been interested by a reform concerning youngsters between 14 (compulsory school leavers) and 18 years of age. Article 68 (Compulsory attendance of training activities) of Law 144/1999 introduces the obligation to attend training activities until 18 years of age: "With the aim of developing young people's cultural and professional growth, starting from the year 1999-2000 the obligation to attend training activities until 18 years of age is to be progressively introduced. This new provision will not affect in any ways the regulations in force concerning the accomplishment and fulfilment of educational obligations. The obligation to attend training activities may also be accomplished through pathways that combine education and training, to be carried out: a) inside the school system; b) inside vocational training structures within regional frameworks; c) through apprenticeship".

Afterwards, Law 53/2003 revoked the regulations concerning the increase of the compulsory schooling age to 15 (Law 9/99) and established that "the right to education and training must be granted to everyone for a period of at least 12 years, or until the achievement of a qualification by the 18th year of age. The implementation of such right is to be carried out within the educational, vocational and training systems, according to essential performance levels set on a national basis." Later on, the law was completed by some implementing decrees concerning the right-duty (Legislative Decree No. 76/2005), the school/training alternation (Legislative Decree No. 77/2005), and the second cycle (Legislative Decree No. 226/2005). Moreover, as an experiment, in 2003 were introduced three-year education and training pathways, and minimum standard requirements for these pathways were also set (Agreement in State and Regions Conference of 15 January 2004).

From a more general point of view, it is important to mention the changes introduced in order to assign tasks and competences to the regions, starting from Constitutional Law 3/01, that assigns the definition of the minimum performance levels to the central decision-making bodies, and specific competences to the regions, with regard to planning and implementation of a training offer consistent with the specific features of the territory.

Article 68 of the mentioned Law 144 of 1999 establishes that: "The obligation described in paragraph 1 is to be considered as discharged with the attainment of a secondary school diploma or a vocational qualification. The skills recognised in any segments of the educational, vocational and apprenticeship system are to be considered as credits to be used for a potential transfer from one system to the other."

Isfol regular monitoring of education and training obligations with regard to the individuals interested by the right-duty, has outlined the following picture: school and training year 2003-2004 involved 2,253,882 youngsters: 92% attending

school, 3,3% participating to vocational training programmes and 1,5% working as apprentices. As far as apprenticeship is concerned, it is important to point out that such type of employment is allowed in Italy only after the 15th year of age, and that only a small number of apprentices was allowed to attend the off-the-job training hours. Apprentices training is actually carried out in 22% of the cases in the North, 13% in the Centre and is almost nonexistent in the South.

Some scenario data provide information on the system evolution: in school and training year 2001-2002, 175,000 youngsters were considered astray; in school and training year 2003-2004 the number of people not attending school, vocational training or apprenticeship programmes had gone down to 100,000 (including the apprentices not receiving off-the-job training). These figures could be interpreted with optimism, if it weren't for the fact that the main part of this 4.4% wastage rate is concentrated in the Mezzogiorno (south of Italy) regions.

With regard to youngsters access to other forms of continuing education and training, the data gathered by *Isfol* in 2002¹²³, concerning people aged 16 to 25, highlight the following: a higher attendance of formal education and training activities (27.1% - especially students attending schools), followed by the participation of youngsters aged 16 to 25 to training activities in the informal education sector (24.4%) and by the involvement in the non-formal sector, also indicated as Third sector (12.5%).

Social and working inclusion of young adults aged 19 to 25

The new apprenticeship

The new apprenticeship profile outlined by Law 196/97 has been subsequently amended by Law 53/2003 (Delegation to the Government for the definition of general rules on education and of the essential performance and service standards with regard to education and vocational training) and by Law 30/2003 (Delegation to the Government on the subject of employment and labour market). In detail, Article 2 of Law 53/2003 envisages that, starting from the 15th year of age, certificates and professional qualifications can be obtained alternating school and work, or through the apprenticeship. Article 2 of Law 30/2003 envisages apprenticeship as an educational and training tool that can also exploit the higher education combined system of school and work. The importance of on-the-job training is also highlighted in the same article. Yet, regulations and experiments related to the implementation of a system that sets skills and certification standards are lacking, thus making it impossible to certify the training.

Nevertheless, the apprenticeship system offers consistent tax benefits to the companies employing 15 to 29 year olds.

The Italian regulations (amended by Law 30/2003, the so-called *Legge Biagi*) en-

123 *L'offerta di formazione permanente in Italia. Primo Rapporto Nazionale*, Isfol, I libri del FSE, 2003 (*The offer for Continuing education in Italy: First National Report*, The ESF Books, Isfol 2003).

visage three apprenticeship types: right-duty apprenticeship, professional apprenticeship and higher apprenticeship, leading to the attainment of a school certificate or higher qualification.

The evolution of the right-duty apprenticeship and of the higher apprenticeship is strictly linked to the development of the school system reform, envisaged by Law 53/2003. The decree related to those apprenticeship types has not yet been issued. In the meantime, experiments are being carried out with regard to the so-called higher apprenticeship, through the stipulation of Agreement Protocols between the Regions of the Centre-North¹²⁴ and the Ministry. In those regions, the test involves 1,000 young people who have the opportunity to participate to education and training activities both inside education structures and inside the companies. Many regions are oriented toward the apprentices achievement of I and II level Masters, while other regions address the young apprentices to university pathways. The figures shown in the Table below represent the clients for school and training year 2003-2004:

	Number	Percentage
Youngsters attending school	2,068.756	91.8
Youngsters participating to vocational training courses	75,282	3.3
Young apprentices	44,051	2.0
Youngsters not participating to education or training	65,793	2.9
Total number of 14-17 year olds on 1st January 2004	2,253,882	100

Table 7. 2
14-17 year olds
education and
training status
(school and train-
ing year 2003-
2004)

Source: Isfol elaboration based upon Istat and Miur data, 2005.

Professionalising apprenticeship falls under the competence of both State and Regions. Since 2005 the regions have been doing deals with the social parts, with the aim of setting common indicators for the definition of experimental projects and for regional regulation. Afterwards, numerous regions appointed the social parts as the actors in charge of regulating the apprenticeship matter, based upon the subsidiary principle stated in Law 80/2005. To outline a picture of professionalising apprenticeship it is therefore essential to analyse the activities carried out by the regions and by the social parts, still in full evolution.

Higher education and vocational training system

Article 69 (Higher education and vocational training) of Law 144/1999 envisages the creation of a new channel: "in order to upgrade and extend the education and training offer for youngsters and adults, employed or unemployed, the higher education and vocational training system (*IITS – sistema della Istruzione e Formazione Tecnica Superiore*) is to be instituted within the Higher integrated educa-

¹²⁴ In November 2005 these regions were: Abruzzo, Bolzano Province, Emilia-Romagna, Friuli Venezia Giulia, Liguria, Lombardy, Piedmont, Tuscany, Umbria, Veneto.

tion and training system (*FIS – sistema di Formazione Integrata Superiore*). The new channel is normally accessible to people holding a secondary school diploma.” In great evidence the role of the Regions, whose tasks are to “plan the implementation of *IFTS* courses, carried out using a methodology that grants integration among the various education and training systems, based upon the guidelines agreed by the Minister of Education, the Minister of Labour and Social Policies, the Minister of University and Research, the Unified Conference and the social parts through the institution of a specific national board.”

IFTS courses are therefore organised by several systems: Universities, Secondary Schools, Research Public Bodies, education and vocational training agencies and centres.

IFTS pathways peculiarity is the integration between a global and a local dimension, by means of a tight connection between the regional planning dimension of the education and training offer and the competences demand on a local level.

Such integration is achieved through the direct involvement of 4 systems that participate to the design and implementation of education and training events: Universities, Secondary Schools, Vocational training centres and the working world.

Table 7.3
*Main features of
IFTS courses*

Length: 2 to 4 semesters (1,200 to 2,400 hours).

IFTS courses have a minimum duration of 2 semesters, in order to grant access to EU International recognition, according to Directive 92/51/CEE, and a maximum duration of 4 semesters in order to facilitate the potential transition of the participants to university courses.

Promoting bodies and providers: projects are drawn up and carried out by Universities, Secondary Schools, Vocational training centres and the working world. These four different bodies must join forces and form ATI or ATS partnerships in accordance with the law.

Stage: the stage is mandatory and its duration must correspond to at least 30% of the total course hours.

Staff: At least 50% of the staff must be recruited from the production and working world and among professionals, while the remaining 50% can be covered by university and school teachers and by vocational training practitioners.

Final certification: At the end of the courses the attendees receive a certificate indicating the vocational credits acquired, valid on the entire national territory. The final certificates should clearly state the skills and knowledge actually developed by the end of the courses.

With regard to the courses implemented between 2003 and 2005, the picture emerging from *Isfol* monitoring data, updated in November 2005, is that of a steadily increasing but fairly low number of courses effectively scheduled and carried out. During the school and training year 2002-2003 the scheduled courses were 613, with less than 10,000 people enrolled and a drop-out rate of about 28%. Nevertheless, figures concerning the employment rate, set at 58.6%, are encouraging, even though 14.4% of the attendees was already employed at the time of enrolment in the *IFTS* courses, fixing the extra-employment rate to 44.2%.¹²⁵

125 These figures emerged from an *Isfol* survey carried out using the CATI methodology and based upon a representative sample of the courses delivered, distributed by geographical area and by participants gender.

The guidelines for the next three years envisage a three-year planning period, and not annual ones, as it used to be. The regions will therefore identify the educational institution or training providers that will implement courses on a three-year basis. On the documents enclosed to the Agreement ratified by the Unified Conference on 25 November 2004 such institutions are described as "Education and Training Centres for Higher Education and Vocational Training."

Education and training to support unemployed adults

The institution of the so-called mixed contracts (a combination of work and off-the-job education and training) has been deeply amended by Legislative Decree No. 276 of 10 September 2003 ("Implementation of the employment and labour market devolution, as indicated in Law No. 30 of 14 February 2003"). The Pact for Italy, stipulated by the Government, the Employers associations and the major Italian Trade Unions, as early as 2002 stated that "the redistribution of the resources will be mainly oriented towards: the support of mixed contracts, with a certification of the education and training activity issued by the bilateral parties; the reintegration of the long-term unemployed; the advertising of tools that can facilitate employees mobility, also with the aim of accompanying the localization of production processes; women inclusion into the labour market and, more generally, employment increase in the Mezzogiorno, also through entrepreneurship and self-employment."

Decree 276/2003 indicates apprenticeship as the main tool for youngsters education and training and gradually cancels the on-the-job training contract (*cfl – contratto formazione lavoro*), keeping it effective in public employment only, where, in any case, it is applied very seldom. Placement contracts therefore replace *cfl* contracts, even if in a transition regime.

One thing that must be pointed out is the questionable legal nature of this measure, i.e. the placement contract presents legal aspects and assumptions that make its inclusion within the mixed contracts quite difficult. To this respect, the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies, in Memo No. 3 of July 2004 clarifies that: "the education and training function loses its typical nature in order to grant placement or replacement into the labour market to disadvantaged individuals peremptorily identified by the Lawmaker." Hence, the main feature of this new contract type seems to be its tendency to help disadvantaged categories access the labour market. Yet, because of the reference to the individual's placement in the company, based upon an agreed project representing the contract grounds, part of the jurists and law researchers are willing to compare these new institution to the mixed contracts.

The placement contract application framework is described in Decree No. 276/2003, Article 54, as: "a contract of employment aimed at achieving, through an individual project involving the adjustment of the employee's vocational competences to the specific working environment, placement or replacement into the labour market of the following categories:

a) young people aged 18 to 29; b) long-term unemployed aged 29 to 32; c) currently unemployed workers aged 50+; d) workers that have been unemployed for the past two years and wish to re-enter the labour market; e) women of any age residing in areas where the female employment rate – indicated via specific Decree by the Minister of Labour and Social Policies in concert with the Minister of Economy and Finance within 60 days from the enforcement of this decree - is at least 20% lower than the male employment rate or the female unemployment rate is at least 10% higher than the male unemployment rate; f) individuals affected by a serious and classifiable – according to the current regulations - physical or mental disability". The placement contract sphere of application is much wider than the CfI's, that was normally used to employ individuals aged 16 to 32.

The employers entitled to make use of placement contracts are indicated in Article 54 and identified as:

"a) economic public bodies, enterprises and their subsidiaries; b) groups of companies; c) professional, socio-cultural and sports associations; d) foundations; e) public and private research bodies; f) trade associations."

It can be noticed that public employment – where the CfI regulation is still in force - is not included. Nevertheless, the range of employers potentially affected by this Article is really wide.

The main feature of this new institution is the Personal Placement Project, considered as the key legal requirement leading to the possible full employment of the individual. To stress its importance the law establishes that the employer could be liable to sanctions should the Personal Placement Project be missing. The Government has assigned the Personal Placement Project definition to the collective, national and territorial bargaining (Article 55, Paragraph 2). Moreover, the collective bargaining is entitled to specify the design methodology for the Personal Placement Projects and, if needed, to "resort to the Multi-sectoral funds available for continuing education and training."

An analysis of ISTAT estimates shows that placement contract potential field of application involves 1,503,000 people: 919,000 represents the young unemployed; 431,000 represents the workers who have been unemployed for the past 2 years and wish to re-enter the labour market; 178,000 represents the currently unemployed workers aged 50+; 171,000 represents the long-term unemployed aged 29 to 32. If we add the women indicated in Article 54, point e), the total number would rise to 1,832,000 people, most of whom (1,100,000) are women. (Table 4). If we consider that the total number of unemployed people in 2003 was slightly higher than 2,000,000, it is quite clear that the potential field of application of such contracts is huge.¹²⁶

126 Cf: Isfol, *Il contratto di inserimento una nuova opportunità per l'ingresso nel mercato del lavoro*, Monografie sul Mercato del lavoro e le politiche per l'impiego, n. 8/2005 (Isfol, *Placement contract: a new opportunity to enter the labour market*, Monographs on Labour Market and Employment Policies, No. 8/2005)

Table 7.4
Assessment of the placement contract field of application, based upon 2003 data (excluding disabled; figures are indicated in thousands)

Category	Residence Area					Total
	North-West	North-East	Centre	South	Islands	
Youngsters aged 18-29	118	60	136	405	200	919
Long term unemployed aged 29-32	14	5	29	80	43	171
Over 50	30	18	26	61	44	178
Expelled	78	35	79	142	97	431
Total*	205	104	234	624	337	1503
Women	170	98	183	425	224	1.100
Total**	253	139	285	754	402	1.832

** Only people searching for a job have been taken in consideration.

** Total does not correspond to the sum due to groups' overlapping.

Source: Isfol elaboration of Istat-RTFL data, 2005.

Employees' education and training

In Italy, continuing education is a topic for negotiations on a national, professional and decentralised level. Therefore, employees' education and training is included in the policies for continuing education. One thing that must be pointed out is that this sort of public policies are also addressed to those individuals who have lost their job just before entering education and training (measures on employability, as envisaged by Law 236/93), or to those individuals who have not completed compulsory education.

In short, these measures are addressed to all individuals belonging to the labour force (both employed or unemployed) so that they can acquire knowledge and skills directly exploitable in the labour market and/or in the company they currently work for.¹²⁷

Employees' education and training policies are financed as follows:

- ESF through D.1 and D.2 measures;
- National regulations for continuing education (236/93 and 53/2000);
- Multi-Sectoral Funds instituted by the social parts in order to manage the companies compulsory contribution of 0.30%.

¹²⁷ Cf: MLPS, *Rapporto 2005 sulla formazione continua*, febbraio 2006 (MLSP, Report 2005 on continuing education, February 2006).

Going into more details, the legislative evolution with regard to continuing education unwinds through the following steps: in 1996, with the allocation of resources, Law 236/93 "Urgent measures in favour of employment" becomes operative. Article 9, paragraphs 3 and 3 b of the above-mentioned Law, state that Regions and Provinces can finance education and training measures in favour of workers employed in the private sector or belonging to specific professional categories.

Moreover, Law 196/97 envisages for the first time the institution of Joint Professional Funds.

In 1999, Law 144 allocated specific resources for continuing education, envisaging, in Article 66, an extra 103 million Euros in addition to the money coming from 0.3% of the workers' salaries.

Law 53/2000 regulated the education and training leave, envisaging in Article 6 the right for "the workers, employed or unemployed, to continue with their lifelong learning pathway, in order to develop and increase professional knowledge and competences". Furthermore, the 2001 Financial Act instituted the Joint Multi-Sectoral Funds for continuing education, that became operative in the second half of 2004. As far as the institutional competences are concerned, Legislative Decree No. 112 of 31 March 1998 established that the competences regarding continuing education are in charge of the central State, that, in any case, has delegated the management of a relevant amount of joint Funds to the social parts, considering their better view and understanding of local labour markets needs.

The total cost for continuing education, financed through Multi-Sectoral Funds, public financing laws for education and training (Law 236/93 and Law 53/00), and the European Social Fund, amounts to 2.2 billion Euros, i.e. 19% of the resources allocated for education and training, that, in the 2000-2004 timeframe, amounted to 450 million Euros per year.

With regard to the 0.3% salary withholding to support education and training, new regulations introduced with the 2005 Financial Act establish that the National Institute of Social Insurance (*INPS – Istituto Nazionale di Previdenza Sociale*) must transfer the entire amount of the extra contribution paid up by the employers into the chosen Funds, while the money coming from the regular contributions paid up to *INPS* and not allocated to any specific Multi-Sectoral Fund is to be shared as follows: 1/3 to the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies and 2/3 to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and to the Ministry of Finance. Speaking in economic terms, the resources deriving from the 0.3% withholding have steadily increased year after year, growing from 330 million Euros in 1990 to 600 million Euros in 2006. This trend is the result of real and nominal pay rises and of the increase in subordinate employment. To November 2006 calls for tender had been published 35 to invite enterprises to present training proposal, for a total budget of 250 million euros.

Multi-Sectoral Funds for continuing education instituted with the 2001 Financial Act (Law No 383) start to become operative in 2004. The current regulations establish that the main national unions representing employees and employers can set up specific bodies aimed at promoting, supporting and financing the agreed education and training plans for workers. The Ministry of Labour approves the Funds after having checked the

bodies instituted by the inter-union agreement meet specific requirements, in particular a strong representativeness on a national level. So far, the Funds approved are 12. Each company can join only one Fund for the workers and one for the management, and finances such funds through the 0.3% withholding on the gross salary.

At November 2006 about 400.000 companies use the Founds; these companies employ 5 million of workers and this data represent the half of the total amount of employers in Italian private enterprises.

These companies employ an average of 14 people, but the participation to the funds is quite uneven; *Fondimpresa* can count on 56 workers vs. 4 of *Fondoprofessioni* and *Fondo Artigianato*. The picture emerging from these figures shows that the Funds are popular in medium and big companies, considering that the average number of employees in the Italian enterprises is 7. The companies located in the Centre-North are over-represented: 50% of the companies that have joined the funds are located in the Lombardy, Veneto and Emilia-Romagna regions. In June 2006 the education and training plans should involve about 240,000 employees for a total of 19.891 companies with an average of 18 employees for company.

Education and training in temporary employment

Legislative Decree No. 176/03 establishes that the Employment Agencies must allocate 4% of the wages paid up to workers employed on a temporary basis to finance education and training measures in favour of the very same workers. The Fund for temporary workers education and training - *Forma. Temp* - was instituted in 2000.

The education and training measures cover four areas of intervention:

- basic education and training;
- vocational training, aimed at providing the employees with key tools needed to perform their job;
- on-the-job training;
- continuing education, aimed at granting vocational updating or redeployment of employed.

The education and training courses promoted so far by the Employment Agencies are 106,511 and have involved about 600,000 people (both workers and individuals in search of employment). Since 2000 the Agencies have invested about 290.5 million Euros.

Education and training vouchers

Free choice in-company training vouchers are economic benefits provided to individuals who may request them. The vouchers represent a contribution to the expenses the workers sustain when they participate to education and training courses with the aim to attain a qualification or a vocational update and, ultimately, to retain their jobs or have better career prospects. In this case, the training offer is organised by accredited education and training bodies that provide a wide range of courses. The vouchers normally cover part of the courses cost while the rest is covered by the worker.

Vouchers are also provided to private individuals wishing to improve their competencies and employability and acting outside of their company's education and training policies. As a matter of fact, some regions have extended the free choice training experience built up in the framework of Law 236/93 and of Multi-Sectoral Funds to other schemes, financed by the ESF through D1 and D2 measures, or, in some cases, through E1 measure, whose focus is on equal opportunities.

The main target for free choice training are the unemployed or those into non-conventional employment, generally the most disadvantaged classes of the labour market. Nevertheless, the common thought is that there is a huge target base that has yet come to the surface. Hence the necessity to apply some changes to the vouchers measure in the areas where it is in use, in order to:

- implement accompanying measures (such as information and guidance);
- develop an offer tailored on the specific professional requirements of the reference area, and characterised by a certain flexibility, in order to meet customers needs. This means that the education and training offer shouldn't conform to companies requirements but stick to the training demand of the individuals.

Nevertheless, the majority of people who have used the vouchers belong to what can be described as the 'strongest employees' category', i.e. young people with a higher education, employed in medium and big size companies performing intellectual and managerial roles.

The reference catalogues concerning free choice training can be divided into three categories:

- "general" catalogues: the most traditional and common category; the first one to be developed according to the ex 236/93. This category offers a wide range of contents and is well spread and used in all regions and provinces;
- target catalogues: the training offer is focused on limited contents areas, with a strong preference toward education and training specialisations;
- integrated catalogues: the integration refers to the offer of activities aimed at covering the whole range of measures applied in lifelong learning and continuing education.

Finally, in 2004, three Italian Regions (Tuscany, Piedmont and Umbria), backed by the Ministry of Labour, started an experiment on the Individual Learning Account (ILA), following the testing already in place in Great Britain, The Netherlands, Sweden and the Basque Region.

The distinctive features of the Italian experimentation are the following:

- the clients do not have to co-finance the ILA services (unlike other European realities);
- the opening of a bank account with the issuance of a prepaid credit card. The money on the card is to be used to pay for the courses fees and cannot ex-

ceed the amount of 2,500 Euros for a period of two year;

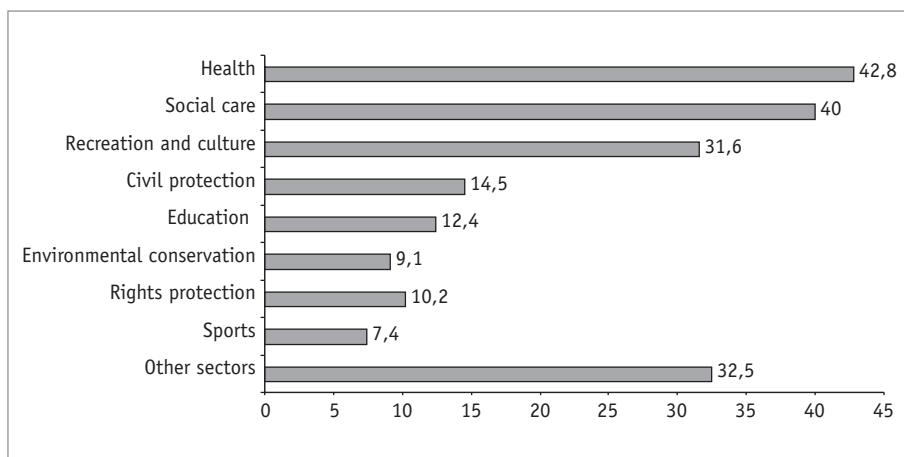
- key involvement of the Employment Centres in selection and guidance activities.

Measures in support of the whole population

Third sector¹²⁸

The third sector field, highly developed in Italy, focuses on many different objectives. Some of the organisations belonging to this sector carry out education and training activities in various areas: "from health care and social work services to recovery and exploitation of architectural and environmental assets; from tourism and leisure activities promotion to the organisation of education, training and cultural activities, without forgetting sport practice, consumers' rights protection, sponsorship of the Arts, fair trade, ethical finance, international cooperation, scientific research and many others¹²⁹."

Figure 7.3
Voluntary Organisations divided by area of activity – Year 2001



Source: Istat, 2005

An analysis of third sector activities displayed in chart 7.3 highlights that 12.4% of the whole voluntary actions focuses on Education. The categories used are the same indicated by the ICNPO (International Classification of Nonprofit Organisations), exclusively dedicated to non-profit organisations¹³⁰, whose number, between 1995 and 2001, has grown from 2.8% to 3.3%.

Figures about the registration of voluntary associations on regional and provincial registers, gathered by the Italian Institute of Statistics (*ISTAT – Istituto Nazionale di*

¹²⁸ In order to have a complete picture of the continuing education non-formal offer and a thorough analysis of the offer provided by Social Voluntary Work Associations, Popular and Third Age Universities and Council Libraries, you can refer to the following documentation, produced by Isfol: *L'offerta di formazione permanente in Italia. Primo Rapporto Nazionale, I libri del FSE, 2003 (The offer for Continuing Education in Italy. First National Report, The ESF Books, 2003)*.

¹²⁹ *Rapporto 2005, forum Terzo settore (Report 2005, Third Sector Forum)*.

¹³⁰ ICNPO Classification – Classification of the activities carried out by non-profit organisations, produced by the Johns Hopkins University.

Statistica) in 2004 and 2005 and referring to 2003 show a positive trend, with an increase of 14.9% on the previous two-year period. But the main features of voluntary organisations remain unchanged: most of them are rooted in the North of Italy, even if in the past few years there's been a significant increase in southern organisations; the preference is on the small size, both from a company and a financial point of view. The total number of voluntary associations in Italy is 21,021¹³¹. A permanent Third Sector Forum was established in 1997 as the sector representative body. An analysis of the monitoring data about Regional and Provincial Forums gathered by the Third Sector Forum and published in November 2004, shows that only 38% of the organisations have carried out internal training activities, 50% of which was financed by public funding, 33% by the National Forum and 17% by Local Boards.

With regard to training activities for the whole population, the two organisations to have operated more intensely in this field are the trade unions and the training structure of the Italian Workers Christian Associations (*ACLI - Associazioni Cristiane Lavoratori Italiani*).

Local Boards Public Libraries represent another way to access non-formal offer. The Libraries are cultural centres that provide a wide range of services like:

- Information and general documentation on any subject, often backing IT literacy;
- Circulation of books and reading; promotion of culture and knowledge;
- Promotion of self-education and training and support to continuing education activities, often in cooperation with the school system;
- Enhancement of a democratic culture, adopting equal opportunities access to knowledge, ideas and opinions;
- Strengthening of the local community identity, in its plural, dynamic and multicultural dimension;
- Social inclusion, through the use of information and communication tools in a common and sociable environment;
- Integration of disadvantaged categories, by removing the barriers that prevent their access to various services;
- Preservation and promotion of local and national books and paper heritage as well as oral storytelling tradition”¹³².

Permanent Territorial Centres

The Permanent Territorial Centres (*CTP – Centri Territoriali Permanenti*) were established in 1997 with Ministerial Ordinance No. 455 issued by the Ministry of Education, and represent the formal education ad training segment for Adult Educa-

131 Cf: Istat, *Le organizzazioni di volontariato in Italia*, 2001 (*Voluntary Organisations in Italy*, Istat, 2001).

132 From website: <http://www2.comune.roma.it/cultura/biblioteche/.htm>

tion. Evening courses to be delivered in second grade schools have been introduced with regard to formal adult education, but the teaching and organisational procedures are still too similar to the ones applied during the normal day classes attended by ordinary students.

Monitoring data gathered by the Ministry of Education for School Year 2003-2004 outline a slight decrease in the number of Permanent Territorial Centres in comparison to the previous year (546 to 540) while for School Year 2003-2004 the number of courses implemented is 19,500 with about 470,000 adults enrolled. In general, about 78% of the adults attending the courses are women aged 40+ enrolled into short-term modular courses dedicated to functional literacy. For the first time, the data taken into account by the monitoring included High Schools evening classes, whose main priority is the achievement of a High School diploma or qualification. In School Year 2003-2004 the High Schools offering such opportunity were 675.

The Permanent Territorial Centres are well spread on the Italian territory, with a higher density in Lombardy, Campania and Sicily. Permanent Territorial Centres offices are normally located in First Grade Schools, even though some Centres prefer to set their offices in other structures, thanks to special agreements signed with private boards, local bodies and other associations.

Moreover, a lot of the courses leading to the achievement of a primary or secondary school certificate is held in prison. The total number of such courses actually delivered is 537.

The courses offered by the Permanent Territorial Centres can be divided into:

- Courses leading to the achievement of a certificate/diploma/qualification;
- Short-term and modular courses;
- Courses focusing on the social and linguistic integration of foreigners.

Short-term and modular courses represent 68% of the total. The number of courses actually carried out in 2003-2004 was 19,531: 2,996 led to the achievement of a qualification; 3,169 had as a main objective the integration of foreigners and 13,371 were short-term or modular courses, most of them concentrated on IT (37% of the courses) and language studies (38% of the courses). Within the short-term courses, guidance activities related to the labour market and to the introduction to education and training are also gaining ground. Such activities are mainly addressed to the young unemployed or looking for first employment.

468,285 adults enrolled in School Year 2003-2004, mainly attending short-term and modular courses about functional literacy (273,151 of them). 67,744 attended courses leading to the achievement of a qualification (primary and secondary school certificate) while 63,868 attended courses for the social integration of foreigners.

With regard to the working status, what must be pointed out is that in the North of Italy the majority of people attending short-term and modular courses and courses for foreigners are employed, while in the Centre and in the South most of the people attending such courses are unemployed.

The individuals enrolled in evening classes were 127,044: 54,871 attended courses leading to the achievement of a school certificate; 8,651 attended courses leading to the achievement of a qualification and 63,522 attended courses leading to the achievement of a secondary school diploma and/or qualification.

Study Circles

Tuscany has been the first Italian Region to adopt a new education and training tool: the Study Circles. The main aim of such tool is to encourage self-learning within an informal education system. The tool is addressed to all adult people. In 2005 677 Circles have been born, for a total number of 4,900 participants¹³³.

In Italy, the Study Circles represent an innovative approach to education and training, characterised by:

- Participants' identification of *their own* training needs;
- Participants' acknowledgement of *their own* competences;
- Negotiation aimed at building the Study Circle Project;
- Common learning within the group.

The offer has therefore been created following the citizens' demand, and supported by accompanying services with proven expertise both in adult education and in the reference subjects. These services have provided guidance to help citizens better identify their needs and technical support for Circles set-up.

The data available show that the people participating to Study Circles in Tuscany have a higher education level than the average Tuscan population: 41% in fact hold a secondary school diploma (vs. 28% of the average population) and 20% hold an university degree (vs. only 8% of the average population). It is clear that also in this case the offer fails to capture the weaker part of the demand and meets the requirements of a range of population that could easily access other types of formal and non-formal education too.

¹³³ Data gathered from a survey carried out in 2005 by Tuscany Region, the Regional Institute for the Economic Planning of Tuscany (*IRPET - Istituto Regionale per la Programmazione Economica della Toscana*), Irre Toscana and EdaForum.

7. 3 MEASURES TO STRENGTHEN SUPPORT AND ACCOMPANYING SERVICES

Motivation, information and guidance

Despite the spirit of growth and innovation present in the guidance sector, intended as the system taking care of the objectives, strategies and measures and managing linked associations and operators, in Italy this sector does not yet constitute a structured system. An *Isfol* survey carried out in 2004 on a sample of about 2,000 organisations has brought to light some features that help draw a profile of the guidance world. Guidance structures are evenly spread on the Italian territory, with only a slight drop in the Centre: 28.7% are located in the North-West; 23.3% in the North-East; 17.2% in the Centre and 30.8% in the South (including Sicily and Sardinia). The total number of people working in this area is 6,700; 5,545 in Public Bodies and 1,151 in Private Structures. Guidance operators can be divided into the following categories: information providers, counsellors, tutors, multitasking workers and structures managers.

In 2004 over 1,400,000 people enjoyed guidance services, with an average of 2,500 clients per structure; about 30% aged 18 to 22; 26% aged 23 to 31, 17% aged 32 to 41 and just a very small number of people aged 42+. Most of the clients are represented by secondary school leavers (22.6%), by the long-term unemployed (14.8%) and by people looking for first employment (11.4%)¹³⁴.

Employment Services

The Italian Employment Services are bodies of public right that perform welcome, guidance and information functions for all citizens of working age and for those falling into the right-duty age range (15-18).

During the past 10 years the Employment Services have experienced a renovation phase, partly due to the fall of the public monopoly of the placement sector (and the consequent public services specialisation in first and second level guidance functions), partly due to the decentralisation of the labour policies (from Central State to Regions and Provinces)¹³⁵.

The *Isfol* Monitoring data presented in 2003 show that, all over the Italian territory, the customers applying to the services provided by the Employment Centres (hereinafter EC) are mainly women (61%). The customers distribution by age indicate the same, (except for the 50+ age range), in particular in the central age ranges (see Table 7.5).

134 Isfol, *Isfol Report 2005*, 2005

135 Law No. 59/97 (the so-called *Legge Bassanini*) recognised the possibility to delegate administrative functions related to work placement and introduction to the working world to the Regions. Taking advantage of this law, in December 1997 the Government issued Legislative Decree No. 469, in order to entrust "the Regions and the Local Boards with functions and activities related to the labour market". The Decree envisages four basic steps: administrative functions transfer and distribution between State and Regions; setting of the criteria that must be followed by the Regions while exercising their authority on this matter; liberalisation of the bodies acting as intermediaries between job supply and demand; implementation of the Employment Information System (*SIL - Sistema Informativo Lavoro*).

Table 7.5
Employment center's demand distribution by age, gender and geographical area – in%

	North			Centre		
	Men	Women	Men Women	Men	Women	Men Women
<i>Age range</i>						
15 to 19 years	17,4	9,6	12,7	23,3	13,7	18,0
20 to 29 years	31,2	35,4	33,7	32,2	35,4	33,9
30 to 49 years	40,0	46,7	44,0	36,1	45,1	41,1
50 years and over	11,4	8,2	9,5	8,4	5,7	6,9
Total	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0
South and Islands				Total as to Italy		
<i>Age range</i>						
15 to 19 years	13,4	11,1	12,3	17,9	11,5	14,4
20 to 29 years	39,3	42,1	40,7	34,6	37,5	36,2
30 to 49 years	41,7	43,2	42,5	39,3	45,1	42,5
50 years and over	5,5	3,5	4,5	8,2	5,9	6,9
Total	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0

Source: Isfol, Demand survey - 2003

With regard to education, the survey highlights that more than 46% of the clients holds a mere first grade certificate and only 34% has achieved a secondary school diploma. A relevant 12% of people holding a secondary school diploma and 7% of graduates make use of Employment Services.

In detail, a higher percentage of people holding a secondary school diploma or a degree is to be found in the Mezzogiorno area (see Table 7.6).

Table 7.6
Educational qualifications by gender and geographical area – in%

	North			Centre		
	Men	Women	Men Women	Men	Women	Men Women
<i>Qualification</i>						
Primary school certificate or secondary school diploma	50,9	42,4	45,8	54,9	39,1	46,2
Vocational qualification	14,8	15,9	15,5	10,1	13,2	11,8
Upper secondary school diploma	27,9	34,6	31,9	28,7	38,5	34,1
University degree and post-degree	6,5	7,1	6,8	6,3	9,2	7,9
Total	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0
South and Islands				Total as to Italy		
<i>Primary school certificate or secondary school diploma</i>						
Vocational qualification	10,5	8,7	9,6	11,5	12,7	12,2
Upper secondary school diploma	34,1	46,6	40,4	30,5	39,7	35,6
University degree and post-degree	8,1	9,3	8,7	7,0	8,5	7,8
Total	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0

Source: Isfol, Demand survey - 2003

EC clients can access a wide range of services. In general, when people walk into the centres for the first time, they do not quite know what to expect and for this reason they are normally received by the welcome staff, who address them to the specific services, such as guidance, information and job matching (see Chart 7.4).

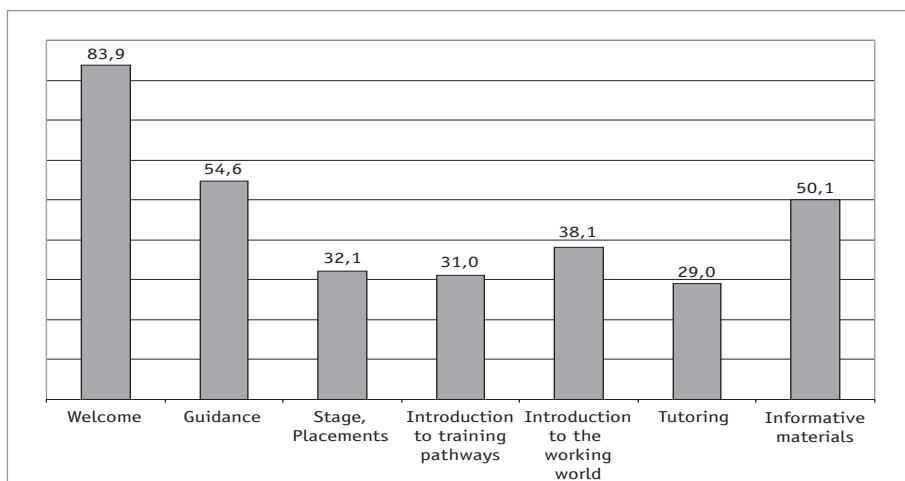


Figure 7.4
Services used – multiple answers – in%

Source: Isfol, Demand survey - 2003

*7. 3 Measures
to access
support and
accompanying
services*

People wishing to participate to in-company stage programmes, to training courses or to training pathways leading to placement normally take advantage of the guidance services. The percentage of people referring to the Centres to find a permanent or temporary job position is smaller. Another feature of the Employment Services is their function as a meeting place for job supply and demand and the implementation of services to meet this objective, as 38,1% of the clients go to the centres for this reason.¹³⁶ 4,3% of the clients accessing the Employment Services are non-EU citizens, mainly concentrated in the North of Italy (8,6%). For this reason most of the northern Regions are increasing the number of Employment Centres focusing on immigrants, through the recruitment of cultural intermediaries and the implementation of specific counters providing information and help on resident permits related matters (see Table 7.7).

Table 7.7
*Clients
distribution by
nationality – in %*

Nationality	North	Centre	South	Total as to Italy
Italian	91,4	94,7	97,1	94,5
Foreign	8,6	5,3	2,9	5,5
Total	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0

Source: Isfol, Demand survey - 2003

Employment Services also implement guidance services in the compulsory training framework, addressed to the youngsters belonging to the right-duty age range (15-18). Following the enforcement of Article 68 of Law 144/1999, welcome, guidance, information and pathways monitoring have become important activities within the Employment Services work, especially for compulsory training tutors' profiles and competences.

In 2003, 83% of the Employment Centres had implemented compulsory training related services; 3,2% of such services were activated in external bodies (Guidance Centres, Joborienta, Youth Information Offices, etc.) (See Table 7.8).

Table 7.8
*Employment
Centres that have
activated compul-
sory training
related services
distributed by
geographical
area - in %*

Territorial distribution	Not activated	Activated	Externally activated	Total
North West	10,8	84,7	4,5	100,0
North East	7,8	84,3	7,8	100,0
Centre	6,9	92,0	1,1	100,0
South	21,2	77,9	0,9	100,0
Total	13,8	83,0	3,2	100,0

Source: Isfol, Employment Services monitoring - 2003

136 Cf.: Isfol, *Gli utenti e i Centri per l'impiego*, Monografie Mercato del Lavoro, 2003 (Isfol, *Employment Centres and their Clients*, Monographs on the Labour Market, 2003).

The following *Isfol* monitoring, carried out in 2004, highlighted how the guidance services offered in most centres were welcome and first approach to guidance. About 50% to 70% of the structures offered vocational guidance and counselling, and 30% of the centres in contact with young clients¹³⁷ offered counselling and skills assessment services.

New technologies for e-learning

On national programmatic papers e-learning is described as the organisational, technological and methodological system aimed at providing education and training activities via web.

In particular, Objective 3 of the CSF describes e-learning as an educational tool:

- dedicated to specific contents, such as foreign languages, science and new technologies;
- dedicated to a specific target, such as adults, disadvantaged individuals, women, vocational counsellors and trainers;
- for the implementation and support of companies, council or clients' networks.

One of the activities in the context of C1 Measure, “System actions to support vocational education and training reform”, is about practitioners’ training, through:

- production and distribution of e-learning (*FaDol – Formazione a Distanza on-line*) tools and methodology;
- analysis of technologies impacts on systems, integration and professionalism;
- implementation of an informative system aimed at disseminating methodologies, tools and products.

In short, a tool addressed both to the disadvantage and to education, through clients and operators vocational training provision.

On the national policies planning paper (*PAN – Piano di attuazione nazionale*) of 2003, e-learning is described as one of the main tools for the accomplishment of the Objective “Employability and Social inclusion”, (Pillar 1) with particular reference to e-learning activities within vocational training, Public Administration and Education. As far as Education is concerned, PAN 2003 envisages the implementation of internet activities aimed at the acquisition of e-learning practices and staff training. It is not yet feasible to assess the impact of the new technologies on lifelong education because Italy still lacks an e-learning and an open learning culture, especially in terms of assessing their impacts. Another reason is that the resort to new technologies in the training field is not methodical.

137 Cf.: *Interventi orientativi realizzati nell’ambito dell’obbligo formativo*, in *Isfol*, “Modelli organizzativi ed operativi dei servizi di orientamento nei Centri per l’impiego” *Monografia dell’Azione Accreditamento delle Strutture, 2005* (*Guidance measures implemented within compulsory training*, in *Isfol*, “Guidance Services Organisational and Operating Models inside Employment Centres” *Monographs on Structures Certification, 2005*).

This means that, despite the theoretical assessment, it is impossible to evaluate the extent and the main features of digital exclusion in Italy.

An analysis of the available data on the not methodical use of new technologies shows that in all surveys the majority of the people accessing new technologies belongs to the middle and upper classes and is used to accessing lifelong education, training and self-learning opportunities.

The same is also true for people who access e-learning through the companies they work for: it is always the most qualified employees who exploit this opportunity, together with professional figures already working in the new technologies field. However, *Assinform* data on e-learning diffusion in the companies show a growing trend: e-learning is used in 30.2% of the cases, while 56.7% of the courses are provided using a combination of e-learning and in-company training.

Data available regarding the use of e-learning within the Public Administration highlight how the main education and training means is still the classroom (98%). The impact of e-learning is therefore much minor than in the private sector¹³⁸.

Analyses carried out by the Ministry of Education show that in the school sector there are 500,000 computers available for a total number of 5.8 million students, with a ratio of one computer per 10.9 students. About 456,000 are connected to the net, i.e. one connection per 12.8 students. In 2004 almost half of the schools used internet as a regular teaching tool. However, these figures cannot testify the schools teaching quality, nor the teachers ability to make use of new technologies, nor the learning consequences.

Skills recognition

Certification is one of the main issues in the debate concerning the education and training system reform. The need to certify skills in a homogeneous and comparable system derives from the necessity to use national education and professional qualifications and diplomas in all market segments of the European countries. On a national level, Decree No. 174/2001 (following the indications included in the State-Regions Agreement of 18 February 2000) sets some criteria related to the vocational training system certification. They focus on certification objects and purposes, on the definition of competence minimum standards, set on a national level and to be used as a reference, on the identification of the people who will be responsible for the certification, on which certification types must be granted by the regions, on the possibility of making experiments aimed at promoting the national certification system.

The content of the Decree is briefly described in the following table:

138 Isfol, *Isfol Report 2005*, 2005.

Table 7.9
Decree No. 174
of 31/5/2001:
vocational train-
ing system cer-
tification criteria

Aim: The aim of vocational training certification is to grant transparency within the training pathways and to grant recognition of the skills acquired by the trainees during the courses leading to qualification, in order to promote entry or re-entry in the education and vocational training systems and to facilitate job matching.

Certification object: In order to assess individuals' cultural and practical resources using consistent criteria, Article 1 describes a certifiable skill as a structured set of knowledges and abilities - normally referable to specific professional profiles - that can be acquired through vocational training pathways and/or thorough work experience and/or through self-learning, and that can also be considered as vocational credits.

Standards identification: With the aim of granting national minimum standards to the certification system, the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies, together with the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of University and Scientific Research and the Regions, and by previous agreement with the Social Parts, sets the minimum standards. Based upon the different production sectors, the minimum standards include: a) reference to the figure or groups of professional figures and to activities or areas characterising them; b) vocational skills description and evaluation criteria to certify the individual's possession of such skills; c) identification of a minimum threshold with regard to point b, essential for the certification assignment described in Article 2 of this Decree.

Structures responsible for the certification: skills certification is in charge of the Regions, that use their authority to regulate the application criteria considering principles and minimum standards set on a national level. Regions also grant transparency in the certification process, through the implementation of common procedures and the adoption of specific tools.

Certification types: Competences certification can be carried out:

- a) At the end of a vocational training pathway leading to a qualification, considering the transparency criteria
 - b) As a result of partial vocational training pathways (i.e. the course is abandoned before its natural conclusion) or when the training pathways do not envisage the attainment of a certification (as stated in point a)
 - c) As a result of work experience or self-learning. In this case it is the individual who asks for the certification, in order to access the different levels of the education and vocational system or to obtain a qualification or a school certificate.
2. The certifications described in paragraph 1 are briefly stated on the 'Citizen's training booklet', according to Enclosure B, paragraph d) of the State-Region Agreement of 18 February 2000.

Vocational Credits recognition: Vocational credits represent the value that is assigned to the skills acquired by the individual, and that can be formally recognised at the time of enrolment in educational or vocational training pathways, thus determining courses customization, also in terms of length. The recognition of vocational credits and the determination of their value is up to the educational or vocational structure enrolling the individual, sometimes in cooperation with the structure of origin. Certified skills constitute vocational credits that can be used in the vocational training system according to the following criteria:

- Consistency with competencies standards: in this case the credit can be used on the whole of the Italian territory
- Existence of specific agreements among institutions and/or training agencies specialised on the credit object: in this case the credit can be used only within the institutions interested by the agreement.

Based upon the national principles set in Decree No. 174/2001, the vocational training system issues certificates (qualification certificates and diplomas), that can present regional differences. The only papers currently issued are the Qualification Certificate and the Citizen's Training Booklet (still at an experimental phase).

"The Training Booklet represents a certification tool recognised on a national level, aimed at documenting and enhancing the competences of the individuals and at facilitating formal, non-formal and informal credit recognition."

The two main descriptions at national level are the following:

- State-Regions Agreement of February 2000 states that "with the purpose of

- documenting the educational and vocational curriculum and the skills acquired, the Regions will introduce the Citizen's Training Booklet, that will also include vocational credits that can be used to achieve a school qualification or to enter a school pathway according to special agreements among competent Ministries, Education and Training Agencies and interested Regions...”;
- Legislative Decree 276/03 (*Decreto Biagi*) describes the “Citizen's training booklet” as the personal booklet belonging to the worker (according to the State-Regions Agreement of 18 February 2000, in concert with the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies, the Ministry of Education, University and Research, and by previous agreement with the Unified State-Regions Conference and after consulting the Social Parts), on which to record the skills developed during apprenticeship, during placement contract training, specialised training and any type of continuing education carried out during the entire working life by individuals accredited by the Regions, as well as the competencies formally, informally and non-formally developed according to EU guidelines on lifelong, as long as recognised and certified¹³⁹.

The Interdepartmental Decree of 10 October 2005 has introduced in Italy the Citizen's Training Booklet, and therefore the adoption of Europass, in consequence of that, to the base of the agreement a experimentation has started in autonomy by every single Region under the control of a *Cabina di Regia* and the monitoring of Isfol. The implementation of the booklet, the requirements regarding the activities supplied by Institute that deliver certifications and the human resources involved in the standards of competences, on the proceedings of recognition of non formal and informal outcomes. However, the National system of certification is still on an embryonic stage; in fact, at regional level there are different certification system: moreover the same certification can be used in a different way in the various administrations. These kinds of devices are called Qualification; Certificate of attendance; Declaration of competence; Certificate of competence; Specialization certificate; Personal certificate of AE; Declaration of the pathways. This data evidences the necessity of having some common indicators useful to compare certifications all over Italy. These standards must regards: format and indicators of certification; kinds of training pathways envolved; which subjects are authorised to deliver certifications. The school system issues educational qualifications legally recognised in the labour market and in the school system itself, in order to move forward with the school pathway. The diploma issued after a 5-year course permits access to University, open competitions or job vacancies requiring a secondary school qualification. Some regulated profession require a secondary school diploma for registration and practice. The secondary school diploma is obtained after having successfully passed a state exam, and is different according to the school specialisation.

139 Cf: <http://www.nrpitalia.it/>

Qualification diplomas allow further education pursuit in the field of vocational training only, while Master of Arts diplomas allow further education pursuit in the field of artistic education only.

With regard to the Higher Education and Vocational Training System Pathway (*ITFS – Istruzione e Formazione Tecnica Superiore*), two certification types are envisaged: a Final Higher Vocational Certificate and a Declaration of attendance, issued when the student drops the course before its natural completion.

Law No. 144/1999, activated through Decree No. 436/2000, establishes that ITFS courses must be organised by the Regions in concert with the Institutions and the Social Parts through public notice. The courses are designed and planned according to the local distribution of the professional profiles used as a national reference (Attachment A – Technical documentation 1 August 2002).

The Italian vocational and training system has adopted a *competence minimum standards* model, that can be referred to the productive sectors.

Some elements of the standards are:

- Reference to the figure or group of professional figures and to the activities or area characterising them;
- Vocational skills description and evaluation criteria to certify the individual's possession of such skills;
- Identification of a minimum threshold required for the certification.

As far as apprenticeship is concerned, the Decree issued on 16 May 2001 has identified objectives and standards for apprentices (aged 18+) training activities as well as aims objectives and standards related to additional modules implemented for apprentices in the right-duty age range. Such modules have a duration of 120 hours and focus on the following areas: languages (Italian and foreign languages), mathematics and computer science. The aim is to support professional development and facilitate access to citizenship rights through basic skills improvement. At the end of the apprenticeship period, the vocational skills developed by the worker are appraised by an evaluation committee made up of vocational teachers from the working world. The Committee informs the Employment Centres of the appraisal result and gives a copy of the certificate to the worker. Each Region is empowered to regulate apprenticeship results certification modalities. The apprenticeship results are also recorded on the worker's employment card. Professionalising apprenticeship off-the-job training is recognised as a vocational credit within the combined education and training sector, i.e. it can be used both in the school and vocational training systems, where acquired knowledge, skills and competences represent credits to access the different pathways. The credits acquired along the apprenticeship pathway can be transferred to other education or training systems even if the apprentices drops the apprenticeship before its natural completion.

In the context of Adult Education, each module is certified as a vocational credit that can be used both to continue education or to access vocational training path-

ways and the job market. Pathways evaluation and certification modalities are described in Enclosure A “Technical memo for the design and certification of personal literacy pathways” and in Enclosure B “Technical Memo Personal Certificate – Certification and documentation provision for adults continuing education pathways” of the Directive issued on 6 February 2001.

The main guidelines of this provision are highlighted in the following table:

Table 7.10
*Evaluation and
certification
modalities in AE
pathways – Perso-
nal Certificate
Directive of 6
February 2001 –
Enclosure A,
Paragraph 4:
“Certification”*

"Every modular pathway ends with a thorough description of the activities carried out and the competences acquired, so that they can be recognised as credits in future education and training pathways. The certification tool "Personal Certificate", described in Enclosure B, records competences and credits developed during adult continuing education pathways, with the aim to: a) grant transparency, in line with EU directions b) facilitate integration between institutions and all the social actors involved with adult education c) develop consistency between pathways design, enrolment facilitations and credit recognition when accessing other education and training structures d) facilitate other systems' credit recognition, with the aim of achieving a school certificate or a vocational qualification. The thorough documentation of the pathway has been made easy by the introduction of the "Personal Certificate". The certificate is split into several cards and records the evaluation of the competences developed at the end of the pathway and the credits acquired. The education level corresponding to the selected pathway is also indicated and, when dealing with combined - school and work - pathways, the certificate states the final vocational qualification the certificate holder is trying to obtain, in order to facilitate credit recognition. When feasible, the certificate should also include references to other national, EU or international certification systems, especially with regard to subjects such as English, Computer Science or Italian as a foreign language."
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Moreover, the Enclosure indicates the reference areas for AE modular pathway development:

- languages area;
- socio-economic area;
- science area;
- technology area.

The Enclosure describes the competences that must be developed for each level of each area, based upon the education standards described in the Directive.

Granting offer quality

In Italy, an organic framework of regulations and measures aimed at granting offer quality within the education and training system is lacking. Nevertheless, in the last few years, *Isfol* (supporting the Ministry of Labour) has begun some experiments aimed at creating a quality culture and at disseminating quality-oriented tools. With this objective in mind, the “Vocational training quality card for young people aged 14 to 18” was designed and approved in concert with the main Italian Education and Training Bodies. The aim of the card is to identify and describe the key quality factors of the services provided. Moreover, the *Isfol* project envisages dissemination and testing of the common core criteria designed by the EU Technical Working Group for vocational training quality, articulated in indicators

and practical tools on the “Education and Training Structures Self-Evaluating Guide”. The Guide must be considered as a learning tool to be used within the structure before credit recognition and certification. In 2005, *Isfol* started to test the “Self-evaluating Guide” inside the main National Training Bodies (Enaip, Iai, Cnos-Fap, Fondazione Clerici, Ciofs), and Schools (Regional School Office for Lombardy).

part III

**Comparative analysis
of the measures and actions
for lifelong learning**

chapter 8

STATE POLICIES ON ADULT EDUCATION - A COMPARISON

8.1 INTRODUCTION

The present study focuses on two main objects of comparison: the adult education systems and the educational policies.

In both cases a methodological approach was adopted in order not to forget the different cultural and theoretical reference contexts while privileging the interest towards the empirical data and the analysis of the different components. Such a choice follows the priority given to the possibility of transferring the innovations present in the countries object of the research's systems and policies. Beyond the relations and diversities resulting from the cultural inheritance (*adult education* in the UK, *éducation populaire* in France, etc.) and from the different work and guidance-related policies, what we are looking for here is how to make use, in Italy, of the experiences made in the other countries. Thus the choice of a methodological approach focused on systems and policies' structural components.

8.2 SYSTEMS COMPARISON

Adult education comparison has historical roots, mainly linked to the research programmes of the international organisations, starting from the work carried out by Unesco.

The main reference sources are represented by the preliminary work drafted for the five international conferences promoted by Unesco and held in Elsinor, Denmark (1949), Montreal (1960), Tokio (1972, but formally concluded in 1976, with the Nairobi General Conference), Paris (1985) and Hamburg (1997). The documentation produced for these conferences represents the best observatory to reap the harvest of half a century of history if we consider that Unesco, despite its contradictions and weaknesses, is the only international organisation that, since its foundation in 1945, has built an arena for the development of a “universal” point of view on the matter.

To these papers we must add the preliminary studies and the basic Documents approved by Unesco between 1949 and 1976 regarding topics such as:

- 1949 Recommendation on vocational guidance;
- 1952 Recommendation No. 34 on women access to education;
- 1956 Recommendation on vocational training in agriculture;
- 1958 Recommendation No. 47 on improving education in rural areas;
- 1965 Recommendation No. 58 to improve literacy and adult education;
- 1974 Recommendation and Convention on paid study leave for workers who wish to continue education;
- 1974 Recommendation on human rights;
- 1975 Recommendation on human resources enhancement.

In half a century, the comparison methods have deeply improved, both because of the concepts development and of the definition of the field object of the adult education:

1. the period between Elsinor and Montreal – the fifties – corresponds probably to the time of major development in the area of adult education with regard to Unesco projects, and of its specific placement within the international programmes. It is during these years that we move from the comparison of good practices and special projects to the effort of shaping the idea of system and of the political instruments for its direction and management;
2. the period spanning from 1960 to 1976 is worth considering, as it is characterised by widespread aspirations towards educational renewal, by the constitution of the so-called “education societies”, and ended at the Ilo (International Labour Organisation) with the acknowledgement of workers’ right to personal education. During this time we witness the appearance of a growing interest towards the application of policies that convey a new concept of adults’ right to education and towards this new concept’s strategic dimension;

3. from 1976 onwards we assist to adult education explosion and to the origin of the market for education and training, up to its final employment as a tool for the policies related to economical and social development. The definitive adoption of the Unesco-Isced model for the systems classification, and the beginning of what resulted to be the first big comparative research on adult education systems and organisation promoted by Unesco through the Ecle Centre in Prague, dates back to the late seventies, and precisely to 1977. The research was carried out during a ten-year period (1976-1986), and resulted in the production of more than 15 national essays, one encyclopaedia, and, in particular, two manuals for the comparative study of adult education (Ecle, 1983 and 1986).

Even if in the following years other international institutions and research centres (for example Oecd, Eurydice, Cedefop) started to pay attention to this subject, the basic model of the methodology adopted and fine-tuned within the Ecle studies seems to encounter confirmation and approval. For this reason, during our work on systems comparison, we have adopted a common grid of analysis, centred on the employment of several indicators related to adult education organisation and systems. On this basis we have then performed a comparison between the different solutions adopted in each of the countries object of our study.

8.3 ADULT EDUCATION POLICIES COMPARISON

The adult education policies' analysis and comparison model refers somehow to the studies related to the Economy of Education, and, more specifically, to the Political Economy of Education, as we did not concentrate on policies results evaluation. The Economy of Education has its roots in the theories of economic growth. Gorge Papadopoulos dates its origins back to the late fifties, as a result of the Oecd research activities. And it is during this period that the first works of Mincer (1958, 1962), Schultz (1961, 1963) and Becker (1964), centred on the elaboration of the "Theory of the Human Capital", make their appearance.

It is about 1960 when this theory presented its first formulations regarding the investments in the education and training system. During this time we see the development of economic theories that led to consider the expenses for the education system not anymore as a mere support to a public service but as an investment. For this reason these expenses are more and more closely connected to the economic theories of development and growth, and, later on, they will be considered an essential component for the development of "Human Capital" and "Social Capital". The first studies entirely dedicated to the Economy of Education appeared soon after 1960: Vaizley (1961), Salomon (1966), Le Thanh Khoi (1967), Vinokour (1967), Page (1971).

From the mid-nineties onwards, it will be the Oecd and the World Bank to financially support the development of a commitment that nowadays involves the main research centres for applied economics of the USA, Canada, Sweden, Denmark, Israel, Australia, France and Spain, etc. but to which the most prestigious excellence centres in Italy are still excluded.

As already mentioned, this becomes possible in the framework of an analysis model that tends to explain the economic growth non only on the basis of the elements highlighted by the classical economics, such as capital (physical and technical) and labour, but also by trying to identify the basic elements of the "surplus", i.e. of the unexplained growth, assimilated at times to the technical progress and, with the economy of education, attributed to the "human capital", considered as an element that can stimulate technical progress and productivity, and able to feed an in-growth process.

Starting from this context, the Economy of Education tries to embrace two big groups of phenomena. On the one hand, on a microeconomic level, the Economy of Education studies people's decision processes involving their investments in education and training and the whole of the related elements. On the other hand, the attention is focused on the analysis of the impact that such choices have on labour market trends, on the well being of the individuals and on the monetary and non-monetary benefits.

The development of comparative researches aimed at transferring and adapting these models to the field of adult education takes place in the eighties, even if in those years the concentration was still focused on the analysis of the legislation

(Ebae, 1985), with only a few feeble attempts to move into the field of administrative measures (Federighi, 1990).

It is thanks to the work of international organisations that promoted benchmarking practices among the states, (structured, for example, in the Open Method of Coordination among the EU countries), if new prospects for a rational management of education and training policies came to light (European Commission, 2005). And all this happened in the wake of what had already been started by Unesco (Unesco-UiE: Bélanger and Federighi, 2000) and, later on and with a special wealth of study, by Oecd (1996 and 2005), by the World Bank (2002), and by the ILO (2003). All these studies share the effort made in order to define an analysis model for the political measures - based on their components - as well as the attempt to gather elements for the evaluation of the consequences related to the funds invested for their application. The adoption, in this study, of a similar analytical approach, has allowed us to perform an analysis that, besides the general and sectorial policies, manages to compare the specific solutions applied to resolve particular problems. An analysis that wills to compare not only the measures but also the quantitative results is too complex and will be addressed in other more specific studies.

chapter 9

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS ON ADULT EDUCATION POLICY TRENDS

9.1 A PROBLEM COMMON TO ALL

Significant policies are in place in France, Germany, Sweden and United Kingdom; the investments they have made and the impact they have achieved aim to be a demand meeting response for the development of knowledge and skills, as required by individual living and working contexts. Specifically, such policies address the demand brought forward by people aged over 16 – i.e.: by people beyond compulsory education age, either employed or unemployed, including entrepreneurs, self-employed workers and the new types of “economically dependent workers” (Sciarra, 33). Moreover, adult education policies share a tendency to expand progressively the knowledge sources which potentially interested citizens are encouraged to use, everywhere; such tendency is no longer limited to some subsystem, it is rather broadening to encompass all learning approaches and all educational and cultural resources. This is what the hereafter conducted comparative analysis is about; its starting evidence has been gathered from background and measure analysis.

However, any comparative analysis endeavour must face the complexities arising from the history of the differing ideas and the social contexts coupled with adult education.

The policy embedded adult education idea has been evolving through a history of diversified constructs:

- France, after moving away from the idea of *éducation populaire des adultes*, has two policy inspiring major concepts: *formation continue* and *formation des adultes*; the contents of both policies are progressively converging, after the legislative provisions enforced in 2004;
- German policies are consistently driven by the adult education (*erwachsenenbildung*) and by the continuing education (*weiterbildung*) ideas;
- As of 2003 The United Kingdom materialised the *adult and continuing education* policy idea, with its National Skill Strategy, by embedding it into a Skills and Lifelong Learning Development Strategy, specifically aimed at competence

- and employability development and responsive to the general requirements brought forward by both the individuals and the entrepreneurs;
- in Sweden the adult education (*vuxenutbildning*) idea encompasses all the traditional sectoral policy intervention areas: from adult to continuing education, through labour policy and non formal education, including associative life education.

Should we finally consider the institutional and the legislative provisions, in their own system organisation, we would draw the same conclusions.

Compare for instance the strongly centralised French institutional model, where a decentralisation process is emerging, with:

- the German federal model based on Länder and on Municipality roles;
- the United Kingdom' State controlled policy direction, coupled with Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland national governments' implementation powers for such direction, supported by the *Learning and Skills Councils* programming and management responsibilities;
- the Swedish national policy direction and management, limited to some country-wide measures, with all other (financial and management) responsibilities entrusted to the Municipalities.

Additionally, on the legislative front, one should consider the synergy between adult education and labour policies, progressively introduced by all countries. As a matter of fact, the adoption of employability strategies has led labour legislation and its related policies to embed worker and unemployed vocational training measures in the labour policy measures themselves. Obviously, this situation makes any comparative analysis endeavour more complex, considering that the education idea and social history differences have been augmented by differences in labour policies related to a period when they were affected by considerable transformation and change (to make them stronger through consolidated supranational basic social rights, evolution towards active policy making, integration with competence development policies and synergy with economic and innovation policies).

However, comparison reveals that over the past few years and beyond all differences, each one of the four countries has been endeavouring to adopt policies and measures which may enable them to cope with some fundamental problems, common to all the different adult education development national strategies, that's to say how to achieve:

- an increased vocational training demand and investment capability by all actors;
- a new definition of the State's role in catering to a strongly expanding sector, where the initiatives of both citizens and enterprises are a success factor;
- a lifelong learning expanded and re-allocated public expenditure, based on existing vocational education and training system reform, coupled with the creation of new infrastructures and services

with adult education broader efficiency and equity as an overall ultimate target.

9.2 EDUCATION POLICIES: “BASIC ELEMENTES” COMPARED

The comparison of the selected country policies may offer an understanding of their basic features if one starts observing (among all available data) the financial commitment related indicators, such as:

- investment made (as the percentage of GDP - Gross Domestic Product allocated to education);
- enterprise expenditure for employees' vocational training;
- and such as the following result achievement indicators:
- interested adult population percentage;
- population competence acquisition (15 year olds), (see table 9.1).

	Sweden	The United Kingdom	France	Germany	Italy
Public expenditure on education as percentage of GDP (2002)	7.66	5.25	5.81	4.78	4.75
Enterprise expenditures on continuing vocational training as percentage of total labour costs (1999)	2.8	3.6	2.4	1.5	1.7
Percentage of pupils with reading literacy proficiency level 1 and lower in the Pisa literacy scale (2003)	13.3	12.8 (2000)	17.5	22.3	23.9
Percentage of population aged 25-64 participating in education and training in four weeks prior to the survey (2004)	35.8	21.3	7.2	6	4.7

Source: European Commission (2005), *Commission staff working paper. Progress towards the Lisbon objectives in education and training. 2005 Report, Bruxelles*

Country placements may be further arranged as per figure 9.1, considering the ratio between investments and results and representing the individual country ranking as follows.

Results	High	United Kingdom	Sweden
	Low	France	Germany
		High	low
	Investments		

Table 9.1
Surveyed country fundamental performances

Figure 9.1
Investment level to achieved results ratio: obtained from each country performance classification in Table 1.

The figure shows a direct relationship between investment level and result quality (pictured by the extreme cases of France and Sweden). However, it is also significant that the same investment level not necessarily leads to comparable results (France vs United Kingdom and Germany vs Sweden). Evidence is thus gathered supporting the view that policies, system organisation and related measures may produce substantial differences.

The above comparison also shows that only in countries where a wider lifelong learning activity participation is obtained (Sweden and UK) the best educational conditions can be expected.

9.3 EVOLUTION OF THE POLICIES FOR THE INDIVIDUAL RIGHT TO ADULT EDUCATION

The development of adult education public policies is permanently striving to achieve a balance between two conflicting needs: 1) the creation of an inclusive knowledge society, potentially granting individual competence development for all; 2) the adoption of sustainable measures, harmonising education policies with development and financial policies.

By taking the above view, an understanding of the dynamics leading different countries to develop new concepts and practices in adult education rights may become easier; we try to picture them in table 9.2 (where only the measures referenced by this study are represented).

The analysis of the right to education at adult age different approaches highlighted the existence of the following common trend lines:

- the definition of a young age specific corpus of basic rights and duties, inclusive of the citizenship right, to which the adult age population is entitled;
- the introduction of new types of compulsory educational targets;
- the introduction of rights concerning a specific status, held within society or within the labour market (unemployment, employee's work, disability, enterprise creation, etc.);
- the introduction of eligibility rights to benefit from rewards for personal investment in vocational training, by one's own autonomous decision.

		France	Germany	Sweden	The United Kingdom
Right duty (Source: Eurydice)	<i>Scholastic</i>	From age 6 to 16	9 year long (10 year long in some Länder), usually starting at age 6. Part time study for 3 additional years if <i>Ausbildungsberuf</i> is entered	9 year long, usually from age 7 to 16	11 year long, usually from age 5 to 16 Extended by 1 year in Northern Ireland
	<i>Competences</i>	Certification	Certification	Validation of real competence and knowledge	Accreditation of prior learning
				Individual right to basic vocational training at any age	<i>Level 2 entitlement</i> for adults without a level 2 qualification, with grants and bonuses for employers

Table 9.2
The individual right to adult education

continue
Table 9.2
The individual right to adult education

		France	Germany	Sweden	The United Kingdom
Obbligation	<i>Youth vocational education</i>	<i>Journée d'appel de préparation à la Défense – JAPD / Defence preparation Day.</i> Assessment of the illiteracy state of young people (aged 17-18) and guidance to training	Support during apprenticeship training qualified young apprentices (20-29 year olds) in view of training accompaniment (<i>AusbildungsBegleitende Hilfen - abH</i>)	Programme granting an activity for long lasting unemployment people aged more than 20, with compulsory training pathway participation towards a work placement, which might be subsidised (<i>aktivitetsgarantin</i>)	NDYP - <i>New Deal for Young People aged 18-24 and unemployed; obligation for Jobseeker Allowance recipients to enter guidance and training or to take a subsidised employment</i>
				<i>Arbeitpraktische</i> - 6 month long vocational work placement, with alternate training, for unemployed people aged over 20	<i>New Deal 25+, unemployed aged between 25 and 49; obligation for Jobseeker Allowance recipients to enter guidance and training or to take a subsidised employment</i>
	<i>Immigrant vocational education</i>	<i>Contrat d'Accueil et d'Intégration - CAI</i> (Integration and welcome contract)	Language and guidance course participation for immigrants – Integration course for immigrants	Swedish for immigrants	<i>English for Speaker of Other Languages - ESOL; compulsory citizenship entrance test for citizenship grants</i>
	<i>Financing</i>	Compulsory contribution paid by enterprises as a percentage of total wages			
Specific rights	<i>Workers</i>	<i>Congé Individuel de Formation - CIF</i> (Individual Training Leave - ITL) for employees who have served a work contract for 2 years	Learning time estimate (<i>Lernzeitkonto</i>)	Study leaves	
				<i>Individual Learning Accounts - ILA</i>	
		<i>Droit Individuel à la Formation – DIF</i> (Individual Training Right - ITR) for employees who have served a work contract for 1 year		Interview for personal competencies and career development	

continue
Table 9.2
The individual right to adult education

		France	Germany	Sweden	The United Kingdom
	<i>Entrepreneurs</i>				Employer Training Pilots - ETP; awards to entrepreneurs for their employees participation in vocational education activities; paid study leave for workers; training at no cost
	<i>Unemployed and disadvantaged people</i>	Subsidized contracts, supported by the State ("Aidés" contracts)	Unemployed placement support services		<i>New Deal for Lone Parents</i> – NDfLP. Pathway for job search
			Closing the skills gap and achieving a qualification while at work (<i>Abschlussbezogene Nachqualifizierung</i>); wage cost compensation		
			Initiatives for the support of older long-term unemployed (<i>Langzeitarbeitslose</i> – LZA), through mobility incentives, subsidies and training expenditure reimbursements		
Incentive	<i>Young and adult students</i>		Financial assistance for students under the Federal Training Assistance Act (<i>Bundesausbildungsförderungsgesetz</i> – Bafög) and/or loan for young people aged 15-30	Grants for the access to adult education (<i>rekryteringsbidrag till vuxenstuderande</i>)	Education Maintenance Allowance - EMA for young people aged 16-19
			Vocational education and training voucher	Swedish study financial aid for students: loans and grants for studies	Adult Learning Grant for people aged between 19 and 31
				Aids for studying abroad (Financial aid – loan and grants for study abroad)	

An analysis of different approaches to the implementation of the right to education, at adult age, shows that countries with higher participation standards feature a blend of three main trends, namely:

1. maintaining the basic education right entitlement beyond compulsory school age, until a specific competence level (Level 2 Entitlement in The United Kingdom), or a title awarded at study completion time (the right to basic education granted by each Municipality in Sweden), has been achieved and certified;
2. compulsory availability of vocational training and occupational placement (including subsidised work) in connection with the rights envisaged by a diversified set of labour policy measures, addressing specific targets (labour market inclusion; long term unemployment, etc);
3. creation of various types of financial rewards, or incentives, in favour of people or enterprises and according to their educational objectives (such as the Swedish provision for vocational education abroad) or other target.

A further trend, to be added to the above list, concerns the recognition of paid study leave periods; however, presently they only affect a percentage of employed workers which is less than 2%.

9.4 DEFINITION OF THE INSTITUTIONAL ROLE

Although we lack comparable data gatherings for the countries being considered, in all the OECD countries allow to maintain that direct State intervention, towards supporting vocational training opportunities financially, never exceeds 20% of the activities attracting adult participation; interested parties or enterprises are charged for the remaining costs. In Italy, in 2003, the survey results show that participation is financially shared by enterprises (29.5%), individual contributions (27.8%) and State funding (15.7%).

From the above it appears that public policies are applied to a steadily expanding vocational training market, everywhere; market rules need to be changed in the area of individual and enterprise exclusion from vocational training, where still existing.

To cope with such need public policies are faced with two alternatives: 1) direct or indirect management of public vocational education channels, parallel to the private vocational education supply market and limited to specific target users; 2) acquisition of a vocational education demand and supply regulatory role, aiming to match their quality and quantity aspects on a territorial scale, through the reliability of the roles taken by all system actors.

The endeavour to cope is well expressed by two policies, which can be identified to various extents in practices adopted by each of the four researched countries, i.e.:

- Development of types of partnership suitable for the achievement of institutional competence and policy integration;
- Turning to forms of vertical subsidiarity for assistance.

The definition of new partnership models, bringing together all parties involved, is attracting the greatest attention in all countries under consideration.

The partnership concept stems from the innovation theories concerned with the *triple helix* model (H. Etzkowitz, and L. Leydesdorff, 1999), which aims to establish *win-win* relationships involving “Institutions”, “Business system”, “Vocational education and research system” (see fig. 9.2).

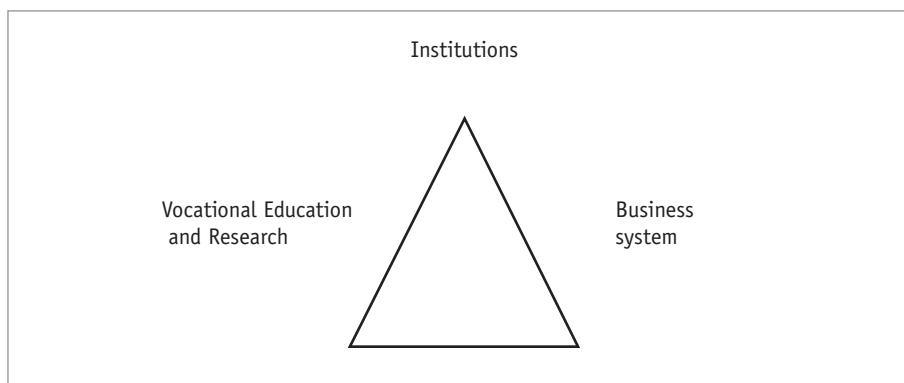
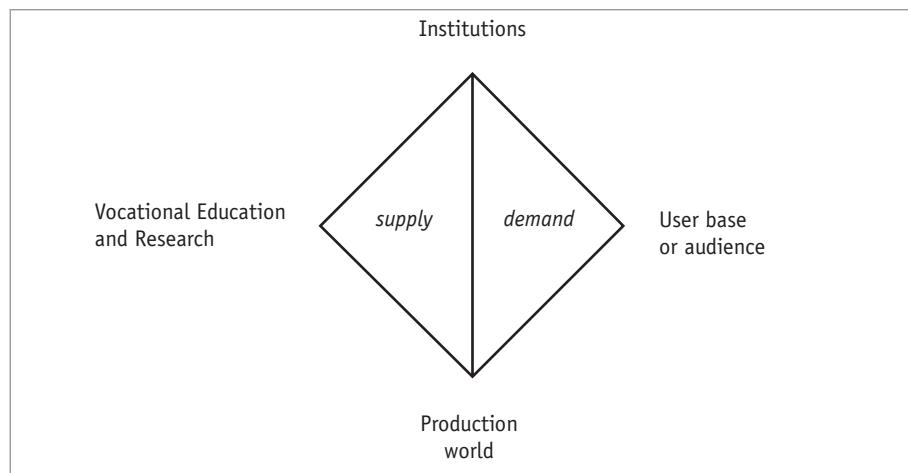


Figure 9.2
Innovation triple helix

9.4 Redefinition of the State's role

Among education policy theorists the above described partnership model is rated as insufficient. It fails to acknowledge the existence of an education user base; yet, from a financial stand point as well, any policy implementation (compulsory school included) rests upon the individuals' willingness, opportunity and ability to invest (in terms of potentialities and of direct or indirect costs). The actors at the triangle vertices are all involved in supply management. The model should be completed as follows:

Figure 9.3
The double triple helix model in education



The analysis model here proposed – some kind of double triple helix- aims to rate the actors involved differently, taking into account their adequacy in representing both vocational education supply and vocational education demand: if vocational education is at the core of what is supplied then: 1) public institutions (State and local electoral power) are active on both fronts, due to their responsibilities in representing general interests; 2) the production world is also active on both fronts, because of its direct involvement in supply management (through the social partners' vocational education bodies and the in-company vocational education initiatives), which is coupled with its role in interpreting and in representing the production system's vocational education demand.

The vocational education user base, which is not necessarily involved in vocational education supply, represents the direct education demand either individually or through various social organisations under some associative umbrella.

In the countries studied by this research there is evidence of a commitment to develop new partnership types, fitting within the framework of adult education governance. The State is withdrawing from direct involvement in vocational education activity management, everywhere; its role and the public educational systems' role are now separate, because supply is a joint public and private venture, involving new actors and stemming from the achievement of a consensus of opinion with the social partners. While this situation is unfolding among the supply

side actors, evidence of partnership cases, involving the vocational education supply customer base and its organisations, is also detectable.

In the above perspective it is worth noting a United Kingdom new reality, such as the *National Skills Alliance*, a nation wide operations body tasked with the implementation of the *National Skill Strategy* which integrates the participation of four ministries (*Department for work and pension, Department for Education and Skill, Department of Trade and Industry, Department of Treasury*), of the entrepreneurial organisations and of the workers' unions.

The above model led to the establishment of the *Learning and Skills Councils* institute (comprising a national headquarter with 9 regional and 47 local branches); this body is held responsible for the planning function and for the educational investments required by the implementation of the *National Skill Strategy*; therefore, it finances all the educational activities addressing citizens over the age of 16, not including higher education. In a partnership development policy perspective, the *Learning and Skills Councils* experience displays the following significant aspects:

- they have replaced the Local Education Authorities, or LEAs (state administration decentralised bodies), while broadening their functional roles;
- their executive committee comprises 15 members, representing employers, unions, vocational education providers and local associations;
- their administered public resources – transferred from the Department for Skills and Education, directly – allow to cope with the organisation of activities addressing 6 million people per year (2003-2004).

This model, as it appears, differs from the types of bilateral bodies which were set up in connection with the worker continuing education policies or with the labour policies in general (e.g.: the *Organismes paritaires collecteurs agréés-OPCA* in France) because, as a matter of fact, it replaces the former State structures – the LEAs - and, additionally, it includes bodies representing demand directly (the civil associations), while being responsible for the overall resource management which allows catering to the greatest part of the vocational education demand at adult age.

Analogies may be found with the French public interest grouping which was established under the name “Fight Against Illiteracy National Agency”, to bring together a federation of public powers, enterprises and social organisations for population basic skill development. However, the French Agency differs from the Learning and Skills Councils because its role is limited to facilitating the coordination of resources provided by other public and private parties.

Also different appear to be the features of German experience with the *Lernende Regionen*. In the German case the federal Government finances the creation of Cooperation Networks among the adult education various local actors, through the allocation of funds specifically meant for network establishment and operation. Some specific territorial projects may also be supported by such funds. An additional amount, 30% is required as a co-funding contribution from the network prospective members.

*9.4 Redefinition
of the State's role*

In terms of vertical subsidiarity, the functional role distribution at the State's various levels (national, regional, provincial and local) shows a progressively growing diversification and complementarity in all countries. Basic information may be provided by the responsibility distribution framework which emerges from the Eurydice data base (see tab. 9.3). It should be observed that, in the adult education area, such distribution may be affected by variations and complexities in each individual intervention sector.

Table 9.3
*Institutional re-
sponsibility distri-
bution in educa-
tion*

	State	Regions	Provinces	Municipalities
France	Legislates and is liable for: a) system and programme operational performance; b) teacher recruitment	High education institutes and their operational performance	Secondary education institutes and their operational performance	Primary education institutes
Germany	Defines Länder duties and people's basic rights	Legislate and exert exclusive administrative powers		
Sweden	Defines the legislative frame of reference for school operations			System administration autonomy. Some municipalities delegate their functions to the Board of Schools
The United Kingdom	Legislative powers, including devolution matters for Scottish, Welsh and Northern Irish governing bodies	Scottish, Welsh and Northern Irish governing bodies exert legislative power in general and vocational education matters		

Source: Eurydice 2005

Notwithstanding their common decentralisation trend towards the regional level, the four institutional models we are considering present significant differences, stemming from their own individual historical backgrounds and Constitutional Charters (exception made for the United Kingdom which does not have a written Constitution). Of all four models, the Swedish decentralisation model based on the role of Municipalities, finally introduced after an experimental trial period, provides the major innovation.

In Sweden the State's legislative role sets the objectives and some of the basic rules; additionally, it contributes towards adult education financing. Moreover, the State sets the constitutional right safeguarding rules for educational and citizen equality matters, while monitoring and assessing their impact. Finally, financial support measures addressing the individuals are State funded.

Financial transfers to the Municipalities are treated as complementary contributions for their provision of a set of public services, integrating their fiscal revenues. Such funds are not meant to be used for adult education; however, Municipalities may freely allocate them as required by their service management activi-

ties. Municipalities contribute to adult education from financial resources provided by local taxations, integrated by State funding.

Municipalities autonomously define a Local Plan for adult education, in line with nationally adopted objectives. They are responsible for defining programmes based on national guidelines and responsive to their participants' requirements. Each Municipality plans its own programmes individually, with contents aligned to national curricula and to specific local circumstances.

Adult education staff recruitment is managed by the Municipalities or by Centres acting on their behalf.

9.5 ADULT EDUCATION SYSTEM ADEQUACY: INTERVENTIONS

Adult education system adequacy is a priority issue for each one of our four countries; ensuring that a vocational education supply exists and may be accessed, to meet the quality and the quantitative aspects of a new type of demand, is a permanently open issue.

The nature of the problems to be solved is twofold:

- a) micropedagogical, e.g.: the quality of didactics and learning (see the measure *Embedded learning* in The United Kingdom);
- b) macropedagogical, i.e.: policies and measures allowing to modify the results produced by the adult education system.

Considering this study main subject, we shall focus on the analysis of trends related to the macropedagogical aspects.

To this end, the data gathered may be interpreted through the observation of the following trends:

- adult education separation from the school system and an increasing number of interconnections with the labour policy support system's measures and services;
 - finer granularity of the vocational education supply breakdown into levels and targets, reaching as far as the educational pathway customisation and the creation of a new educational subsystem, integrated with measures and services supporting the innovation policies;
 - creation of new infrastructures and support services;
 - introduction of new supply funding schemes.
- a. The development of the adult education system autonomy from the school system was addressed with reference to the creation, in the United Kingdom, of a government system other than the LEAs and centred upon the programming and financing role of the *Learning and Skills Councils*. This trend is equally visible in the new law on adult formal education in Sweden, where Parliament is expected to change the old law in 2006 for the following reasons:
 - to go beyond an old model which was essentially limited to counterbalancing the lack of adequate education at young age;
 - to keep adult education separate from the ordinary school system norms and procedures, while maintaining the same value for the awarded study certificates;
 - to create a more flexible model in terms of study schedule, locations and contents, more responsive to individual circumstances.

Still in Sweden, non formal adult education as well has been structuring as an autonomous system: the *Folkbildning*, governed by the *Folkbildningsrådet*.

A different type of choice has been made in France, where the Ministry of National Education operates through the Greta centres, mostly located in upper secondary school premises. In Germany, adult education in the shape of study certificate recognition is normally hosted by school institutes as a school subsystem. Other activities are structured within the *Erwachsenenbildung* (where non formal activity prevails) and the *Weiterbildung* frame of reference (where the professionalising activities prevail).

This trend finds an explanation in the progressive dialogue between the adult education measures and the labour policies, but also in the difficulties for the scholastic model to adapt its own educational supply to the circumstances of participant types differing by age, learning style, expectations, etc. in relation to the standards. The above described situation has been further underscored by the worsening school system performances, as revealed by the 15 year olds' competence shortage (see tab. 4); if the Lisbon Strategy objectives are kept in mind, such situation is to be underscored even more markedly:

"By 2010, the percentage of low achieving 15-year-olds in reading literacy in the European Union should have decreased by at least 20% compared to the year 2000"

Year	Sweden	United Kingdom	France	Germany	Italy
2000	12,6	12,8	15,2	22,6	18,9
2003	13,3	n.r.	17,5	22,3	23,9
Balance	-0,7		- 2,3	0,3	-5
Distance from EU benchmark	3,2		5,7	4,2	7,8

Table 9.4
Percentage of pupils with reading literacy proficiency level 1 and lower in the Pisa literacy scale: comparison 2000-2003

Source European Commission, 2005

The distance from the objectives set out for 2010 is increasing everywhere (excluding Germany), if one acknowledges a general slump in the 15-year-olds reading literacy achievements.

b. Educational supply breakdown granularity and customisation

A lifelong learning strategy should avoid excessive standardisation of the educational supply. Therefore, systems need to cope with a three-fold stress:

- establishment of new educational system channels, leading to labour market requirement conforming certifications (AVE in Sweden, for instance);
- creation of specific pathways, meeting differing target user base circumstances and locations; this is more clearly perceived in labour policy connected educational activities, where supply needs to adapt to a user base including: people entering the labour market, mobility workers, senior workers

with workforce re-entry problems, single parents, young drop-outs, etc. (see the Germany adopted Measure “Closing the skills gap and achieving a qualification while at work. *Abschlussbezogene Nachqualifizierung*”, for apprentices with educational problems, in addition to various practical examples);

- highly customised educational pathway availability (such as the APPs in France) in all kinds of educational provision (this possibility exists whenever access to education results from a competence assessment pathway).

An additional trend is to be acknowledged, in connection with the appearance of new educational channels.

The adult education system has been expanding from qualification recognition to employability and to innovation process support functions, progressively. The relationship between vocational education and innovation policies in general, and in small/medium enterprise specifically, is now addressed by national, regional and local public policies, with the resulting production of special projects, support services, innovation territorial agreements, etc. The educational systems may now practically breakdown into parts allowing innovation and economic growth to be encouraged, directly. It is a common trend in all European Countries, including the four countries considered by this research. Adult education provision, typically, aims to achieve innovation policy objectives only in part (continuing vocational education in France or the study circles in Sweden). In this respect the activity development mainly addresses the creation of learning partnership networks, based on applied research models and on highly customised implementation approaches.

However, this type of system breakdown is developing independently from any organic or programmatic ties with specific adult education policies and measures; it is rather evolving as a separate channel configuration.

c. The basic reasons for the relevance of support services creation in education policies are:

- the spreading of support services targeted to the individuals, required by the development of demand and customised supply policies; whenever one needs to apply for a voucher, or for inclusion in some labour policy measure or in a selected vocational education pathway, preliminary and accompaniment contacts should be made and maintained with services catering to information, motivation, guidance and counselling; known cases of demand policy measures which were not coupled with this type of services ran into serious implementation problems (the ILAs in the United Kingdom for instance);
- the promotion of self-learning methods – in view of a tuition time cost reduction and of an increasing supply flexibility – has led to the creation of support and service infrastructures such as the competence validation services (available in France, Germany, the United Kingdom and Sweden)

- and the distance learning services (consider for instance the *Learndirect* performance in the United Kingdom);
- the supply management cost reduction, achieved through the creation of shared services (such as the *LiWE* measure, which funds the adult education operators vocational training in Germany, or the *Lärcentran* promotion in Sweden, providing common reception structures for the public and private vocational education agencies operating in a Municipality);
 - the availability of quality assurance development, certification and management methods in all system organisations (see the *LQW2* programme in Germany or the functions performed by the inspecting services in all concerned countries).
- d. The introduction of new vocational education funding schemes provides, in essence, a tool whereby adult education supply may be kept under control with policies overthrowing monopolistic and oligopolistic market powers, bringing reduced unitary costs and supply quantity and quality increases. The analysed measures highlight two major approaches:
- individual vocational training demand funding; related measures differ for their implementation aspects, which change according to the freedom of choice margin allowed to the funded individuals (for instance through the creation of a market restricted to a few providers, towards which individual choices shall be directed, as an alternative to the possibility of making choices based on the availability of different types of educational supply, meeting specific individual interests);
 - supply funding according to the type of service actually offered (number of learning hours, competence levels actually achieved, number people served, etc.).

These types of measures are also used to reduce the public funding dependence margins of the vocational education agencies, by encouraging them to diversify their own financial sources, acting openly on the vocational education market and creating a stronger presence of economically and financially stable agencies.

chapter 10

EDUCATIONAL AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING OFFER FOR SOCIALLY AND CULTURALLY DISADVANTAGED PEOPLE

10.1 THE CENTRAL ROLE OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

Starting in the Nineties and with the Delors White Paper, the European debate on active employment policies has been rating vocational education and training as the cornerstone of any individual improvement in labour market placement. Since then, education and training configure themselves as crucial elements for economic development and social cohesion policies in all Union countries.

In fact, economic system advancement and competitiveness are increasingly dependent on citizens' education level and workforce qualification; they cannot unfold in situations affected by low qualification and insufficient education ratings for significant portions of the population. Labour market trends leave no doubts: a complex set of *employability* enabling *skills* is the prerequisite for people to find any occupational placement, and to maintain and develop it career-wise. Moreover, employability is progressively more difficult to achieve. It's less and less identifiable as *just-a-need-for-a-job*; it's more and more shaping up in terms of prospective job openings, which may be considered by anybody holding good relational attitudes and minimal competencies in specific professional fields. Individual awareness of the above situation differs from person to person; this leads to changing behaviours and attitudes in the labour market, and in the most general social context. For some people, who can move off from their own initial wealth of "skills" (robust basic education – at least equivalent to their completion of higher school studies – and a good public relations network), *employability* represents no problem, and competing in the labour market offers challenging opportunities for one's own acquired knowledge to be deployed, while taking advantage of relational prospects and seizing the available training offers, towards a successful professional pathway. For many other people, however, labour market is a bleak context to be in, where coping with anxieties and insecurity is nothing less than hard work, and where any already acquired *skill* is at risk of rapid obsolescence, while "employability" loses its grip and becomes increasingly problematic. Such a context, often coupled with bothering income rates and with hands tying family commitments,

makes the well known all-inclusive advice “*get trained or die (i.e.: or you'll be out of business very quickly)*” unheard or meaningless, notwithstanding its wisdom.

The above reasons, altogether, make the rethinking of vocational education and training role in social, cultural and employment policies a central and decisive action for the referenced type of population. Such rethinking attaches to population training various meanings and functions: not just a tool towards easier occupational placement or a solution meeting entrepreneurial demand, but also a user centric instrument for individual needs, providing opportunities for creativity, social integration and cultural growth.

10.2 BASIC OPTIONS

The observations here reported are largely shared in the four surveyed countries (although their individual welfare policies may differ). Modifications, innovations and integrations resulting from these observations have been applied to the existing vocational education and training supply, with the aim of generating young and adult participation from significant portions of the population, holding low schooling and qualification levels, to enable the acquisition of the necessary “employability” skills.

The above mentioned modifications take place in two basic directions:

1. use of all available – *policy mix* – options, allowing to reach the target audience, support it and get it involved in training activities (capillary diffusion of information, face-to-face advisory sessions, employment guidance, income allowances, validation of knowledge acquired outside formal study pathways, focused cultural literacy and vocational training programmes, result evaluation, interventions towards educational structure and teacher quality improvement);
2. broader learning environment achievement, by coupling scholastic-educational contexts with social and working contexts.

Measures are thus appearing, which target the organisation of vocational training and its related service supply, by addressing (young and adult) individuals who failed to complete compulsory school or, after its completion, did not further their studies and/or are unemployed and/or, if employed, hold an occupation in a precarious or disqualifying job position.

10.3 VOCATIONAL TRAINING SUPPLY FOR DISADVANTAGED AUDIENCES

In the light of these observations, a close look at the vocational education and training supply, towards the achievement of social and professional integration, highlights the existence of a complete awareness for the above mentioned issues in the four surveyed countries, coupled with a substantial unity of intents. In all four countries we find *measures* conceived for predefined groups, aiming to find solutions for specific problems while promoting the value of individual experiences. Four areas should be mentioned, considering their special relevance and the features of the deployed measures: migrants; cultural distress situations; vocational training supply targeted to job seekers or unemployed people; cultural and vocational training supply targeted to the overall adult population.

10.3.1 Migrants

The identification of the priority problems to be tackled, to get on with vocational training interventions in favour of the population social and cultural level raising, through the arrangement of their related educational offers, may be rated as uniformly handled when it comes to the immigrant population training supply.

In all four countries immigrants are the target audience of a specific vocational education and training supply, which places language learning, but not just that, at its core.

Table 10.1
Migrants

FRANCE	French Language for Migrants (Integration and welcome Contract, <i>Contrat d'Accueil et d'Intégration C.A.I.</i>)
	Integration for Migrants
GERMANY	ABH (<i>Ausbildungsbegleitende Hilfen</i>). Support during apprenticeship Training. BQF Programme (<i>Berufliche Qualifizierung für Zielgruppen mit besonderem Förderbedarf</i>) - Promoting skills – Vocational Qualification for target groups needing special support
THE UNITED KINGDOM	English for migrants (<i>English for Speakers of Other Languages - ESOL</i>)
SWEDEN	Swedish for migrants

It should be noted that in all four countries the course for immigrants has somewhat similar duration and objectives (immigrants' achievement of adequate language, culture and hosting society knowledge level); however, support and participation enhancement mechanisms differ, with consequences on the results achieved both in terms of participation and of success. In this respect, a specific German measure addressing vocational training organisation and immigrants' occupational placement gains special relevance.

The social and cultural integration issue shows up in all four countries, with special emphasis in France and in the UK, where participation in these activities has an

impact on the immigrant' status, towards permission to stay in the country and citizenship acquisition¹⁴⁰.

10.3 Vocational training supply for disadvantaged audiences

10.3.2 Population with Cultural Distress

An intervention area rated as central refers to situations of cultural distress. In such area two measures adopted in France and in the UK try to come to terms directly with this problem and are significantly relevant. As far as Sweden is concerned, an organic adult education system tries to cope with the issue, while Germany has no specific measures in this respect, other than those which address vocational training for young people employment, following the dual system crisis.

FRANCE	<i>Ateliers de Pedagogie Personnalisée - APP</i> Individual Educational Workshops
THE UNITED KINGDOM	<i>Basic Skills</i>

Table 10.2
Population with cultural distress

The French measure is significant for its establishment of dedicated listening and training locations (800 local antennas and 458 branches, with 29 of them in prisons), for the adopted pedagogical approach (supported self-training, granting tailor-made pathways for individual participant requirement) and for the organisation large flexibility (training entrance is always viable).

The UK case stands out for its features, making it more of a literacy campaign in its own right: *Skills for Life* organizes training activities which differ from traditional school pathways by seeking to reach the population and achieve its participation through:

- absolutely free courses;
- wide advertisement campaign with massive use of all kinds of media;
- alternative didactic systems, based on broader information and communication technology deployment and granting more flexibility in comparison to traditional systems;
- National Test for achieved result verification and validation, towards a certification application.

Finally, it should be noted that the measure for migrants (Esol) is an integral part of "Skill for life"¹⁴¹.

140 DILF – French Language Initial Diploma, one of the “republican integration” criteria to obtain the issue of a permanent residence permit, since 2006. In the United Kingdom, the Esol courses combine linguistic training with elements of English civilization and culture. The latter aspect was further enhanced at the end of 2005, with the national adoption of training modules targeted to foreign people who have been UK residents for at least 3 years, intending to apply for British naturalisation.

141 In quantitative terms Skills for Life and ESOL final objective is basic skill improvement for 2.2 million people in 2010. By the end of 2004 they reached 800 thousand participants (beyond the assigned objective: 750 thousands), with complete training success.

10.3.3 Vocational training supply targeted to job seekers or unemployed people

Regarding this area, specific measures may be found in all four countries; they are directly linked with the employment services and strongly interconnected with active employment research and on the job experiences. In Sweden and in the UK these measures are compulsory for unemployment allowance recipients. Additionally, France, Germany and the UK pay special attention to young adults.

Table 10.3
*Job seekers or
unemployed
people*

FRANCE	Subsidized contracts supported by the State
	<i>Missions locales</i> (Young People Welcome, Information, Placement)
	Greta Centres
GERMANY	<i>BvB</i> – VET measures for employment preparation
	<i>Bundesausbildungsförderungsgesetz - BAföG</i> (Financial assistance for students under the Federal Training Assistance Act)
UNITED KINGDOM	<i>New Deal for Young People 18-24 - N.D.Y.P.</i>
	New Deal 25 +
SWEDEN	Guarantee Activity Programme (<i>Aktivitetsgarantin</i>)
	Vocational training experience (<i>Arbetspraktice</i>)

All measures share a common objective: to facilitate unemployed or never employed population transition from welfare to work through employability; this is to be achieved, where necessary, by improving competencies with individual support services and with a series of occupational and vocational training options. People without a job, who are disadvantaged by their lack of sufficient educational and professional qualification, get highest priority attention. Vocational training delivered mostly *on the job* never comes as an isolated activity but is integrated with State supported fixed term contracts. Specifically, but not just for young people, employment-training contracts are coupled with interventions addressing housing, health and leisure. The employment services are directly involved in all measures with responsibilities for their most important aspects.

10.4 CULTURAL AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING SUPPLY TARGETED TO THE GENERAL ADULT POPULATION

A long tradition of formal and non formal adult education activities, for a significant number of female and male citizens, is well established in all four countries. Two less advantaged audience targeted measures (in Sweden and in the UK) deserve to be mentioned, notwithstanding their considerable differences.

SWEDEN	Study Circles
THE UNITED KINGDOM	Learndirect

Table 10.4
General adult population

The Swedish case presents a measure which is transversal to all employment policy and adult education system (formal and non formal) channels. The “*study circles*” measure is meant to increase the available opportunities for getting together, for social network creation and for self-directed learning; it targets citizens of any age who share interests for specific, autonomously selected topics; they may self-organise a study group (312,100 study circles in 2003 with over 2.5 million participants).

Learndirect is an Internet portal providing distance learning courses, covering a vast range of sectors and specialisations which lead to all qualification levels, including basic skill certification¹⁴². It is also a telephone line - *Learndirect Helpline* – delivering an information, advisory and guidance service¹⁴³. Course attendance is possible from any Internet access provided location (home, work, *learndirect centres*). There are 8000 active centres spread across the UK territory. Their visibility and the number of prospective and actual users keep growing; to that end, the centres are located in study places such as libraries, as well as in consumer places such as supermarkets, shopping centres and transit locations such as main streets or downtowns, and tourist attraction areas.

142 About 1.3 million people attended Learndirect courses since the measure was launched in 2000.

Course users: mostly women, with no recent training experiences, low qualification holders and generally with no employment market placement. It may be interesting noting the rather high participation of the over 50ies – compared with other types of training.

143 Over 6 million calls have been made since 1998, when the service was made available.

10.5 OBSERVATIONS

The comparative study we have been conducting shows there is special attention, in the four surveyed countries, for the organisation of knowledge and of how-to-do knowledge opportunities, specifically addressed for disadvantaged audiences. Five fundamental elements of our findings are shared and should be evidenced:

1. the awareness that a growing social gap exists and makes large groups of the young and the adult population experience difficulties related to employment, social life and citizenship rights;
2. the need for interventions which make arrangements for courses and training activities centred around the individual's competence and autonomy growth, with a strong attention, among others, for occupational placement;
3. the indispensable presence, for training initiatives to be successful, of a mix of measures addressing reach, guidance and support;
4. the convenience of an intervention programme classification, according to target audience schooling level and occupational placement;
5. the top priority rating for the central role of the migrant population cultural and linguistic integration.

Beyond the just listed elements there are social and training policy specifics in all four countries'; these differ both in their general strategy and in their deployed structures. It is worth recalling here some of the key traits of each country' supply policy.

10.6 NATIONAL ADULT EDUCATION STRATEGY IN SWEDEN

Sweden only, out of four examined countries, owns an organically organised adult education system, which envisages rights to vocational education and training for all citizens, coupled with matching dedicated training supplies: disadvantaged groups fit within this system with no limitations.

Each individual aged over 20 is entitled to adult education. Compulsory school (9 years) drop-outs are entitled to attend courses for such certification to be obtained. Municipalities are required to grant this type of educational offer to interested individuals. This right is sanctioned by law.

Formal adult education is free, financial State support (direct and indirect costs) is awarded to all citizens throughout their studies, at any age and for any professional status. Usually, financial support is based on scholarships combined with long-term loans, repayable by their applicants. The amount payable by scholarships for the unemployed equals the unemployment allowances. Scholarships are mostly granted to drop-outs, adults in social and cultural distress, specific disadvantaged groups in the 25 – 50 age range. The main criteria for financial support granting address the need to overcome training participation barriers and to increase the employability level enabled by training. In relation to State deliverable benefits, Municipalities are in charge of priority short-listing.

Employed workers are entitled to take advantage of all measures. Additionally, they are entitled to study leave; however, this benefit is poorly used (1% of the workforce).

This set of rights translates into training offers¹⁴⁴ targeted to compulsory school (9 years) drop-outs or post-compulsory school leavers.

Adult basic education equals 9 years of ordinary school; it must provide students with the competencies required by living, working and furthering one's own studies. The Municipality has the obligation to offer adult basic educations courses to any non-holder of the corresponding certificate. The study starting level is determined by each participant's prerequisites.

Upper secondary adult school and the ordinary school for young students are based on the same program. However, contents, methods and further study levels may change. Planning functions are a Municipality responsibility. The upper secondary school offered tuition features:

- highly flexible study plans, meeting each individual's demand and participation profile. Some activities may be carried out individually;

¹⁴⁴ Amendments to the 2000 Law, expected to be introduced this year, aim to:

- replace a model whose function is limited to compensating for education not received at compulsory school age;
- separate adult education from ordinary school system norms and procedures, while granting the awarded study certificates the same value;
- create a more flexible model in terms of schedules, locations and contents, more responsive to individual circumstances and adult age aspects.

- courses last one or two years; they may be coupled with basic education modules;
- some of the courses may have no equivalent course in ordinary school;
- vocational education objectives may differ from those in ordinary school.

Special types of offer are arranged for specific population groups. For example, “Swedish for immigrants”: Municipalities have the obligation to provide it to all immigrants aged over 16 upon entry.

This vocational training channel aims to provide unemployed people with basic or a specialist professional education. On the basis of Parliament’s decisions, the Labour Market National Committee distributes the financial contributions in favour of Provincial Committees and Employment Offices, in charge of sectoral policy implementations. Following that, local institutions proceed with the acquisition of various formal and non formal programmes from a multitude of public and private suppliers. The activity is then carried out in strict cooperation with enterprises and social partners. This training channel absorbs a large portion of the investments in the field of *lifelong learning*.

Next to these types of offer we find non formal adult education (*Folkbildning*); altogether these offers (higher vocational education, university and on-the-job training) give shape to a fully developed system, in its own right. However, the *Folkbildning* is not just a system; it should rather be identified with the popular movement which has been promoting adult education in all its forms country-wide, ever since the XIX century. The vocational training activity carried out by the *Folkbildning* actors unfolds across all adult education domains (from basic education to in company training, through higher vocational education and non formal education, up to cultural activities). These activities are still today attracting the most relevant participation and significantly higher financial contributions (almost twice the State investment in formal education); they are closely related with the Swedish popular and political movements, which are coordinated by a single autonomous national body (the *Folkbildningsrådet*). As far as non formal education is concerned, the main activity is provided by the study circles and by various kinds of cultural activities (200 thousand events for 15 million participants).

10.7 THE UNITED KINGDOM: THE NATIONAL SKILLS STRATEGY

In the UK, although no organic adult education system as seen in the Swedish case is available, the issue of adult population training/qualification is rated as decisive; since 2003 it has been addressed by a new strategy: the *National Skills Strategy (21° Century Skills: Realising our Potential)*.

The basic features of these new policies are to be focused on economic competitiveness by addressing professional aspects, and to be targeted for a progressively higher number of people holding nationally recognised certifications, meeting labour market demand.

The preliminary critical issue for the objectives to be achieved is defining which certifications and which *skills* provide a minimum acceptable standard. The vocational training level rated as minimum acceptable standard has been identified to be “Level 2” (*NVQ2; 5GCSE grades A-C; Intermediate GNVQ*). All intervention programmes for adult education¹⁴⁵ are targeted to the achievement of this level. At the same time the *low-skilled universe*¹⁴⁶ (low schooling, scarce or no qualification) is the area where priority actions should be carried out with ad hoc training offers. These offers are fine tuned on the requirements of the diverse populations in the low-skilled universe:

- young people aged 16-19 who do not further their studies after compulsory school;
- low qualification employed adults;
- unemployed subsidy recipients;
- foreign population experiencing English language communication difficulties;
- indigenous population with no basic (literacy, language and numeracy, etc.) ability to understand, communicate and participate;
- specific disadvantaged groups (lone parents, ethnic minorities, disabled people, prisoners and ex-prisoners, etc.).

To facilitate and encourage training activity participation the following measures have been deployed:

- free vocational training for all adults holding insufficient employability, up to the achievement of a suitable (Level 2) qualification;
- weekly £30 contributions for adult trainees from priority target groups in Further Education full-time course attendance, to support their studies;
- Adult Basic Skills” campaign: inclusion of Information and Communication Technologies as third “skill for life”, in addition to literacy and numeracy;

¹⁴⁵ In the UK context “adult education” is taken to include young people aged 16 to 19, who are outside a regular study pathway.

¹⁴⁶ 10.5 million *low-skilled* people have been counted within the working age (16-64) population in 2003. Out of these, 6.5 millions are employed and about 600 thousands are unemployed.

- learndirect web portal and “freephone helpline” number: the portal offers on-line vocational training courses, from the basic to the advanced levels, open to whoever has an Internet access; the freephone helpline offers access to expert supported information and guidance, towards individual’s requirement driven most suitable course identification and selection.

10.8 FRANCE: THE CONTINUING EDUCATION CENTRAL ROLE

The on-going French policies and actions, in the education and lifelong learning domains, revolve around the following objectives:

- fighting against illiteracy;
- enhancing the recognition of non formal learning values, for young people in particular;
- offering suitable vocational training solutions for “at risk” or “in distress” audiences, starting at school system time, to counterbalance the unsuccessful and the early drop-out outcome of young people initial education;
- widening competence recognition possibilities, however and wherever acquired.

In relation to these objectives, the French educational offer addressing the disadvantaged adult audiences breaks down into the following traits:

- robust and well settled continuing vocational education subsystem for employed workers, linked with the various branches of the public and private educational offers;
- vocational training systems, services, unemployed training specific mechanisms
- dedicated training and mechanisms, towards basic competence reuse/consolidation, migrant linguistic education, new technology learning;
- VAE, “*validation des acquis de l’expérience*” – a national mechanism managed by the vocational training sectors – dedicated to non formally acquired adult competencies (professional and social experiences).

In the adult targeted vocational training supply landscape the topmost offer is the employed workers’ continuing vocational education¹⁴⁷, which has been developing since the early ‘70ies. This offer emerges from social partners’ contractual negotiations (which lead to results translated into State legislative provisions) and is financed by vocational training targeted contributions, paid by companies and administered by social partner representative bilateral peer bodies.

However, next to continuing vocational education, other educational possibilities have been developing, with interconnected objectives and not limited to the employed worker target audiences. Such educational offers target adult and low schooling young people, to deal with their basic and functional competence reuse/consolidation/development.

Things have been evolving this way since the eighties-nineties, when youth started shaping as a condition at risk of social exclusion because of:

¹⁴⁷ There are several thousand public and private bodies for use by the Inter-professional Funds, among which many vocational education enterprises: about 6 million people get trained every year.

- labour market changes and of growing occupational profile fragmentation;
- new educational requirements in the adult world;
- social and cultural inconsistencies brought in by immigration.

Adult vocational training policies, now featured in the country, are no longer exclusively influenced by workers' need to adapt/update their competencies, in tune with working context technological and organisational changes; they are also influenced by the need to use vocational training as a tool and a resource towards the population cultural growth, enhanced social cohesion and citizenship. Exemplary of the above said evolution are some recent innovations in the very field of continuing vocational education: on one hand, its opening to typical adult education objectives, such as basic competence reuse (illiteracy versus language learning); on the other hand, its planning of each worker autonomously selected individual training pathway, in addition to the company training plans negotiated and agreed by the social partners.

10.9 GERMANY: THE DUAL SYSTEM CRISIS

The Social Welfare Book (*Sozialgesetzbuch - SGB*) is the most relevant legislation regarding support of worker and disadvantaged people vocational training. Volume III (Employment Promotion) regulates all services rendered towards employment promotion and those provided by the Federal Employment Agency (*Bundesagentur für Arbeit – BA*). The regulations specify in great detail all (financial and service) activities for apprenticeship support, vocational training, occupational placement and rehabilitation, reconversion, young people and unemployed adult update.

Unlike other examined countries Germany's interventions, in favour of disadvantaged groups, leverages almost exclusively the employment and the vocational training issues. This approach emerges in relation to the crisis of the dual system, in terms of results and operations, which should grant the acquisition of recognised professional qualification to all young people who do not pursue academic studies after compulsory school.

The German school system is one of the more selective systems in Europe. Selection starts after four years in primary school, already. Young students get assigned to one of three types of study direction: *Hauptschule*, *Realschule*, *Gymnasium*. *Gymnasium* is the only educational pathway leading to university¹⁴⁸ access.

The main road to employment for young people holding a *Hauptschule* or a *Realschule* diploma is the company's vocational training dual system – an apprenticeship lasting two to three years and a half, combining practical experience in some company's work environment with cultural and theoretical education in vocational training schools. Apprentices hold a training contract with their employer which grants an apprentice salary, a social security system registration, the contractual agreements negotiated with the trade unions. Every year around 70 percent of school leavers enters a dual system training pathway. Such pathway leads to a qualification among those required by the acknowledged professional profiles. In the German employment market the above mentioned qualifications are prerequisites for labour market inclusion: failing to hold a qualification of at least one of the two official dual system professional profiles, leaves vary few *chances* of occupational integration.

In the last few years this system has been showing signs of crisis:

- professional profiles change ever more frequently while work technological content keeps growing; training entrants must own information technology knowledge at their training outset, with ability to use analytical thinking, communication and public relations competencies;
- ever more often, companies' preferences go to young owners of *Realschulen* or *Gymnasien* diplomas; the number of apprenticeship drop-outs is therefore in-

¹⁴⁸ Achieved results show that 7.5% of all young people leave school without obtaining any qualification, the 23% with a certificate of *Hauptschule*, the 39% with a certificate of *Realschule* and the 30% with a high school certificate of *Gymnasium*

- creasing (about 25% of the contracts each year), most of all when the *Hauptschüler* is involved, because the training pathways are complex and difficult;
- progressively, this situation falls back on the *Hauptschulen* (traditionally the main apprentice tank) which are becoming schools with the highest concentration of young people with learning difficulties (foreigners with linguistic shortcomings);
 - some “culturally more advanced” apprentices demand higher quality training from companies, which most often is beyond reach for small and medium enterprises.

Due to the evidenced crisis, many disadvantaged audience measures aim to achieve qualification improvement or reuse, both for unemployed people and for those employed workers whose qualifications do not meet sector skill requirements.

The central role of the employment issue for disadvantaged audiences, and the high priority of the migrant people issue, don't mean that Germany has no other adult education activities. Among the deployed offers, in some ways linked to the disadvantaged audiences' problems, it should be noted that many possibilities exist for reusing qualifications obtained from basic education – *Hauptschulabschluss* - or technical proficiency– *Mittlere Reife* – or high school - *Abitur*.

In the adult non formal education domain operate the Volkshochschulen (VHS): municipal educational structures available in over 1000 German towns and districts. Their inspiring principles may be traced back to popular education (*Volksbildung*) of liberal and bourgeois extraction; the range of courses they offer to all population groups is very broad. Foreign language courses, with general and in depth cultural courses are privileged. However, they also offer scholastic rehabilitation courses, while playing an important role in German courses for migrants.

chapter 11

SPECIFIC MEASURES TO SUPPORT SERVICE ACCESS AND SUPPLY QUALITY

11.1 SCOPE DEFINITION

This research report section takes a close look at services implemented by measures adopted in four surveyed countries; the scope definitions of such measures show a common concern for the achievement of:

- target audience reach: adults with special training requirements;
- need determination and classification;
- assignment/reassignment to educational pathways leading to social inclusion, citizenship right claims, satisfactory employability level attainment and protection.

Adult continuing education interventions are naturally at risk of fragmentation and dispersion; they address by necessity a ‘borderline’ territory, open to the initiatives of various institutions and parties, whose actions are concerned with the educational system, social policies, economy and employment; the problem solution is sought by the various measures through programs aiming to achieve cost cohesion and rationalisation, starting from the unification of bodies and services, and moving on to the promotion of networks, partnerships, association and joint venture opportunities.

A further problem stems from the variety and quantity of the available supply, which brings with it a quality control requirement. In some cases we experience the existence of measures dealing with such matter through research projects for the improvement of didactic strategies, and of trainers’ methodologies and professionalism. In other cases control procedures and quality certification mechanisms are introduced, coupled with the creation of their related conformance assessment bodies. Social and occupational policies, in all four surveyed countries, rest upon guidance services towards return to vocational education and training; they are required by the strong differences featured by the adult audiences, specifically by the training and cultural shortages of the target audience considered by this research, coupled with its weakness in the labour market and within society.

11.1 Scope definition

Legislative provisions and measures address the weakest audiences, with special attention paid to the younger groups and to people lacking functional competencies; they also launch disadvantage reduction projects while introducing procedures and mechanisms which can suitably recognise and highlight all formally and informally acquired competencies. The adopted human and social capital development approach goes hand in hand with the country competitiveness protection, through an increase of training actions and of people qualification in general.

Personal self-development projects (both educational and vocational: for all, for workers, for unemployed people in general, for long-term unemployed people) often mark the close of all guidance interventions and of the competence assessment structured procedures. The French “skill review” has been leading the way in their deployment.

Finally, we experience the use of new technologies for adult education in all considered measures, although with different emphasis in each surveyed country, coupled with a commitment to overcome the digital divide. The purpose of using ICT is twofold:

- information and guidance service spreading with a closer reach and greater capillarity;
- improved access and broader participation, in an increasingly rich vocational education and training supply.

Additionally, ICT brings in opportunities to explore and develop new learning methods and environments.

11.2 MOTIVATION, INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE

The measures here considered, aiming to achieve guidance service enhancement while promoting their access in the surveyed countries, are meant to cope with shared and specific issues; these are related to each individual country's policies and/or well defined programmes. Therefore, the topics of this comparative study should fit within a framework comprising the legislative provision, programme or strategy references, which allow to make the adopted measures understandable.

11.2.1 Reference legislative provisions / programmes

In France

An in-depth debate, both political and professional, on guidance role and methodologies has been on-going in France since the '80ies: in this context, a revision of the existing guidance services has been carried out – starting from the student targeted services – and new services have been offered, of generalist or audience specific nature, with localised or inter-institutional features.

Presently, various types of information and guidance services are provided, addressing professions, vocational opportunities and labour market; they frequently feature the possibility to develop customised supporting measures and to operate reception services based on the proximity principle.

The most important guidance services are:

- organised by National Education;
- locally promoted by inter-institutional partnerships or by local institutions.

The latter type of services targets adult audiences, specifically. Among these:

- the network of Information and Vocational Training Houses (MIF); there are 40 of them across the national territory, open to any type of audience arriving from the educational system; they specialise in providing reception services, information, guidance and in supporting adult professional placement;
- the Continuing Education Houses (MEP); promoted by the municipalities, they offer information about adult education opportunities, mostly targeted to personal cultural development advancements;
- the *Missions Locales* – established in 1982 as an appendix of the Inter-ministerial delegation for young people placements, they are made of territorial services for young people, aged between 16 and 25, dismissed by the education system and experiencing social and professional placement difficulties.

Workers are entitled to a “*Bilan de compétences*” (Skills review), granted by the Labour Code. The competence balance was adopted as a continuing education mechanism in 1991; however, it first appeared in the '80ies as a tool supporting people involved in

company reorganisations when returning to work, or moving to different professional contexts. It is referenced also by the 2004 Law on continuing vocational training and it may be found in the list of activities recommended by guidance and job search services.

In Germany

The German Social Code (Sozialgesetzbuch - SGB) contains the most relevant legal provisions towards supporting guidance and vocational training; they are targeted to workers and to less advantaged people. In its Volume III (SGB III – Labour promotion) regulations are set out for all services provided to facilitate apprenticeship, vocational training, occupational placement and replacement, professional update, job reassignment and its related guidance; such services are provided by the Labour Federal Agency (Bundesagentur für Arbeit – BA), headquartered in Nuremberg with local offices in most cities.

Among the recently implemented services there is counselling and guidance for young school or apprenticeship leavers; this service includes a competence balance and a redirection activity. The Federal Agency local offices, in every city, mainly focus their counselling on vocational training, with no aim to provide a more generic cultural training. Over the past few years, the Federal Ministry of Education and Research has been integrating legislative provisions with specific continuing education programmes; these programmes fostered the creation of many local education and vocational training guidance agencies, within a number of territorial networks. In general, evidence may be gathered that active labour policies are developed showing, at the core of their interventions and with a concern for dedicated institution integration, the implementation of services and guidance actions combined with support actions which are not just meant to maintain social welfare.

In The United Kingdom

The *National Skills Strategy*¹⁴⁹ aims to achieve – among other objectives – the availability of compensatory interventions for people who do not hold *basic skills*, which are rated as the essential element towards the attainment of strategic objectives, such as: workforce qualification level increase and consequential economic system competitiveness growth. The *National Skills Strategy* acknowledges the decisively important role played by an adult information, guidance and support service, whereby individuals are helped understanding the available opportunities and supporting actions, towards participation enhancement and vocational training demand increase. Within this strategic programme, the 2004 reform of the national guidance service *Information, Advice and Guidance* – IAG defined:

¹⁴⁹ This strategy, launched by the Labour Government in 2003, aims to bridge or narrow down the human resource qualification level gap between the UK and each of its main competitor countries. The *National Skills Strategy* sets out the Government plans towards the improvement of the nation's cultural and professional assets; each individual should obtain help for her/his own employability to increase, enterprises should obtain assistance for their results to improve and for national productivity to maintain a growth trend.

- which services an adult user is entitled to expect;
- the service provision standards.

The reform converted the IAG into an integrated service, where all main institutions and organisations with an essential role in employment and vocational training are actively involved. The assurance of the service quality standard is based on the accreditation of the service providing body, for compliance to the national standard “Matrix Standard”, as certified by the EMCQ - East Midland Quality Centre. The “IAG service” provided by the accredited centre operates in integration with the Learndirect on-line services, and with the Job Centre Plus¹⁵⁰ and the Worktrain¹⁵¹ services.

The Department for Education and Skills (DfES) and the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) define the service terms of operation and its implementation norms, while the Learning and Skills Council¹⁵² takes responsibility for the service national coordination and makes available the necessary financial contributions, as prescribed by the annual strategic plans. Job Centre Plus, the DWP operational body, targets people seeking a new job (unemployed) and seeking first job (never employed), who are eligible for income subsidy.

The IAG reform's three main points (information, advisory, guidance), in line with the European Memorandum proposed directions, facilitate the task of bringing service access within everybody's reach, aim to provide “personal need” centric guidance, identify training requirements and acquired skills, refer the IAG service users to the relevant bodies; they also provide the in training adults with available financial support information and directions.

In addition to the national standard conformance guarantee the service meets specific local requirements; regional service differences may result from this.

The here referenced policies and objectives apply throughout the UK; however, careful consideration should be taken of the UK' strong territorial autonomy, regulated by the different bodies responsible for the implementation of the governmental central policies. The institutions of Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland transpose London Government launched directives, to make them their own and implement them through appropriate bodies, ensuring they include specific aspects which meet the territorial requirements they are concerned with.

Sweden

In this country the Adult motivation, information and guidance services are robustly structured and well spread across the territory.

¹⁵⁰ The *JobCentre Plus* services target income subsidy eligible new job (unemployed) and first job seekers (never employed).

¹⁵¹ *Worktrain* is a Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) website; it provides information and guidance about jobs and training.

¹⁵² The LSC is a *Learning and Skills Act 2000* established body, tasked with the coordination and financing actions for continuing and secondary.

These services are definitely made available by any type of organisation actively involved in the system (public and private schools, employment centres, adult education residential centres, trade unions); they are meant to develop interventions targeted to motivate adult participation in vocational training¹⁵³, to inform and support any individual's approach to the definition of her/his vocational training pathway, while identifying and selecting the most appropriate available choices. The information service is mainly delivered via the Internet. Financial interventions are provided by: State, for motivational services, distributed through the Employment Centres; Several sources, for guidance services; a basic contribution is paid by the municipalities.

At the heart of the intervention planning and organisation system there are the main decentralisation actors: municipalities. They autonomously define an "Adult Education Plan" which meets local requirements brought forward by individuals; through the plan, the intended activities are specified. Municipalities are held responsible for reaching all individuals entitled to basic vocational education, and to participation in educational measures targeted to immigrants, while encouraging them to join the ongoing activities.

Issues dealt with by the measures

Among the issues dealt with by the measures examined for this report, some – with changing emphasis – are earmarked for priority action in all four countries; they refer to:

- guidance required by young adults who experience social and cultural problems, with a weak labour market status;
- definition of professional and educational development projects for the individual, also through the identification of customised guidance procedures and mechanisms;
- service provision fragmentation risk;
- service access proximity and user reach.

11.2.2 Guidance required by young adults who experience social and cultural problems, with a weak labour market status

This is a priority issue in all four countries, either targeted by specific measures or, alternatively, targeted by measures which place the issue within the general framework of the guidance services for adults experiencing difficulties; such services mostly aim to establish supporting relations for social and professional inclusion. The measures examined for this report are contained in welfare policies and, more often, in labour policies, because of their main concern for fighting unemployment.

¹⁵³ Such interventions also comprise structured courses for easier training participation and level achievement in 2-6 months.

Guidance service operations for this specific target may be managed through the deployment of specialised teams; they often work in collaboration, or integrated, with social and welfare services; youth in distress problem solutions are thus sought by joint efforts. The intended interventions are normally aimed at each individual, through those basic skill recovery actions which allow an individual's effective management of her/his own social and working life.

In France

The issue is at the core of the specific *Missions Locales: youth welcome, information, placement*.

The services involved target young people, aged between 16 and 25, with social and professional placement difficulties. They first appeared within the welfare policy context, to be spread throughout the national territory (there are over 400 of them) and to provide a tool for policies aiming to achieve social integration and cohesion. Legally, these services are an association bringing together State and public bodies (35%), Regions (20%), Departments (6%), Municipalities (29%), European Social Fund (10%).

The multidisciplinary teams involved may take responsibility, with a customised approach, for different types of youth issues, regarding lodging, health, vocational training, drug addiction, leisure time, etc.

The French Measure *Journée d'appel de préparation à la Défense – JAPD* (Assessment of the illiteracy state of young people and guidance to training)¹⁵⁴, targets young citizens aged 16-17 and aims to capture their training shortages.

The guidance measure is an integral part of the JAPD mechanism, a one day training for young citizens which incorporates an assessment enabling the identification of any problems in basic skills; those affected by illiteracy conditions or lacking sufficient literacy skills are referred to guidance services and to training activities, for help in basic skill recovery¹⁵⁵.

In Germany

In this country, where guidance services are mostly operated through the Federal Employment Agency territorial branches, Volume III of the German Social Code (*Sozialgesetzbuch - SGB*) sets out the regulations which address young people and

¹⁵⁴ JAPD – Defence Preparation Day replacing, since 1998, the former (compulsory) military service with a one day training in civil rights and duties for all young citizens aged 17-18. Evidence of training participation must be obtained and is a necessary supporting document for driving license and study certificates to be issued by the relevant authorities.

¹⁵⁵ At the time of the international seminar (ISFOL, Rome, 16 January 2006) a measure pitfall was found: as a matter of fact, an individual's ascertained functional literacy shortage does not necessarily call for action on the individual's problem. Some young illiterates, *if they so wish*, may apply with the *Missions Locales* to access guidance or seek a job; however, this voluntary choice is psychologically difficult for a culturally disadvantaged young person.

other less favoured social groups, their motivation to re-enter vocational training and their individual guidance when social and cultural difficulties need to be overcome.

Some other measures, among those examined, concurrently address guidance as a service and as a complex set of actions within a more general target audience framework, including youth as well because of its concern for social and professional inclusion of all disadvantaged adults.

The German Measure *Lernende Regionen – Förderung von Netzwerken* (Network promotion – Learning regions), although aimed at a topic somewhat different from the one considered by this section, is a case in point: in a number of territories this Measure triggered network projects which revolved around the issues raised by youth guidance, e.g.: transition from school to work, but also raised by the need to facilitate occupational opportunities and choices. Additionally, these projects seek a solution to the problem of making management of vast amounts of vocational training information less difficult, possibly through the deployment of online portals, enabling country wide dissemination and individual counselling.

The German Measure *Innovative measures to fight unemployment* – is meant to facilitate the social and professional inclusion of disadvantaged adults and young adults; the measure targets the local Employment Agencies and the Social Welfare Agencies, while aiming to improve their collaboration; to such effect, the measure promoted the creation of the so called *Job-Centres*, which are currently implementing the combined guidance, advisory and support functions performed by the Social Welfare Offices, Minors Office, Housing Office, Drug Addiction and Indebtedness Advisory Centres, in addition to the traditional Employment Agency services; the *Job-Centre* creation is in accordance with the provisions made by the “Hartz”¹⁵⁶ Reform. Each Centre user is granted an adviser, who is charge of keeping contacts with companies allowing job vacancy identification and selection.

This measure is mainly concerned with overcoming the passive attitude induced in the individual by forms of welfare, combined with lack of jobs or occupational opportunities; that's why active collaboration between the two Agencies' social and guidance services is sought, towards the achievement of occupational placement/replacement.

In the United Kingdom

A specific measure, among those examined, addresses youth audience guidance issues, i.e.: The English Measure *Connexions*, an *Information, Advisory and Guidance Service*, modelled on demand and requirements typical of young people aged 13 to 19¹⁵⁷. The service aim is to provide adequate support to youngsters in whatever sector, with help in making proper decisions, encouragement to continue their studies after compul-

¹⁵⁶ The “Hartz” reform (named after the president of the Expert Commission which worked out proposals later turned into a Government Law) introduced changes to the Social Code (*Sozialgesetzbuch*), between 2002 and 2005, in its Volume III specifically, with the main objective of bringing together Labour Agency and Municipal allowances and services (such as the unemployment and placement allowance and the social welfare services).

¹⁵⁷ 25 year olds, when disabled and/or learning difficulty persons are involved.

sory school and job seeking assistance. Additionally, the advisory service directs them to participate in vocational training to deal with various social and family problem aspects. Similarly to Germany, the service operation is managed by a country wide synergy¹⁵⁸ among organisations responsible for social services, youth delinquency, vocational guidance, youth services, local education authorities and drug working groups.

Additional guidance interventions, planned within the New Deal Programme¹⁵⁹ measures, aim to help people in making projects towards their own professional inclusion. One such example is the Measure New Deal for Young People 18-24, addressing young unemployed Jobseekers Allowance (JSA) recipients in this age range. For those who fail to find a job in 6 months an interview is arranged at a Jobcentre Plus local site, with a New Deal Programme adviser. In this meeting a preliminary knowledge and skill assessment is conducted, towards an employment leading (training based) competence improvement action plan.

The presence of a personal guidance adviser is specified within the Measure New Deal for Lone Parents, which is not dealing with guidance services but with a special kind of user's guidance needs: over 16 "lone" parents whose child is less than 16, who are jobless or whose part-time job is not exceeding 16 hours per week. A personal adviser assists all user's activities and constantly supports a user's job seeking. Measure participation rates show an almost exclusive participation by women.

Important innovations were introduced by the National Skills Strategy intervention commitment, towards filling the adult/young adult population basic skill deficit. Among these, a telephone help-line delivering course selection information and guidance, to match one's own requirements with guidance expert advice. This service fits within the *Learndirect* Measure, which provides vocational training online courses for over 16 young people and for adults.

In Sweden

Measures including guidance services for unemployed and less favoured audiences, mostly young people, fit within the labour policies and deploy guidance interventions towards personal advancement and action plan making. Because of that, such measures are considered in what follows.

11.2.3 Definition of professional and educational development projects for the individual, also through the identification of customised guidance procedures and mechanisms

It appears from the examined measures that three out of four surveyed countries adopted customised guidance procedures and mechanisms, which use *interviews* to facilitate individuals' ability to self-determine their direction, supported

¹⁵⁸ Between 2001 and 2003, 47 partnerships were formed.

¹⁵⁹ The *New Deal Programme* was launched in 1997 by the UK Government to be implemented by the *Department of Work and Pensions (DWP)* in support of the unemployed, or never employed, population transition from welfare to employment.

by specialist personnel (tutor, personal adviser, etc.), and which end up defining an individual's own vocational advancement and/or training plan.

In general, these mechanisms come with active labour policies and are therefore regulated by the regulations on the agreed settlement of a dispute, with the exception of the German *ProfilPASS* Measure (aimed at certification) which introduces a guidance procedure and is specifically designed for lifelong learning and for non formal and formal learning recognition.

In France

This country owns the most popular Measure: *Bilan de compétences* (Skills review). The measure envisages 5-6 meetings with an expert centre adviser, to assess competencies held by individuals and, broadly speaking, the vocational prospects which may form the basis of a new professional project definition. The adviser action is performed with specific methodological tools and requires, as a consequence, specialist operators.

Although the measure is part of an active labour policy, vocational training is also called into play, because any realistic change opportunity requires participation in ad hoc vocational training activities.

The measure benefits are drawn by :

- employed workers holding an indefinite contract: when authorised by their employer they may claim their right to a competence budget during working hours, and within the company's vocational training plan; costs (about Euro 1,200) are debited to the relevant OPC-A¹⁶⁰ or to the inter-professional body responsible for individual training leave financing;
- fixed-term contract workers: the same benefits are granted, provided their experience spans across two consecutive years, with no interruptions, or two years accrued through worked periods;
- job seekers: these may freely draw benefits through the ANPE (National Employment Agency) within the framework of State funded return to work plans.

In Sweden

The examined measures attach special relevance to the guidance intervention customisation, while interviews are rated as a pivotal tool towards achieving professional placement and replacement, coupled with career advancement.

Workers employed by companies undersigning union collective contracts which contemplate the adoption of Measure, Interview for personal competencies and career development, are entitled to such interview. The interview is meant to help the worker's own professional role advancement plan definition, with due consideration of personal circumstances and of employer's prospects and needs. Interviews may be held face to face or they may be arranged to take place online, based on web application use; individual competence maps are obtained from interviews, coupled with

¹⁶⁰ Bilateral Peer Bodies (*Organismes Paritaires Collecteure Agrées – OPCA*) responsible for collecting funds, such as enterprise contributions and partners agreed training plan financial resources.

the identification of any possible asset each individual may provide to an employer organisation, and of any personal realistic prospects for career and competence advancement. Presently, Swedish trade unions are also providing these services and interviews towards their members career and competence advancement.

The Swedish Measure *Interviews*, targets unemployed people aged over 20, in addition to people with disabilities and labour market weak inclusion. The measure grants free guidance service provision and introduces the customised interview procedure, ending up with the definition of an individual competence advancement plan, which includes vocational training targeted actions in whatever educational pathway, through University, work experiences, traineeship in enterprise work environments, contributions towards enterprise making. Individual competence advancement plans – also called “job seeker plans” – aim to achieve the involved worker return to work or re-entry in a labour market requirement matching vocational pathway. Swedish Measure *Aktivitetsgarantin* (Guarantee Activity Programme) for long term unemployed people aged over 20, who have been jobless at least 24 months, is meant to ensure that an individual tutor monitors the worker’s progress. The tutor’s work aims to reconstruct the worker’ self-esteem and motivation for a labour market project remake, through the definition of an individual Action Plan.

In The United Kingdom

Although in this country no specific measure has appeared, such as the other countries’ measures allowing the identification of advancement projects, a *customisation concept* may be perceived in the guidance services implemented by the examined measures, when such services address the search of viable paths, leading to social and professional inclusion, in addition to the development of multiple training choices. The customisation concept has been clearly found in measures:

- *New Deal for Lone Parents*, which makes a personal adviser available to its target audience, while placing help actions in a broadly conceived guidance context comprising: self-esteem development, individual’s competencies identification and their prospects in the labour market, operational aspects such as job vacancy application submission, child care support and vocational training opportunity identification;
- *Connexions*, where a service feature is the creation of young users’ personal profiles, to be maintained and updated over time. The young unemployed action plan, which results from the guidance interview in Measure “*New Deal for Young People 18-24*”, is the outcome of a customised advisory service as well.
- *Learndirect*, where the telephone help-line delivering information and expert supported guidance to make a suitable course identification and selection, provides a user requirement driven service case.

In Germany

The German Measure *Certification of academic learning and work-based learning (ProfilPASS)* implements the *ProfilPASS* mechanism. The mechanism induced

self-investigation process, of one's own biography, is coupled with professional conducted guidance. The process encourages a deep self-confrontation with one's own doings and exploited competencies, towards the awareness acquisition of one's own strengths and weaknesses. It is a useful tool for:

- one's own professional advancement planning;
- return to working life preparation;
- personal and professional direction and re-direction;
- forthcoming vocational training project planning.

11.2.4 Service provision fragmentation risk

In some cases an attempt is made to cope with the concern here expressed by forming partnerships, or by collaborations and service integration approaches.

National policies seem to be drifting towards an intervention rearrangement, with a twofold objective: to convert welfare policies into workfare policies, and to reduce service costs. A case in point is the 'Hartz' Reform in Germany, which aims to achieve the unification of Employment Agency (unemployment and placement) allowances and Social Welfare (guidance and brokering) services.

Similarly, the move (from welfare to work) is among the objectives of the United Kingdom decision to establish the *Job Centre Plus*. Launched in 2002, the *JCP* unified the Employment Service Job Centres and those *Benefit Agency* sectors providing services for income allowance recipients.

In the United Kingdom, *Measure Connexions* aims to establish standing collaboration and integration practices among various services, operated towards guidance provision, for young people aged 13-19, by organisations responsible for social services, youth delinquency, vocational guidance, youth services, *local education authorities* and drug addiction working groups.

In this country, the overall national guidance service reform converted the IAG into an integrated service, bringing together all main institutions and organisations which play an essential role in vocational training and employment.

In France the Skills Review Centres (CIBC), spread across the national territory, operate in liaison with ANPEs, *Missions Locales*, Regions and Municipalities. Their cohabitation with the Adult Training Centres (such as the GRETA Centres) emphasizes their tight collaborative work in driving people towards training projects resulting from guidance and balance interventions.

11.2.5 Service access proximity and user reach

In the four surveyed countries two different and, at times, complementary or integrated strategies concur to achieve information, advisory and guidance service proximity:

- territorial spreading;
- new technology deployment.

Capillary spreading of guidance services in France and Germany is achieved through:

- the presence in France of the National Education services (such as, specifically, the CIOs – Information and Guidance Centres for audiences of all kinds, with students and their families getting privileged attention) and of local services promoted by inter-institutional partnerships or by local institutions, with network services in evidence for adults and the already described *Missions Locales* for young people;
- the establishment, in Germany, of the Federal Employment Agency (*Bundesagentur für Arbeit* - BA) with its well distributed local offices, active in many of the examined measures, dealing with guidance, occupational brokering, apprenticeship vacancy search; the Agency is responsible for vocational training allowance management, continuing education, disabled person professional placement, unemployment allowances.

Both in France and in Germany information provided by many of the available services may be found through their web sites as well. In the UK, guidance service delivery is largely technology supported. The Job Centre Plus organisation allows their services to be delivered either directly, through face to face meetings, or through a phone line active 7 days a week, or through a website. Additionally, their services are in constant and active collaboration with the *Learndirect* on-line and phone services, the most actively ICT based distant learning Measure, and with the phone *Learndirect Helpline* for guidance services. The latter have been very well received by users¹⁶¹; users' evaluation has been expressed by many positive opinions, rating the advice received as an incentive in determining their own training participation to continue or to be resumed.

Learndirect deploys a network of 2000 centres, spread across the territories of England, Wales and Northern Ireland. In the Scottish territory *Learndirect Scotland* operates similarly, in collaboration with the UK-online centres, bringing therefore to 8000 the total number of deployed active centres.

To increase the centres' visibility and to achieve maximum user involvements, they have been made available in student places such as libraries, in consumer places such as supermarkets or shopping centres and in transit locations such as town main streets and tourist attraction areas.

The Connexions Service, has a similar objective, i.e.: a 10% decrease, between 2002 and 2004, of the number of 16 – 18 year olds who are not involved in the training system, yet. This service is tuned on young target audience requirements; therefore, its provided information, advisory and guidance contacts are largely based on friendly user interface technology (user - adviser chat, mobile and fixed line phone SMS messaging).

In Sweden ICT use is mostly connected with distance learning innovative methodologies¹⁶². However, when guidance actions are required, even the "Interview for personal competencies and career development" may be carried out through web supported sessions, in addition to its normal face to face approach.

¹⁶¹ Over 6 million calls answered since 1998. Users are women by large majority; they hold recent vocational training experiences and medium-high qualification levels; however, they need placement in the labour market.

¹⁶² To access information and data regarding quality of internet based vocational training supply see Measure "On line information on the vocational training offer". The city of Göteborg provides the model for the analysis.

11.3 NEW TECHNOLOGIES FOR DISTANCE LEARNING

In all four countries, new technologies are attracting increasing adult education policy attention. Their deployment in distance learning, as we gather from the examined measures, aims to achieve several objectives, as per the following summary:

- vocational training adult participation enhancement, by proximity-based distance learning offers;
- vocational training supply and spreading enrichment;
- digital divide barriers elimination, by Internet based job searching;
- new learning environment creation within an e-learning usage framework and improved didactical methodologies, coupled with greater flexibility.

In Sweden and in the UK these measures led to the creation of learning infrastructures, based on free Internet access, spread country-wise and used as socialisation and aggregation places as well.

Proximity-based vocational training supply and services, and their most capillary spreading, are both enhanced by new technologies (yet, the *digital divide* problem should not be left unattended, since it still affects broad adult population sectors); ICT and special telephone services have been deployed, as previously mentioned – especially in the UK – towards guidance action delivery, with a specific concern for young people groups more keen on their use.

The Job Centre Plus services make use of ICTs; however, the most active user of ICT in distance learning is Measure *Learndirect*. This measure is one of the National Skills Strategy implementation key elements, where it plays a most essential role:

- in programmes towards broadened vocational training participation;
- in *Skills for Life* programme implementation;
- in the reformed IAG service deployment.

In addition to including the already mentioned *Learndirect Helpline* telephone line, *Learndirect* is an Internet portal with vocational training courses on offer for distance learning participants, covering the widest range of sectors and specialisations, and leading to all *Further Education* qualification levels (level 2 – level 4) with certificates issued for basic competence levels (entry level – level 1).

The portal has been developed and launched by the *University for Industry* (Ufi) in 2000, following a Government mandate for a broader training activity participation and for reaching parts of the population which make no use of traditional forms of training supply.

To date, about 550 courses are available. Mostly on-line, they are organised in flexible modules. Each module specifies the average number of hours required to complete it; however, each participant may feel free to take the time required according to her/his own judgement and learning ability.

It is worth noting that course attendance may be offered wherever Internet access is available (home or work), in addition to thousands of *Learndirect* centre premises. *Learndirect* has a network of 2000 centres spread across the English, Wales and Northern Ireland territories. *Learndirect Scotland* operates similarly across the territory of Scotland, in collaboration with the *UK-online* centres, bringing to 8000 the number of centres deployed across the national territory, overall.

In Sweden

The measure objective here considered (proximity-based training supply and its spreading) is coupled with the creation of new learning environments, in addition to the promotion of research aiming to improve increasingly more flexible didactical methodologies, for their use when network projects need to be managed based on Municipality decentralisation, with the involvement of training bodies and organisations. The *E-learning promotion* Measure target audience (Municipalities and training organisations) may obtain support in several ways towards the development of various types of flexible learning promotion. The *Flexible Learning National Centre* is in charge of managing an infrastructure granting financial benefits for Distance Learning enhancements, including blended learning approaches; collaboration towards integration of flexible learning solutions, within the training activities delivered by various kinds of organisations, is promoted; benefits are made available to network establishment initiatives, creating connections between training actors and small municipality associations (allowing to reach the 30,000 inhabitant threshold); such networks enable the establishment of a *Learning Centre* infrastructure for shared use with the following features:

- non stop public service availability,
- long term planning possibility,
- planned development quality standard compliance.

The *Learning Centre* is a meeting point where adults may find support and resources for their own learning. Normally, it is hosted in a large building with various types of training and labour related organisations. Unification allows them to benefit from shared services, among which distance learning services, including those addressing leisure time.

Notwithstanding its efficient organisation, e-learning is still lacking sufficient participation.

In France

The “Access to Internet” examined Measure aims to bring people in distress to overcome the *digital divide*, by developing their ability to perform job seeking activities on the Internet, autonomously. The measure targets job seeking adults under ANPE supervision; it is essentially a very short training package (14 hours) and it is meant to lead to the acquisition of basic Internet access skills.

The acquired skills should not be confused with the professional competencies which allow to apply for jobs in the ICT sector; they are just the minimum knowledge and skills required to get started with Internet use (surfing, communicating and

searching), before furthering the development of more advanced skills. The ANPEs manage this measure by entering agreements with mostly private training agencies, to set up the required training modules; the ANPEs also keep unemployed people informed of available opportunities, while supporting their attempts to seize them.

Training module access is free and supported by a Ministry of Labour website, dedicated to job seeking. At module completion a final test is taken, granting the issue of the Ministry of Labour NSI Certificate, as an acknowledgment of the holder's Internet navigator proficiency.

11.4 COMPETENCE RECOGNITION AND CERTIFICATION: TARGET AUDIENCES, PROCEDURES, STRATEGIES AND RELATED MECHANISMS

Competencies acquired through formal learning channels are generally documented and recognised; non formal and informal competence recognition is more difficult to achieve. In lifelong learning strategies, and in labour policies, the need for such recognition is a core problem, which triggers a guidance action tightly related practice, required by the necessary definition of individually tailored vocational and/or professional advancement projects.

Activities aiming to attach transparency and value to non formal and informal competencies – until their certification may be obtained – are carried out as supporting practices for the examined guidance services and for the definition of the development pathways which may follow; these activities are based upon the exploratory review of the individual's overall competencies, at interview and counselling time, in a guided phase of biographical self-consideration for the discovery of one's own attitudes and the search of a more consistent inclusion/re-inclusion, in professional life or in training/vocational activities.

In addition to the above type of actions, France and Sweden introduce measures specifically targeted to structuring the assessment procedures of informal and non formal competence, acquired in specific working environments providing competence documentation and certification mechanisms. The objective is to make adult holders of credentials for employability and easier career advancement more widely spread across the population.

In both countries the deployed mechanisms represent forms of eligibility to rights granted by the labour policies; such rights may be claimed by workers on continuing education pathways, within the lifelong learning strategies framework.

Validation procedures normally have costs attached, in some cases partly covered, and mostly when the measure involved is adopted within a continuing education pathway. For instance in Sweden, if the measure is adopted within an enterprise plan for workforce development, towards enhanced competitiveness and career advancement, the costs attached are covered by the enterprise. Additional service cost coverage is also provided, in the same country, by means of a study loan for over 50ies. In France, free access to the "Validation of knowledge through experience" – VAE is granted, but the (optional) technical assistance services cost Euro 600 to 3,000; these services may be required by the complex operations the measure implies: from the identification of the most adequate study certificate, to the provision of a dossier, highlighting the individual experience significant aspects, up to a final interview and/or test.

In this country the measure targets adults holding (3 year) professional and (4 year) voluntary experiences, to confirm the validity of competencies related to the study certificate applied for, including the possibility of an assessment by a

11.4 Competence recognition and certification:

*target audiences,
procedures,
strategies
and adopted
mechanisms*

professional jury¹⁶³, and to ensure that such certificate grants access to the professional diplomas.

VAE participants may be:

- (indefinite or fixed term contract) employed workers, eligible for a (24 hour) VAE leave with partial or total cost refund; refunds are issued by the bilateral organisation for continuing vocational education (FONGECIF), in charge of CIF (Individual Training Leave) management;
- temporary workers, eligible for the same benefits;
- unemployed people, with no measure provided benefits; eligible for different kinds of interventions (awards or vouchers) by regional councils and municipalities.

In both countries these examined measures introduce validating bodies or entities, with their related services.

In France the VAE implementation has created validating bodies for all types of training agencies which issue study certificates, from Ministries (National Education, Agriculture, Social Affairs, Defence, Culture), to Chambers of Commerce, Industry, schools and higher education institutions; it also created adequate information and advisory centres, while alerting the reception and guidance service network.

The Swedish government established a Commission tasked with the development of process quality and of its validation methods. Service management is the responsibility of a Validation Centre, deploying a network of valiators (professional competence companies, experts, agencies, schools, etc.).

In Germany, the examined certification measures differ; they show this country' special interest in introducing detection and validation procedures and in making them available to the lifelong learning structures, for adult informal competencies most of all. Government funded research projects, with contributions from the European Social Fund, produced and tested mechanisms targeting all adults, not necessarily employed workers only.

The ProfilPASS provides a case in point; its test phase has just reached completion. This measure was specifically designed for lifelong learning participation to gain momentum and for a stronger private initiative, based on the acknowledgement of informally and non formally acquired competencies, with greater emphasis on equal opportunities, vocational training participation and horizontal or vertical mobility. The biographical self-exploratory process, supported by professional adviser conducted guidance, includes 5 sections which:

- make individual competence development pathways visible;
- draw up a balance from them;

¹⁶³ Juries – about 500 – usually include in their composition 50% educational institutions personnel, 50% professional sector experts.

- help each individual with the definition of a personal advancement plan;
- complete the process by “gathering certificates, compliance statements and other documents”.

The Measure was developed within the framework of the federal project Weiterbildungspass mit Zertifizierung informellen Lernens (Further training passport with informal learning certification), for inclusion in the model searching Continuing Education Programme, under the auspices of the State-Regions Commission tasked with vocational training programmes and research support (BLK).

Additionally, this country has a number of research programmes funded by Measure *LiWE – Learning in adult continuing education structures*; some of these fit within the thematic sector *Transparency and recognition of professionally relevant competence. Toolkits and implementation strategies* (monitored by DIE, Bonn) and focus on the following objectives:

- creation and maintenance of a portfolio containing relevant informally acquired occupational competencies; this is targeted to adult course participants (Alzey and Worms Bildungswerk Professional Craft Centre);
- creation of networks interconnecting small and medium enterprises with Continuing Education, by means of surveys and workshops for drawing up proper competence balances (*Im zentrum* Service Company; Berlin);
- adaptation to the German context of the French *Bilan des compétences* (*Pscherer* Vocational Training Institute; Lengenfeld);
- establishment of a modular guidance and advisory system for immigrants, towards the recognition of informal competence and qualifications, acquired in foreign countries (Göttingen Institute of Applied Cultural Sciences).

11.5 SUPPLY QUALITY ASSURANCE

The surveyed countries take an active role in evaluation and control of what is supplied by the various continuing education structures; to that end, they use measures which are meant to avoid that quality is adversely affected by initiative quantity and fragmentation. The adopted procedures are not just technical and/or bureaucratic; they rather aim (with various levels of emphasis) to acknowledge the training activity adult participant's ability to evaluate; therefore, they include didactical, methodological and pedagogical aspects which are based on adult learning principles (learning should be self-directed, target oriented, related to everyday and working life content; an understanding of the relationship between common sense and formal, discipline formed, knowledge should be sought; etc). In general, it's true to say that the adopted mechanism aims to keep coupled the supply quality control and the proposed training pathway customisation requirement, raised by different adult audiences, while supporting method and content innovation. Measures require the establishment of validating bodies or control commissions. In the UK this requirement has been met and supplemented by an inspection regulatory framework.

Organisations and training actors complying with quality granting measures – with some model dependent differences – accept to be involved in the evaluation process and to develop pedagogical projects consistently with demand and customisation needs.

A case in point: the French Measure *APP Measure – Individual educational workshops* – (Basic cultural and technological competencies for low training level people, aged over 16). The APP is a learning ‘place’ activated by (so called “APP carrier”) bodies entitled to use such INPI¹⁶⁴ registered mark. The ‘carrier’ body, through an agreement with a Ministry of Labour Regional Delegation (DRTEFP), has a commitment for the development of an annual APP pedagogical project; the project must be based on the analysis of the basic cultural and technological competence requirements, brought forward by the measure most important target audience, i.e.:

- young school leavers aged 16 – 25 who hold no study certificates nor qualifications;
- low level qualification unemployed;
- mothers returning to work;
- prisoners;
- employed workers individually fitting in the framework of the enterprise training plan, eligible for individual training leave.

¹⁶⁴ Industrial Property National Institute, a branch of the General Delegation for Employment and Vocational Training (DGEFP).

The APP basic principles include territorial coverage, non-stop public reception, network based operations. Basic competence learning by adults may benefit from short term “accompanied self-learning” opportunities, arranged on a territorial basis with flexibility and customisation features, independent from any professional training proximity access activity.

The DRTEFP hosts a Guidance and Support Committee, in charge of evaluating the pedagogical project and the quality of the performed activities, through the territorial spreading of its antennas (about 800 in 2004). All activities are State funded, with contributions from Regions, Municipalities and continuing education Peer Bodies.

In Germany the Measure Certification and development of VET structures quality – *LQW2 - Lernorientierte Qualitätstestierung in der Weiterbildung* (Certification and development of VET structures quality) is the only quality certification model studied for continuing education, starting from continuing education. Unlike the French model, the procedure may be applied to all continuing education vocational agencies requiring it, when they apply for the issue of a certificate, a necessary supporting document for institutions implementing publicly funded measures.

The mechanism stems from a unitary project of the model researching programme arranged by the Continuing Education Federal-Regional Commission (*BLK LLL*)¹⁶⁵.

The *LQW2* represents a trans-regional ISO 9000 alternative model, with less bureaucratic procedures, more suitable to promoting innovation in continuing education structures. The *LQW2* aims to perform a more “pedagogical” quality assurance test, based on an internal assessment system (process assessment), through the analysis of 11 quality environments, and an external assessment system, through an evaluator commission. The vocational training body personnel is fully involved in the review process, bringing the procedure towards a growingly shared responsibility and structure organisation internal quality improvement.

Quality Control, unlike previous measures, in the UK is based on inspections; it does not address adult continuing education structures specifically, it rather impacts the whole vocational education and training system; it is performed in accordance with the *Individual Training Leave (CIF)* regulating the inspection activities of the *Adult Learning Inspectorate*, which concentrate on each individual's experience assessment and may be adapted to the various types of vocational training and their delivering bodies (further education colleges, adult and community learning, *Learndirect*, on-the-job training, etc).

The inspection analysis is twofold:

- it provides a general judgement about that type of vocational training effectiveness and efficiency, in relation to the participants' requirements and to the

¹⁶⁵ The model has been researched since 2000 in 3 phases:

- pilot (2000-2002) – contracted by the BLK LLL to start training and promote the model research;
- test (2002-2003) – to experiment the *LQW2* model;
- implementation (06.2003 – 05.2005).

- possible requirements;
- it takes a close look at both educational personnel and students, using interviews to analyse 5 key points of vocational training:
 - results achieved by participants;
 - tuition, learning and training effectiveness;
 - proposed programmes and activities versus participants' needs and interests;
 - guidance and support services;
 - management and *leadership* effectiveness in result achievement and participant support.

The Swedish municipality model offered by Goteborg with Measure *Online Information on the vocational training offer*, proposes a bottom-up quality control of the municipal training services, using the Internet and their users' evaluation ability, while providing interesting clues for a possible mechanism further extension to the adult education organisations.

This quality management model (the *balanced scorecard*) makes arrangements for constantly monitoring the quality of all provided services, with online publishing of performance level data. Before any service is selected from the relevant database, citizens may access a vast amount of informative input about the selected service providing organisation, including comparative analysis of organisations providing the same type of service.

11.6 QUALITY OF TRAINERS

Next to the quality assurance measures applied to the introduction of control systems, and of certification mechanisms and models, two programmes addressing less advantaged adult audiences have been surveyed in Germany and in the UK; the programmes aim to encourage return to vocational training (mostly for professional qualification recovering, level raising and/or updating purposes) to achieve trainer professionalism, didactic strategy and methodology improvements. To this end, competence centric research projects have been launched in Germany, while in the UK a programme has been started for teaching method renovation, based on production and dissemination of didactic material specifically targeted to vocational training of the culturally poor adult population.

The Measure *Lernen in Weiterbildungen - LiWE* fits within a series of sector research and development programmes, financed by Government also through the European Social Fund; firstly, these programmes try to cope with the severe unemployed person re-conversion and professional requalification problem, brought about by the German reunification. Among these, Programme *Lernkultur Kompetenzentwicklung* (Learning Culture and Competence Development), whose thematic sectors include the *LiWE* measure, aims to facilitate the on-the-job learning intensity, the enhancement of professional competencies and of competence maintenance strategies for the unemployed.

The *LiWE* measure promotes documented research and training activities for continuing education personnel, to achieve its expertise in self-learning and review processes adopted by adults cognition styles. The measure finances a total of 36 projects with deliverables such as:

- preliminary study and research publishing;
- pilot projects in seven thematic areas, focused on personnel development based on a new learning culture, addressing;
- innovation promotion in continuing education organisations and structures;
- professionally relevant competence recognition, including competencies acquired in different action contexts.

In the UK, the *Embedded Learning* measure fits within the *National Skills Strategy* and the *Skills for Life* programme which envisages to achieve a broader training participation by means of a substantial reform of the qualification system, the trainers training, the teaching methods and, last but not least, the didactic materials. *Embedded learning* addresses the last reform objective, among those just mentioned. The measure is both a teaching methodology and a set of didactic materials, for use in adult professional or recreational courses, which are meant to increase linguistic and mathematical competence levels *within* the specific contents of the courses themselves.

Didactic materials for teachers and students, also available online, are based on daily social or working life needs. Priority is attached to basic functional linguistic, communicative and mathematical competencies. Studies on the effects of the

11.6 Quality of trainers

measure highlight the greater value and student awareness acquired by literacy and numeracy difficulties, when perceived as an integral part of the occupation they aim to specialise for; additionally, motivation and team work, bringing together literacy and technical-specialist teachers, are essential for the methodology to be successful. The positive results, displayed by the number of adults who have obtained a level 2 of qualification within the *Skills for Life* programme, are no doubt due to the use of this didactic methodology.

11.7 PARTNERSHIP AND INTEGRATION PROMOTION

Services targeted to maintaining and enhancing weak adult audience employability are located on a borderline, where several actors from the social, cultural, educational and economic policy sectors play their roles. As previously observed, the surveyed countries national policies are concerned by the need to avoid that multiple and fragmented interventions end up damaging quality and financial contribution dissemination. In this paragraph we shall take a close look at the partnership and integration instrument, adopted by some measures in order to reach greater and better cohesion and effectiveness in continuing education policies, by means of agreed strategies and cost rationalisation.

Unemployment rate reduction and reference territorial area development are among the main objectives of networks and of promoted integration forms.

Partnership developed projects, in the survey examined measures, always grant special advantages to culturally, socially and professionally weak audiences, when interventions address professional qualification recovery of the young drop out, or immigrants' social and working condition improvements or, finally, when interventions aim not to achieve professionalisation and occupational improvement objectives – with the UK providing a case in point – but rather to enhance a community social capital through non formal learning value recognition and voluntary¹⁶⁶ association participation.

In Germany, network and partnership establishment are required and financed by (ESF integrated) federal programmes, normally lasting 5 to 6 years and aiming – just like the Lernende Regionen – to progressively achieve a self-financing network operation. These continuing education research and development programmes are meant to make the system suitable, both at national and at Länder level, for the changing user and labour market needs.

The most relevant among these is the Lebensbegleitendes Lernen für alle (Lifetime learning for all Programme), financed by the Ministry of Education and Research; one of its sub-programmes, measure Lernende Regionen 2001-2007 (Learning Regions), aims to facilitate the opening of the territorial educational institutions to continuing education and the establishment of networks among relevant actors of the productive, scientific, social and cultural sectors.

Network projects are promoted by the territorial district actors directly affected by the project themselves; they may include the *Volkshochschulen*¹⁶⁷, the Com-

¹⁶⁶ At the interim international study seminar the English representative Jane Thompson reported the termination of the referenced Measure, *Widening Adult Participation Action Fund – WAPAF*, which stopped getting funded because of its lack of links with the Government scheduled priority on the Employability and Competence Plan (*Skills and Employability Agenda*).

¹⁶⁷ Municipal vocational training structures for continuing education, available in over 1000 German towns, municipalities and districts: they are State financed and their educational offer addresses – mostly in afternoon and evening classes – the whole continuing education thematic range, for all population groups.

merce and Industry Chambers, public and private vocational training agencies, unions, socio-cultural structures, universities, schools, companies and municipal administrations, Youth Information Offices, Economic¹⁶⁸ Promotion Society, etc.). Many *Lernende Regionen* Programme networks comprise interventions supporting traditionally disadvantaged groups, aiming to achieve their labour market inclusion and social integration through continuing education pathways, with features which may be both general purpose and professionally specific.

From 2001 to 2006 the Ministry of Education and Research financed the experimental programme *Berufliche Qualifizierung für Zielgruppen mit besonderem Förderbedarf – BQF – Programm* (Promoting Skills – Vocational qualification for target groups needing special support), which aims to facilitate low schooling young adults and apprentices with learning difficulties, towards the acquisition of a professional qualification.

This programme supports research projects, model development and best practice experiences in four sectors. The fourth of these sectors (*IBQM – Initiativstelle Berufliche Qualifizierung von MigrantInnen*), mainly covering the improvement of immigrants' professional opportunities, grants scientific support and assessment by the BIBB (National Institute for Vocational Education and Training) to 10 local and regional networks (*BQN-Bundes QualifizierungsNetzwerke*) towards their professional qualification and employment, coupled with a broadening of the occupational opportunities for young immigrant offspring, achieved with the involvement of their families. Additionally, attention is paid to updating teachers, consultants and vocational training operators with an intercultural perspective, while producing adequate training modules for foreigners linguistic-communicational needs in the working place. The *BQN* network actors are the sector specific main territorial stakeholders: Chambers of Commerce, Municipalities, Employment Agencies, schools, immigrant associations, companies, unions, etc.

In the UK, within the *National Skills Strategy* framework and with a view to supporting its objectives through the widening of adult vocational training participation, measure *Widening Adult Participation Action Fund – WAPAF*¹⁶⁹ has been introduced and operated since 2004; its aim is the enhancement of network based collaboration among various educational bodies and social sector operational actors. The measure promotes research and vocational training projects aiming to achieve adult involvement in essentially non formal training activities, starting

¹⁶⁸ *Wirtschaftsförderungsgesellschaften*: these are mostly *Länder* government owned companies, in charge of providing assistance to German and foreign entrepreneurs, when implementing their investment and enterprise making projects, by means of:

- regional investment fiscal and legal aspects information and advisory service;
- investment project analysis and optimal allocation;
- investor support in all phases of contacts with economic operators, be them private or public (from investment sector identification to administrative formality management).

¹⁶⁹ No longer funded Measure.

from the determination of their needs, and best practice identification and dissemination. The target audience includes voluntary associations, non formal training delivering bodies, citizenship local services. The *Wapaf* recommended priorities include:

- stimulation of networking among the various bodies and associations which carry out vocational training activities, or activities related to adult education in any way;
- development of diversified approaches to adult audiences wider participation; among these, the promotion of family and intergenerational learning opportunities;
- full involvement of voluntary and community services.

As far as France is concerned, the number of activities and services revolving around the “GRETA Centres” – although they are not meant to promote partnerships – enables participating adults to take advantage of what is on offer with a wide range of options and, if required, to select and integrate a number of them.

Greta Centres (a National Education owned facility) do make available a vocational training supply for almost all targets and sectors (including employer agreed integrated activities, or within the scope of mixed cause contracts – apprenticeship, professionalisation – or of continuing education contracts) and different kinds of services such as: competence balance, advisory, guidance, technical assistance, VAE and selection interview and exam preparation.

chapter 12

LABOUR MARKET VOCATIONAL TRAINING DEMAND

12.1 INTRODUCTION

What follows describes measures adopted in four surveyed countries, to enhance and support vocational training demand in the labour market. The adopted measures take aim at the total or partial cut of costs related to participation in vocational training opportunities: such costs are mainly accounted for in terms of economics and time.

The measures involved address a type of workers' demand for further vocational education and training, which does not always nor exactly match with the economy and production system workers' demand for professional competence update, in different sectors and in individual companies. The measures here considered are not to be confused with the different continuing education mechanisms, resulting from legislative provisions and/or social partner agreements, which finance, organise and regulate various strategy implementations for business productivity and competitiveness in each country. As a matter of fact, the case at hand looks at vocational training features which stand out as workers' choices, aimed at their own employability enhancement in a sector spanning labour market.

Within the lifelong learning framework of an adult education survey the above proposed distinction is very significant; however, such distinction may easily become blurred when moving from theoretical to factual analysis. The reason is twofold: firstly, within certain limitations or within certain types of vocational training, enterprise's and worker's training demand converge or may be made to converge, and this possibility is also assumed by the social partners' co-financed and jointly managed initiatives towards continuing education system provision; secondly, and most importantly, individual workers' claims of their right to vocational training imply negotiations at all levels towards the agreement of the job description changes required by the amount of time to be committed to training. On the other hand, enterprises' vocational training demand needs to come to terms with workers' needs, to be accepted and shared by them as well, based on negotiable issues such as: contents/objectives, remuneration and work conditions,

balanced working time pattern definitions, allowing to combine work, training and leisure. The measures towards the achievement of cost reductions, in the economic and time related aspects of worker vocational training, are therefore seldom decoupled from enterprise promoted continuing education; on the contrary, they are often tightly coupled.

Such tight coupling stands out particularly where lifelong learning strategies appear to be sort of evolving from, or developed by, the continuing education systems: the French situation provides a case in point. However, other situations provide cases where lifelong learning strategies are mostly implemented by public interventions, supporting the achievement of educational participation for all citizens, not just for employed workers: the UK is one such case. The Swedish and the German cases further highlight the different kind of couplings which may exist, between lifelong learning strategies and continuing education systems.

Country by country differences are due to individual histories with adult education and lifelong learning, or to specific welfare and employment policy provisions. It is worth noting here that the so called *co-investment* logic is diversely affected by such differences, leading to various blends of vocational training investment and cost sharing among its active parties: workers themselves, employers and communities.

12.2 TIME RELATED MEASURES

The time involved is required by vocational training activity participation. Dedicated time needs to be scheduled for most occupations, although conditions may exist allowing *on the job* training to be used.

The required time may be allocated in terms of working hours, as an alternative to job duties, or outside working hours, using spare or life time:

- in the former case, when training time involves paid leave, its cost is entirely charged to the employer; when training time involves time-off or unpaid leave its cost is charged to the employee, but in some circumstances a partial or full refund may be awarded by specific support initiatives. It should be observed that the employer is however charged the organisational cost of all time allocated to training; an economical cost may need to be added, whenever a replacement of personnel on training leave with external workforce is needed: sometimes this circumstance calls for economical support provisions from public interventions, mostly addressed to companies with just a few employees;
- in the latter case, when training time is allocated outside working hours, its cost – in terms of dedicated spare time – is on the employees, with the occasional award of partial indemnities.

Additionally, other training time arrangements exist which define its costs and charging approaches as a consequence of negotiation between workers and employers (or between workers and social partner bodies), based on the type of training involved.

The following sections outline the vocational training time related measures, adopted in the four surveyed countries.

12.2.1 In France

Work time allocation to vocational training is achieved through the use of C.I.F. – *Congé individuel de formation* (Individual training leave) and of D.I.F. – *Droit individuel à la formation* (Individual training right).

The above legally established measures¹⁷⁰ are further regulated through the national collective contracts and integrated by the decentralised social partner agreements, entered by individual companies or by groups of companies. Both measures aim at enhancing access to vocational training by workers, while making special provisions for specific cases, purposes and connections.

- The C.I.F. is an unpaid vocational training leave. Its definition stems from the existence of a reasonable possibility that the company's training scope and ob-

¹⁷⁰ The C.I.F. was established by the first (1971) Law on “vocational education and training within continuing education”, to be further confirmed in the (2003) inter-professional agreement and in the (2004) Law on “vocational lifelong learning and social dialogue”, by which the D.I.F. was also introduced

jectives, and the workers' demand motivation, diverge or differ in any way; however, the possibility that the worker motivation for vocational training may not be shared by her/his employer, while being supported by the bilateral body which the employer is a member of, is also considered.

Employed workers who have served a work contract for two years at least (one of which with the present employer)¹⁷¹ are entitled to a C.I.F., to follow autonomously selected vocational education and training pathways, provided they are formally aimed at obtaining a study certificate. The educational pathway attendance time should not exceed one year for full time contract holders, or 1200 hours for part-time contract workers. While leave is being taken – with granted worker re-admission to the original job position at leave's completion – no remuneration is paid. Direct costs incurred for course attendance (registration, materials, etc) are paid by the workers involved, too. However, when the worker's choice is endorsed by the peer body OPCA¹⁷² – which gathers all social partners affiliated to by the employer – the costs incurred by the worker for withheld remuneration are refunded by such body up to 80 – 90% of the regular wages. The OPCA also refunds course attendance direct costs, just like it happens with vocational training plans, promoted by any employer, which have been successfully negotiated with the social partners.

When workers, taking vocational education and training leave, need to be replaced by new recruitments or by temporary work agency manpower, costs incurred by companies with less than 50 employees may be indemnified by State economic interventions ("State aids") covering replacement worker minimum wages.

- The D.I.F. is an annual voucher for the allocation of twenty working hours to vocational training. When used within working hours it looks like paid leave. When used outside working hours¹⁷³ it entitles to an indemnity (*allocation formation*) to be awarded by the involved employer, for an amount totalling 50% of the agreed wages: by this mechanism all use of the D.I.F. outside working hours is obviously discouraged. This measure, similarly to the C.I.F., applies to the worker's choice of vocational education and training; the worker's employer approval of the selected vocational pathway is however required. Should the employer's approval be unobtainable, the C.I.F. may be used instead (provided the OPCA affiliated to by the employer is agreeable). The worker's right is triggered by the completion of the first year served working for the same company; it is retained when moving from one company to an-

¹⁷¹ Workers who have served a 5 year work contract at least may use the C.I.F. to participate in skills review or skills review activities (V.A.E.).

¹⁷² The OPCA are the bilateral social partner bodies gathering enterprise contributions towards continuing education, responsible for educational plan funding. Enterprises with more than 10 employees contribute 1.6% of total wages.

¹⁷³ In this case, the vocational education and training maximum time allowance is 80 hours.

other or in case of lay off (if not caused by worker's fault); vouchers may be accrued for up to six years but are not exchangeable for economic benefits.

12.2.2 In Germany

The amount of working time which should be made available for vocational education and training purposes is first established using the *Lernzeitkonto* – Learning time estimate, which has been adopted by 10% of all companies, namely those with over 500 employees. This measure is based on *Lander*¹⁷⁴ approved (11 out of 16) regional legislative provisions, which define the public responsibilities on matters concerning employed workers' continuing education, time off and leave of absence for study and vocational training purposes. Such provisions normally entitle all workers to take training leave for up to ten working days per two solar years.

Vocational education and training leave rights, usually remunerated by the employers (with direct training costs, due to training attendance fees and materials etc., paid by employees), are contractually agreed with special reference to each employer's working environment. However, negotiations may result in different approaches to how working hours for training are defined. Sometimes vocational training is agreed to take place within working hours, entirely; this implies it is managed in terms of paid training leave; alternatively, a split arrangement with working hours and spare time dedicated to training may be agreed. Additional arrangements stem from taking into account time for company required training, versus time for workers' autonomous vocational education and training choices, which may have no relevance whatsoever for their employers.

Some sector or company specific agreements are worth noting:

- the textile and clothing industry contract for continuing education (1997) entitles workers to five working days per year, to be used for training activity participation, irrespective of its relevance for the employers' training requirements. As part of such agreement employers are expected to pay a € 10.00 vocational education and training contribution (€ 12.00 as of Jan 2006) per employee. Paid contributions are managed by a peer commission established by the social partners. The funds accrued through contributions enable training activity participation for 2% of all workers, weekly;
- the (2001) metallurgical industry contract in Baden Wurttemberg rates as working time – in its paid leave version – any employer promoted continuing vocational education time; unpaid leave periods of up to three years are instead envisaged for workers who have served contracts for five years at least, when they request autonomously selected vocational activity participation. In this second case workers take full charge for all costs incurred, including both

¹⁷⁴ Workers' right to vocational education and training is enforced in Germany starting in the early seventies, in the context of continuing education (*Strukturplan für das Bildungswesen*), defined as fourth education/training level, after the primary, secondary and university-tertiary levels. Such programmatic context defines the framework for the Laws approved by 11 out of 16 Landers.

lack of remuneration and course attendance. When a granted leave period expires, workers are re-assigned to a job position similar to the one held before taking leave – content and qualification wise;

- the (2001) agreement undersigned by the Debis-Ag Volkswagen company envisages two types of training: the first one, related to the enterprise training requirements, uses working hours; the second one, based on the workers' own choices and related to employability enhancement, uses a time allocation (five working days per year accruable over 5 years, up to 25 days) which is half paid leave and half a cost for the workers to pay;
- the (2001) agreement undersigned by the Auto 5000 GmbH Volkswagen envisages a training time of 3 hours per week, which is half paid leave, with the remaining half accounted as workers' spare time. The selected training activities should be mutually agreed by workers and employers;
- in many companies, other ways of establishing the amounts of time dedicated to training may result from negotiation, e.g.: compensation for overtime work, flexible working hours, temporary reductions of weekly working hours. This greater availability of different arrangements has been growing markedly over the past few years. As a matter of fact, social partners seem inclined to give careful consideration to diversified productive situations and working conditions.

12.2.3 In Sweden

Employed workers' training time amounts are defined in terms of study leave periods, which are handled as non remunerated time-off for training purposes. Workers' entitlement to such leave periods is sanctioned by Law (SFS 981/1974), with no defined limits for their duration.

Compliance with legal provisions is regulated by sectoral/trade national contracts and by territorial or company related agreements negotiated among the social partners; in such negotiations the maximum leave length, and each company's percentage of employees with an entitlement to take it concurrently, are also defined. Vocational training leave rights may be claimed by all workers who have served a work contract with no interruptions for six months at least, or for twelve months at least over the last two years, irrespective of any interruptions (the just mentioned limitations do not apply to study leave motivated by trade union vocational activity participation).

Full time or part time study arrangements are made as per workers' choices, as freely as their choices of training activity contents and objectives are made; no obligations whatsoever exist for these to be professionally constrained; they could even be motivated by a new job search concern (but no training activity could be justified by a hobby or a political interest). Upon return to work, from training leave, workers shall retain the same job position previously held, for the same type of activity. The training leave starting date should be agreed with the employers, who are entitled to postpone it up to six months.

The costs for workers, stemming from non remunerated study leave, are supported by the Swedish study financial aid for students: loans and grants for studies provided by the Swedish National Council for Financial Support (CSN), which may comprise special economic aids for adult vocational education and training¹⁷⁵. Sectoral union agreements often make provisions for employers to grant economic benefits in favour of workers undertaking a training programme: although such an activity is allowed to be autonomously planned by workers, irrespective of their employers' training strategy – and is not therefore remunerated – the social partners acknowledge its value for a collective endeavour towards enabling individual workers to take a vocational training commitment.

12.2.4 In The United Kingdom

The *National Skills Strategy* makes provisions for working time arrangements to be adjusted for training hours availability, as found in the *Level 2 Entitlement*¹⁷⁶. The Government Programme was launched in 2003 to cut or decrease differences in human resource professional qualification from the levels enjoyed by countries rated as United Kingdom main economic competitors.

Level 2 is the professional qualification minimum level. The programme targets *Low Skilled* workers: 10.5 million people with no professional qualification, with 6.5 of them employed in manufacturing (car components), in the social-health, sales, transport and logistics sectors.

Government promoted vocational activities, aimed at increasing “Low Skilled” people professional qualification levels, may last one or two years; they comprise courses ranging from basic to level 2 competence acquisition. Training programme participant workers are entitled to an annual amount of paid working time, ranging from 35 to 70 hours.

In the United Kingdom there are no legislative provisions addressing and regulating the training leave right, nor other mechanism aimed at making working time available for vocational education and training. However, group or company specific contractual agreements may be entered towards: flexible working time, overtime work compensation, time-off and leave of absence for study and training purposes.

¹⁷⁵ In Sweden, financial support is the most common educational pathway funding mechanism, also for adults. Study loan full entitlement cannot be claimed beyond age 45: up to that age loans may be obtained for a maximum of 240 weeks, with a 20 week decrease per year beyond 45. A 54 year old worker is entitled to a maximum of 40 weeks.

¹⁷⁶ *Level 2 Entitlement* is presently a pilot action experiment in two regions, North East and South East; its extension to the national territory is envisaged to start in September 2006.

12.3 VARIOUS ECONOMIC MEASURES: LOANS, SUBSIDIES, VOUCHERS, ACCOUNTS, OTHER TOOLS

Mechanisms towards promoting and/or enabling vocational education and training participation by workers are also envisaged, through its related economic cost cuts or reductions, as add-ons to the measures which cater to making training dedicated time available through leaves of absence, time-off, accrued working time vouchers. Intended cost cuts or reductions are achieved with various types of compensations or indemnifications:

- when Individual Training Leave (*CIF*) is involved (France), contributions are awarded by Bilateral Bodies to compensate for lack of remuneration while training leave is taken; there are also “State aids” to small enterprises, aimed at covering expenses related to the replacement of employees undergoing training with temporary workers;
- when the Individual Right to Training (*DIF*) is involved (France), an employer may be required to pay indemnities (allocation formation) for training time outside working hours;
- when Study leave is involved (Sweden), lack of remuneration while training leave is taken may be supported by Swedish study financial aid for students: loans and grants for studies (Sweden);
- direct costs charged to workers attending courses (registration fees, didactic materials, etc.) are also supported in a number of ways, and France is one such case.

However, a new generation of measures has been showing up in the surveyed countries, in many and diversified ways; the mostly or exclusively economic nature of such measures – promoting adult education and training by cutting training participation costs – enhances the impact of other measures, time factor concerned, adopted in the seventies. The new generation measures feature:

- a value which aims to be universal in character or scope, by targeting a (citizen, adult) public, broader than just employed and self-employed workers;
- the involvement of both employees and employers, when the occupational reality is dealt with;
- the look and feel of a public sector social intervention, awarded to the individuals;
- the deployment of mechanisms aiming not just to do away with training economic cost constraints, but also to develop an individuals' culture for shared investment and decision making towards the quality of their own competences.

In such features one may recognise:

- the long standing evolutionary processes which are driving the European Welfare Systems away from their initial labour oriented organisation;
- the new labour policies, more concerned with workers' employability devel-

- opment than with their welfare in specific working contexts;
- the impact upon continuing education of a new *lifelong learning* rationale and strategic approach.

12.3.1 In Germany

The *Meister-BaföG* – assistance for master craftsmen trainees – is a Career advancement subsidy which implements for employed workers the *Bundesausbildungsförderungsgesetz-BaföG – Training support subsidy*. The measure, initially established by Law in 1971 to provide an economic subsidy for university students, was later extended to additional population targets, including upper secondary school students and young apprentices. In 1982 the subsidy was converted into a repayable customisable loan. Today the subsidy (370 Euros per month for university students and 303 Euros per month for upper secondary school students) becomes a grant for secondary school students (no repayment required), while half of it becomes a grant for university and academy students, with the other half repayable as a non interest loan. Repayments are made sustainable by long payback periods and by instalments.

The *Career advancement subsidy* aims to finance the training measures which enable the achievement of professional competences required by career advancement. Its target audience comprises workers in Crafts, Industry, Information Technology, Health Sector, etc.; such workers should be holders of an already recognised first level qualification, willing to make their way through vocational education and training pathways, leading to the advancement of their own competences. Its goal is also the encouragement of a migration from employment to self-employment and (new) company creation, through concessional loans. 78% of the subsidy is financed by the Ministry of Education and Research; the remaining 22% is Lander provided (in 2002 funds were allocated for 45 million Euros). Loans, even when concessional, with no accrued interests and with sustainable repayment plans, differ very much from grants: as a matter of fact they end up in determining a most committed worker selection, whereby forms of shared investment in training goals and outcome become viable.

The *Bildungsgutscheine* is a *Training voucher* mechanism recently introduced by the *Legislative provisions for the modernisation of labour market services* (2003), in support of professionalism as continuing education main target. The voucher may be awarded to workers entertaining a difficult relationship with the labour market, provided they have served a regular work contract for one year at least, over the last three years, while benefiting from preliminary guidance counselling, provided by the employment services. The employment agencies are in fact expected to:

- declare that training participation is a preliminary requisite towards the achievement of full integration in the labour market and
- forecast a 70% possibility for integration in the labour market to be achieved within six months, after the training measure has been brought to completion.

The need for training is acknowledged whenever workers:

- hold a professional qualification; however, their assignment for over four years to job positions not requiring such qualification, or requiring an on the job learning experience, makes it unlikely for them to find a qualification matching job;
- do not hold a professional qualification among those for which federal and regional regulations prescribe training for not less than two years.

In Germany, just like in other countries, the voucher mechanism is adopted for various purposes, requiring that some economic resources are allocated to the workers' free and most convenient training supply. An obvious purpose is to encourage participation in sometimes committing training activities, with a three month maximum duration voucher, by workers who could not otherwise afford participating; an additional purpose is to introduce a virtuous logic aimed at the achievement of internal competition in the vocational training market, and of educational supply qualification, by means of a direct relationship between training agencies and their users.

However, employment agencies are responsible for defining and maintaining a list of vocational training objectives, which are used to select the training agencies.

This measure is too short lived for a reliable assessment of its impact to be available, yet. Here are some critical aspects which have already been noted as outstanding:

- about 20% of the available vouchers have not been awarded, partly because the employment agencies are reluctant to issue the required 70% likelihood forecast of a positive training period outcome, within six months from its completion, when it applies to workers who have been experiencing serious difficulties;
- self-guidance in the vocational training supply market, and responsible decision making in individual competence advancement, cannot be achieved easily enough by the measure mostly targeted workers, i.e.: those holding the weakest educational and training levels;
- employment agencies offer insufficient advisory and guidance operational performances for the problem at hand;
- a vocational training supply market which remains hardly affected by demand, while offering little transparency to quality and training success guarantee concerns, is less than adequate for the measure expected development prospects.

12.3.2 In Sweden

Access to a Swedish study financial aid for students: loans and grants for studies is granted also to employed workers who take non remunerated vocational education and training leave. Over 50ies may only obtain loans for some vocational courses offered within the framework of labour policy interventions:

- The *Study loan*, one of the public sector planned actions to enhance and support training participation by citizens with ages ranging from 20 years and 6

months to 50 years, enables its recipients to complete any type of educational activity leading to study certificates and to professional qualifications. In 2005 the loan minimum amount was 1,800 SEK (200 Euros) per week, payable for full time training activities. Workers aged between 41 and 54 may obtain a loan for a maximum number of training weeks which drops from 240 to 40, in relation to age. The loan is mostly awarded to workers aged 25, or about to reach age 60. The minimum annual repayment amount is about 6,000 SEK. The loan is credited to the workers' personal bank accounts, directly.

- *Aids for Studying Abroad* – has been adopted to support workers willing to undertake a study program abroad, in connection with their own professional activity. Eligible workers should hold a permanent and regular job position, or should be *self employed*. Additionally, they should have been Sweden residents for not less than two years. Workers who lost their job, after a period of employment, are not required to observe the rule whereby the vocational education they planned to undertake abroad should be related to their ongoing professional activity. The educational activity should be a full time commitment lasting no longer than 13 weeks; before applying for this type of aid admittance to intended foreign school should be obtained; applications should be supported by a personal study plan.

The weekly contribution payable amount includes:

- 600 SEK (non repayable) scholarship;
- the study loan depends on the country student is accepted;
- the *Rekryteringsbidrag till Vuxenstuderande* – Grants for the access to adult education is used as a mechanism supporting *Campaign (Kunskapslyftet)* development and launch. *Campaigns* are focused and intensive educational interventions, promoted by public policies; they aim to achieve fast productivity and efficiency improvements in specific service or production sectors. Workers aged between 25 and 55 are their target audience. A notable example is the training campaign for about 6,000 Municipal workers in the services to the person sector – held between July 2004 and December 2005. In this case, part-time contract workers who had not autonomously selected the type of job in question were given priority. Training places were made available for such purpose by university (3,000 people) and by the Municipal adult education activities (3,000 people);
- workers are also offered the *Adult Education Participation Scholarship*, which is meant to encourage and enable available training activity attendance, in addition to free information, counselling and guidance services. The scholarship may cover a 40 week maximum study period, with monthly payments of 3,800 SEK (and weekly payments of 860 SEK).

12.3.3 In The United Kingdom

The measures aiming to achieve the objectives set by the Government *National Skills Strategy*, launched in 2003 towards the adult population competence de-

velopment, include the *Career Advancement Loans* – within the *Adult Learning Grant* framework – and the *I.L.A.*, *Individual Learning Account*.

Both the above mentioned measures aim to overcome training participation barriers of economic nature, using different mechanisms and addressing different target audiences:

- The *Career Advancement Loans*, low interest bank loans with long term repayment plans, address an exclusive target audience made of workers who envisage to acquire higher level professional competences, leading them to participate in an improvement process of their own working conditions. The loan amount is tuned to training participation aspects, such as full time, part time and contents. Indebted workers start repaying their dues after course termination, based on the instalments and the fixed interest rate negotiated at loan awarding time. The *Learning and Skills Council* pays the interests accrued on the loan amount while the course lasts and for an additional month after its termination. The type of credit offered is the outcome of an agreement entered by the English Government and by four major Banks in the UK: *Barclays*, *The Co-Operative*, *Clydesdale*, *Royal Bank of Scotland*.
- The *I.L.A.*¹⁷⁷ measure was promoted by the *Department for Education and Skills* in 2000, to develop Life Long Learning and to overcome training participation barriers of economic nature, affecting the weakest social groups more than any others. On the same year the English Government established a network called *ELAP – European Learning Account Project*, with several other participating countries, among which Sweden, The Netherlands, Switzerland, Spain; the network aims to assess the model and to facilitate best practice exchange regarding economic support tools and individual self-responsible decision making in matters concerning people own competences. With the *I.L.A.*, vouchers are credited to an agreed bank account to refund costs incurred for training; the credit amount is related to the type of course undertaken by each person, irrespective of her/his worker' status: vouchers may be valued up to 20% of a training course cost (or £ 100.00, whichever comes first), when standard level 1 qualification courses are taken; however, they may be valued up to 80% of a specialist qualification training course. Voucher validity lasts twelve month and may be used for multiple training opportunities, provided they are interconnected and accessed within the same year, starting at the time of the first one. In 2001 the *I.L.A.* programme was suspended due to fraud cases; some of its operation and control rules have been revisited, in view of a forthcoming programme re-launch; the programme first edition scored the greatest success both on the demand front – 2 and a half

¹⁷⁷ I.L.A. now labels various mechanisms for training activity individual participation in several European Union and OECD member countries. Financial aid is provided through variously shaped mechanisms: *Saving Accounts*, *Voucher*, *Insurance Scheme*, *Virtual Accounts*.

million people, approximately – and on the supply front – with about 9,000 training agencies reacting positively to its offers. In practice, to meet its defined objectives, the measure effective implementation requires additional adjustments, starting from the preliminary arrangement of promotion and guidance services, suitable even for the weakest form of demand. As a matter of fact, although the mechanism attracts the greatest attention in the United Kingdom, as well as in other countries, its use has proved effective in meeting the strongest form of demand, i.e.: employed workers holding medium-high qualification levels, while its intended target audience among the weakest social groups is at risk of (self) exclusion. In the United Kingdom too, just like in Germany, some barriers do hinder the training agencies planned achievement, by means of a free relationship between training demand and supply, of supply market fluidity and life long learning practice takeover. Evidence is being gathered, showing that workers' training participation, with a general concern for people with weaker social and education/qualification circumstances, calls for the deployment of effective demand promotion and accompaniment measures.

- The *Small Firms Training Loans* programme is another measure aiming to develop adult education and stimulate a training demand, through supporting financial actions; the programme was launched by the British Government in 1996; it allows companies with less than 50 employees, to obtain concessionary loans with deferred repayments which are used to finance their training activity requirements.

The loans cover :

- course admission costs;
- up to 90% of costs incurred for employee information advisory and guidance services;
- up to 90% of costs incurred for consultancies addressing employees' training requirement analysis and training activity planning;
- didactical materials and textbooks allowing to carry out the training activities.

The borrowed sum, possibly between £ 500 and £ 125,000, is credited to the applicant's bank account one month before the training course starting date or, when consultancy services are involved, on the first consultancy scheduled date. The loan repayments are made in instalments, based on the agreed interest rate, starting six to twelve months after the training has been provided. A number of factors affect the repayment arrangements: course closing date, loan amount, company size and economic-financial status, type of activities requiring financial support and lending bank terms and conditions. Loan interests accrued for repayment deferral are paid by the State.

The programme stems from an agreement entered by the Government and by a number of important UK Banks.

chapter 13

SOME REFLECTIONS ON TRANSFERABILITY

The research project, on which the work presented in this volume is based, is part of a more complete programme of activity that engages *Isfo* in building a framework of information on lifelong learning demand and supply in Italy and identifying proposals to support policies to develop the lifelong learning system. The programme therefore envisages two lines of work, which can be broken down into a recurrent and systematic analysis of the data on the programming of national and regional lifelong learning provision and on the participation of 25-64 year population in lifelong learning activities. The programme also envisages the formulation of proposals through which lines of action can be drawn up to remove the obstacles that today still stand in the way of the progressive implementation of lifelong learning.

On the one hand, therefore, the aim is to monitor the number and types of activities carried out by the education, university, vocational training and Third sector systems, and to interpret the wide and varied range of demand for training expressed by the adult population, measuring outputs in terms of participation and examining the constraints preventing further expansion. On the other hand, the research is designed to identify tools and systems that could improve the performance of institutions, stakeholders and users.

This specific study focuses on the measures adopted by four European countries (France, Germany, Sweden and the United Kingdom), each with a strong tradition in the field of continuing training and lifelong learning with the aim of considering the degree to which these measures could be transferred or adapted to the Italian system.

This comparative analysis is distinguished by an original feature intrinsic to the research hypothesis itself. The primary objective, in fact, is not so much to study the architecture of the education and training systems, as to survey "measures" or actions which either operate at the governance level (institutional responsibility and decentralisation, legislation, funding, collaboration between the institutions and between the latter and social actors) or are organisational and didactic in nature.

The Lesson Learned

As one can envisage, the survey followed a logical path starting with the observation of the operational solutions adopted in the countries surveyed, with regard to the wider participation of the adult population in continuing training and lifelong learning activities, especially in cases of less well-educated and trained segments of the population. The review pointed out many elements for reflection that can be applied to the needs of the Italian situation. These elements emerge more clearly if we consider the principal shortcomings of the Italian system and compare them with the options chosen by the different countries in this survey.

The first observation is that a substantial degree of convergence - expressed by precise regulations - exists in the four selected countries where adult learning is a *right of the individual* and as such should be supported in all forms of action agreed by the institutions and social actors. It is obvious that the first, necessary step to be taken in Italy should be to draw up a framework law that establishes lifelong learning as a right and envisages the forms through which it can be upheld and achieved.

In the countries surveyed, the right to training is conceived as a continuum that does not by any means come to an end once the compulsory educational requirement has been fulfilled. The aim is not merely a formal one of establishing how many years of compulsory education should last, but one of encouraging the acquisition of a minimum level of knowledge and competences to enhance each individual's potential for active citizenship and employability. The UK and Swedish systems strongly support this model, whereby basic competences (or rather, key competences) can be acquired at any age.

It is clear that, if it is to be exercised, the right to lifelong learning needs to lie on a series of essential elements including the systematic combination which could be described as a benchmark for the policies inspiring the initiatives and systems actually adopted. It is clearly visible that the aim of expanding access to training must correspond to a public policy governance model in which government bodies take on the role of "regulating" the quality and quantity of lifelong learning provision and the related matching of supply and demand. In so doing, these bodies give partnerships of the stakeholders in lifelong learning a key role in creating measures for innovation and implementation. In the four situations analysed, this trend appears clearly and a number of different solutions were found with respect to models for developing partnerships. These forms of partnership where the demand for training is also represented, not just on the part of enterprises but also of individuals, are playing an increasing role. One such example is the UK's "National Skills Alliance" in which, to implement the national strategy for competence acquisition, the institutions and Social Partners have also organised themselves locally and administer large amounts of public resources for adult education initiatives. Decentralisation and local autonomy based on a common, agreed context defined by framework laws and national guidelines have come to be considered as an integral part of one of the most widespread models for the implementation of education and training policies.

In the field of system-level initiatives, the comparative research highlights the considerable significance assumed by measures to recognise and certify the training acquired in various formal, non-formal and informal settings. Attention has built up on the last two forms of training where a validation procedure is more difficult to process. The valorisation of the knowledge and competences acquired in one's professional and personal life and, most important, the adoption of systems to interpret, recognise and certify these competences has become a widely established practice. In Germany the "Profilpass Project", where prior learning experience is also evaluated in awarding a certification or formal qualification, has recently been completed.

Overseeing this process are specific validation bodies which belong to the public bodies responsible for issuing the various qualifications, with the costs of the validation procedures stemming in part from government. Closely related to the recognition process are guidance, listening and counselling services which have already been applied for some years and over time have achieved good levels of dissemination and technical reliability.

Two measures are of particular relevance for Italy, in which a serious delay is found in the field of competence certification procedures, probably as a result of the difficulties encountered in the decentralisation process. These measures are included in the employment policies implemented in France and Sweden: "Validation des Acquis de l'Expérience" (VAE, in France), and "Competence Validation" (in Sweden).

The French VAE has an "on-demand" certification procedure based on individuals' requirements. It aims to certify competences, however and wherever they have been acquired, rather than the pathway followed to acquire them. "Juries" made up of autonomous services and authorities are responsible for the certification process, which adopts national criteria and procedures and ensures the quality of the process.

In the Swedish model, all those participating in training activities can apply for "Competence Validation", again through an "on-demand" procedure, that can be obtained at specialised centres or in enterprises.

To date, a number of problems have emerged in both countries due to the low quality of the technical assistance services which provide consultancy for people interested in the system who lack experience in certifying competences acquired in an informal setting or for the costs that applicants have to bear to have their competences validated.

The challenge for the valorisation of competences acquired on the job can also be met by focusing on employed people's individual right to training, not only as a mere declaration of principle but as a real opportunity. As such, it envisages collaboration by the social actors to identify the spaces and timescales within which to set individual career-progress or employment re-insertion project. Freeing-up working time for training purposes or using the individual right to training are concrete ways of expanding access to lifelong learning and continuing training already

operating in all the countries surveyed. This applies where these rules are envisaged by national laws, as in France and Sweden, or at the regional level, as is the case of Germany. Timing and funding arrangements applicable to the right to training are governed in all the countries by collective or decentralised bargaining. The issue of certifying competences, however and wherever acquired, and the transparency of the process are closely connected with the opportunity individuals are given to have their knowledge duly acknowledged and their lifelong learning pathways better defined. This is due to the fact that they are able to move without interruption from one channel to another and without "losing" any part of the knowledge and competences acquired and can use the different forms of training provision to improve their life and work situations.

Current thinking places the emphasis on a wide-ranging approach to this issue. This is partly the result of a European framework of reference that suggests the building of a lifelong learning system characterised by clearly visible pathways and the recognition of training credits obtained at different periods of the individual's social and professional life.

This "building" process, which is proceeding at a very slow pace in Italy compared with other European countries, would require a more intensive joint effort by the institutions and the world of work through systematic actions to build up an agreed national and regional reference system, following an approach based on the integration of training and employment systems.

A further field considered by the research was an exploration of the measures adopted by the countries surveyed to break the "vicious circle" whereby the people benefiting from training are those who have already completed a training pathway while those who are less educated, less trained or in unstable and/or poorly guaranteed employment situations often remain excluded. This is a sphere to which all the countries concerned attach considerable significance, as can be observed from the surveys already conducted. There are numerous measures dedicated specifically to job-seekers or the non-employed and unemployed through which the institutions intend to encourage the transition from welfare to work by leveraging training as an active policy and placing a priority focus on socially disadvantaged categories.

In this regard, two measures, adopted in France and the United Kingdom respectively, seem to offer an interesting solution to the serious problem of the risk of social marginalisation and employment exclusion. The first, called *Ateliers de Pédagogie Personnalisé (APP - Individualised Pedagogy Workshops)*, is a countrywide initiative characterised by a training action designed along with the applicant and by its high degree of organisational flexibility. The national "Skills for Life" Programme, launched by the UK government, coincides with a literacy campaign that uses ICTs and through which a final certification can be obtained. In terms of adaptability to the Italian context, the "LearnDirect" measure, developed in the UK and addressed to the general adult population to enrich and enhance competences, should definitely be mentioned. This is a portal that offers

distance learning courses in various sectors, leads to qualifications at different levels and uses an online guidance system. The 8000 active advice and information centres are also located in places not traditionally associated with study or learning (shopping centres, tourism destinations, etc.).

In keeping with the adoption of a lifelong learning approach in the formulation of education and training policies, vocational guidance has progressively acquired the role of active support in individual choices, not just for young people but throughout the individual's professional life.

In this respect, we should note that in Italy, where there is an abundance of initiatives and stakeholders for youth guidance, guidance for the adult population receives much less attention in real terms, whether from policy-makers or service agencies. Similarly, the provision of guidance services in this respect is also much less developed, especially for employed adults and older people.

This is one of the lessons we can learn from the four countries which have implemented measures specifically dedicated to guidance, information, and reception services for adult individuals enabling them to build up their own customised training pathway in accordance with their competences, aptitudes and inclinations in the employment field. A significant example in this respect is the "Information, Advice and Guidance" (IAG) measure set up in the United Kingdom. After the reform that followed the launch of the "National Skills Strategy", the IAG proved to be a key factor in the success of the government's policy. It takes the form of a service for people aged over 20 that can be delivered by a wide range of bodies and is also available on-line or by phone. As such, it is an important channel for contact with the population. Informing all categories of the population, providing them with an opportunity to learn about the possibilities open to them and making these both accessible and desirable to individuals who have become extremely "distanced" from training settings, is one of the aims of this survey. Some of the key aims include: increasing the adult population's participation in lifelong learning by focusing on the weakest and most disadvantaged targets (the low-skilled) who most need to develop their competences in order to avoid being excluded from social and training contexts and who are often the least informed and least aware of the rights and opportunities available to prevent such social exclusion. By using the media and therefore greatly increasing the appeal of training, as in the best marketing strategies, the United Kingdom is also improving its performance in the training sector. An extensive campaign is one of the key features of the measures included in the "Skills for Life" Programme.

The academic research on adult learning has always underlined certain basic organisational features of teaching available to this segment of population. Even when an individual has made a determined choice to resume one's education and training pathway, the lack of continuity with respect to traditional "school-based" teaching (timetables, programmes, assessments, etc.) plays a decisive role affecting motivation and the positive outcome of the pathway. It is widely recognised that if the return to training is not supported by innovative teaching meth-

ods, it is very likely to fail and accentuate the vicious “refusal to learn” circle, which can often be explained by the bad memories adults have of their school-days.

For this reason the countries surveyed, Sweden in particular, have sought to eliminate “rehabilitation” and “compensatory” functions from adult education and to make it possible for individuals well past school-age to enter a flexible training system that goes some way towards meeting their life requirements. The new Swedish law on adult education also touches on the key themes of the quality of the infrastructure, personnel, equipment and measures in the demand-based policy. The “*Online Information on the Quality of Training Provision*” measure is a Swedish service addressed to all citizens; it envisages the constant monitoring of the quality of training provided throughout the country and focuses primarily on the variable corresponding to the “satisfaction” of participants and practitioners. A worthwhile and effective survey, from a transferability perspective, of the lifelong learning measures and actions adopted in the four European countries cannot, however, fail to include the evaluation of a new trend in Europe: establishing specific measures to reduce training costs so as to simplify participation in related activities also in financial terms, especially for the most disadvantaged population targets.

These are measures addressed to a wider audience (citizens, adults) and, in the case of employed people, characterised by the involvement of enterprises in supporting training costs. A significant part of these measures involves the use of systems designed to develop a culture of co-investment and accountability in individuals with respect to the quality of their competences.

The Swedish government, which places a particular emphasis on policies targeted to training demand, has implemented a number of measures to support the costs of training activities which would otherwise discourage the participation of a large portion of the population.

The main objective of the Swedish government in implementing its lifelong learning system is to foster equality and democratisation. Swedish citizens must have the opportunity to continue to train throughout their lives without limitations, whether economic or otherwise. The government accompanies individuals as they follow their training pathways and supports them in the interests of equality and economic growth.

With this aim in mind, the government has set up the “Study Loan”, a measure designed for citizens aged from 20 years 6 months to 50 to cover their individual study programme costs. Citizens aged over 50 can obtain study grants only for some vocational training courses as part of overall employment policies.

The *Aktivitetsgarantin* (Activity Guarantee Programme) is very useful in fully understanding the almost “paternalistic” attitude that the Swedish government has towards its citizens. Under this programme, long-term unemployed people aged over 20 and out of work for at least 24 months are placed in a service with which they build up an individual Action Plan that encompasses the whole set of em-

ployment policy measures. The aim, naturally, is to assist them to re-enter into the labour market. Beneficiaries receive unemployment benefits and are accompanied by an individual tutor as they follow a pathway ranging from guidance to work experience, from training in residential adult education centres to business projects.

A significant measure, even in adapting to the Italian context, is the Individual Learning Account (ILA) initially implemented in Sweden but adopted by a large number of other countries, including the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Switzerland and Spain. This model is also being experimented in a number of Italian Regions under a project launched in 2005 by the Ministry of Labour. The measure in question enables all employed workers with a savings programme to set aside up to 25% of a given basic figure per year, including tax allowances, in an ILA. Both individuals and employers can pay into ILAs and participants are free to choose their training activity.

To sum up, while the aim of transferring the successful elements from one context to another is very complex, just as it is complex to compare the government policies of four countries that differ so greatly in terms of historic, socio-economic and cultural background, it is at the same time entirely practicable to adapt measures and actions to enhance measures already existing in the Italian context.

The countries surveyed, which were not chosen randomly but by virtue of their significant performance with respect to their adult population's participation in lifelong learning activities, could hardly conceal the reasons for their success. Contrary to what might be expected, this is closely related not to higher investment in training, but to strategies inspired by demand-oriented supply and by services whose key aim is to satisfy customers.

Accompanying individuals in their customised training pathways, which encompass reception, information, guidance and quality - and quality-control - measures; promoting training pathways by making widespread use of the media to significantly increase the appeal of training and inform those currently without access to it; focusing on the demand for training which encompasses the different actions of financial support; freeing up time and incentives for non-formal and informal training activities, to the extent of the certification and recognition of training credits: these are the common features that have led France, Germany, Sweden and the United Kingdom to achieve enviable results in the field of lifelong learning, which is a driver of economic growth and social well-being.

There is no doubt that a wide-ranging and diversified effort, the like of which has never been observed before, is currently under way at the European and national levels. Lifelong learning is viewed today as a crucial element in creating an advanced economic and productive system and ensuring social equity.

Enhancing the provision of lifelong learning is also a fundamental factor in relation to the active ageing of the population.

Current demographic trends show that the average lifespan is extending considerably, while birth rates are falling markedly. These trends are leading to an overall

ageing of the population, which in turn brings significant changes in life expectancy, expectations and needs in old age.

Closely related to this phenomenon is the progressive ageing of the labour force which is mirrored, according to the observations of the last thirty years, in a fall in participation among the older population - with clear repercussions on the sustainability of the welfare systems.

In this respect, the European Commission has estimated that, if effective action is not taken to extend active and professional life, by 2050 the ratio of pensioners to working age members of the population will increase from its current 24% to as high as 50%.

In the light of the above observations, therefore, enhancing the amount and quality of lifelong learning provision designed not just for the young but also for the older population would in practical terms mean giving these older people the cultural and occupational tools they need to make successful choices which lead to a longer and more active stay in the labour market. This, in turn, would enable them to effectively and actively exercise their rights of citizenship and social well-being.

Acronyms

A

ABWF - Arbeitsgemeinschaft Betriebliche Weiterbildungsforschung
ACCAC - Qualifications, Curriculum and Assessment Authority for Wales
ACL - Adult and Community Learning
ACLF - Adult and Community Learning Fund
ADIA – French network of temporary job companies
AE – Adult Education
AFPA – Association Nationale pour la Formation Professionnelle des Adultes
AFBG - Aufstiegsfortbildungsförderungsgesetz
AGEFIPH - Association nationale pour la Gestion du Fonds pour l'Insertion Professionnelle des personnes handicapées
AGEFOS-PME - Fonds d'Assurance Formation des Salariés des Petites et Moyennes Entreprises
ALG - Adult Learning Grant
ALI - Adult Learning Inspectorate
AMCL - Attestation Ministérielle de Compétences Linguistiques
AMV- Arbetsmarknadsverket
ANLCI – Agence Nationale de Lutte contre l'Illettrisme
ANPE – Agence Nazionale pour l'Emploi
APEC – Agence pour l'Emploi des Cadres
APP – Ateliers de Pédagogie Personnalisée
ARGEn - Arbeitsgemeinschaften
ASSEDIC – Unemployment Agency
AVE – Advanced Vocational Education

B

BA - Bundesagentur für Arbeit
BAC – Baccalauréat
BAföG - Bundesausbildungsförderungsgesetz
BAMF – Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge
BBiG – Berufsbildungsgesetz
BCA – Bilan de Compétences Approfondi
BEP - Brevet d'Etudes Professionnelles
BerBiRefG - Berufsbildungsreformgesetz
BET- Basic Employability Training
BGJ - Berufsgrundbildungsjahr
BIBB – Bundesinstitut für Berufsbildung
BLK - Bund – Länder – Kommission
BMBF – Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung
BQF - Berufliche Qualifizierung für Zielgruppen mit besonderem Förderbedarf
BQN- Berufliche QualifizierungsNetzwerke

BSC - Balanced Score Card
BTS - Brevet de Technicien Supérieur
BSHG – Bundessozialhilfegesetz
BvB - Berufsvorbereitende Bildungsmaßnahmen
BVJ – Berufsvorbereitungsjahr

C

CAFOC – Centre Académique de Formation Continue
CAI - Contrat d'Accueil et d'intégration
CAP - Certificat d'Aptitude Professionnelle
CARIF - Centre d'Animation, de Ressources et d'Information sur les Formations
CCEA – Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment
CDD – Contrat à Durée Déterminée
CDI – Contrat à Durée Indéterminée
CDL - Career Development Loans
CE – Continuous Education
CEREQ - Centre d'Études et de Recherches sur les Qualifications
CFDT - Confédération Française démocratique du Travail
CGT - Confédération Générale du Travail
CIBC - Centres Interinstitutionnels de Bilans de Compétences
CIE – Conseil Inter Etablissement
CIF - Common Inspection Framework
CIF - Congé Individuel de Formation
CIO – Centre d'Information et d'Orientation
CISI - Comité Interministériel pour la Société de l'Information
CNAM – Conservatoire National des Arts et Métiers
CNED – Centre National d'Enseignement à Distance
CPTA – Centre Pédagogique et Technique d'Appui
CQP – Certificat de Qualification Professionnelle
CRI – Centre Ressource Illettrisme
CRIS – Cellules Régionales Interservices
CSN - Centrala studiestödsnämnden

D

DAEU - Diplôme d'Accès aux Etudes Universitaires
DAFCO - Les Délégations Académiques à la Formation Continue
DAG - Deutsche Angestellten Gewerkschaft
DALF – Diplôme Approfondi de Langue Française
DELF – Diplôme d'Études en Langue Française
DAP - Direction de l'Administration Pénitentiaire
DAVA - Dispositif Académique de Validation des Acquis
DARES - Direction de l'Animation de la Recherche, des Études et des Statistiques

DCL - Diplôme de Compétence en Langue
DELNI - Department for Employment and Learning Northern Ireland
DENI - Department of Education Northern Ireland
DESCO - Direction de l'Enseignement Scolaire
DfEE – Department for Employment and Education
DfES - Department for Education and Skills
DGB - Deutscher Gewerkschaftsbund
DGEFP - Délégation Générale à l'Emploi et à la Formation Professionnelle
DGLFLF - Délégation Générale à la langue française et aux langues de France
DIE - Deutsches Institut für Erwachsenenbildung
DIF - Droit Individuel à la Formation
DILF - Diplôme Initial de Langue Française
DIPF - Deutsches Institut für Internationale Pädagogische Forschung
DIW - Deutsches Institut für Wirtschaftsforschung
DPD - Direction de la Programmation et du Développement
DPM - Direction de la Population et des Migrations
DRT – Direction des Relations du Travail
DRTEFP – Direction Régionale du Travail, de l'Emploi et de la Formation Professionnelle
DTI - Department of Trade and Industry
DVV - Deutscher Volkshochschul-Verband
DWP - Department for Work and Pensions

E

ECLOR - Écrire, compter, lire, s'organiser pour rebondir
ELWA - Education and Learning Wales
EMA - Education Maintenance Allowance
EMQC - East Midlands Quality Centre
ESF – European Social Fund
ESOL - English for Speakers of Other Languages
ESTYN - Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales
ETP - Employers Training Pilots

F

FASILD - Fonds d'Action et de Soutien pour l'Intégration et la Lutte contre les Discriminations
FE – Further Education
FONGECIF - Fonds de Gestion du Congé Individuel de Formation
FPA – Formation Professionnelle Accélérée
FPS – Formazione Professionale Superiore
FTET - Full-Time Education and Training

G

GBE - Gemeinnützige Bildungs und Entwicklungsgesellschaft
GDP – Gross Domestic Product
GIL - Groupe Interacadémique Langues
GNVQ - General National Vocational Qualifications
GPC – Good Practice Centre (Benachteiligtenförderung)
GPLI - Groupe Permanent de Lutte contre l'Illettrisme
GRETA - GRouements d'ETAblissemens publics
GRUFO - Grundlagenforschung und wissenschaftliche Begleitung

H

HCEEE - Haut Comité Education Economie Emploi
HE – Higher Education
HEFCW – Higher Education Funding Council for Wales
HIE - Highlands and Islands Enterprise
HMIE - Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education Scotland
HwO - Handwerksordnung

I

IAB - Institut für Arbeitsmarkt und Berufsforschung
IAG - Information, Advice and Guidance
IAP - Intensive Activity Period
IBQM – Initiativstelle Berufliche Qualifizierung von Migranten
IES - Institut für Entwicklungsplanung und Strukturforschung
ILO – International Labour Organisation
INBAS - Institut für berufliche Bildung, Arbeitsmarkt - und Sozialpolitik GmbH
INFAS - Institut für angewandte Sozialwissenschaft GmbH
INPI – Institut National de la Propriété Intellectuelle
IRILL - Insertion, réinsertion, lutte contre l'illettrisme
ITL – Individual Training Leave
ITR – Individual Training Right

J

JAPD - Journée d'Appel de préparation à la Défense
JCP – JobCentre Plus
JSA - JobSeekers Allowance

K

KAW - Konzertierte Aktion Weiterbildung

L

L2E – Level 2 Entitlement
LEA - Local Education Authority
LEGT – Lycée d’Enseignement Générale et Technologique
LINE - Lernen im Netz und mit Multimedia
LIPA - Lernen im Prozess der Arbeit
LISU - Lernen im Sozialen Umfeld
LiWE - Lernen in Weiterbildungseinrichtungen
LKMU - Lernzeitkonten in Kleinen und Mittleren Unternehmen
LP – Lycée Professionnelle
LQW2 - Lernerorientierten Qualitätstestierung für die Weiterbildung
LSC - Learning and Skills Council
LSDA - Learning and Skills Development Agency
LWQE - Lernerorientierten Qualitätstestierung für die Weiterbildung
LZA – Langzeitarbeitslose

M

MASGF - Ministeriums für Arbeit, Soziales, Gesundheit und Familie
MDPH - Maison Départementale des Personnes Handicapées
MEP - Maison de l’Education Permanente
MIF – Maison d’Information sur la Formation
ML – Missions Locales

N

NCFL - Nationellt Centrum for Flexibelt Larande
ND – New Deal
NDfLP – New Deal for Loan Parents
NDYP New Deal for Young People
NIACE – National Institute of Adult Continuing Education
NQF - National Qualifications Framework
NRDC - National Research and Development Centre for adult literacy and numeracy
NRW - Northrhein Westfalia
NSS – National Skills Strategy
NVQ National Vocational Qualifications

O

ODL – Open Distance Learning

OFFSTED -Office for Standards in Education

ONISEP - Office National d'Information Sur les Enseignements et les Professions

OPACIF - Organisme Paritaire collecteur Agrée gestionnaire du Congé Individuel de Formation

OPCA - Organismes Paritaires Collecteurs Agrées

P

PAIO - Permanence d'Accueil, d'Information et d'Orientation

PARE – Plan d'Aide au Retour à l'Emploi

PRDF - Plan Régional de Développement des Formation

PSA - Public Service Agreement

PT-DLR Deutsches Zentrum für Luft- und Raumfahrt

Q

QCA - Qualifications and Curriculum Authority

QUEM - Qualifikations-Entwicklungs-Management

R

RMI - Revenu Minimum d'Insertion

S

SCQF – Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework

SCUIO - Services Communs Universitaires d'Information et d'Orientation

SEn - Scottish Enterprise

SFC – Scottish Funding Council

SFEFC - Scottish Further Education Funding Council

SFHFC- Scottish Further and Higher Education Funding Council

SFHL – Svenska Folkhögskolans Lärarförbund

SFI – Swedish for Immigrants

SGB - Sozialgesetzbuch

SIBS - Short Intensive Basic Skills courses

SME – Small and Medium Enterprises

SQA - Scottish Qualifications Authority

SSC - Sector Skills Council

SVQ - Scottish Vocational Qualifications

T

TIC – Tecnologie dell'Informazione e della Comunicazione
TRACE - TRajet d'ACCès à l'Emploi

U

Ufi - University for Industry
UPR – Unité Pédagogique Régionale
URP – Unità Regionale Pedagogica

V

VAE – Validation des Acquis de l'Expérience
VET – Vocational Educational Training
VHS – Volkshochschulen
VW – Volkswagen

W

WAPAF - Widening Adult Participation Action Fund
WB – Work Based
WBLA - Work Based Learning for Adults

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FRANCE

ADIA

www.adia.fr

Agence Nationale pour l'emploi – ANPE

www.anpe.fr

Assemblée Nationale

www.assemblee-nationale.fr

Association de Gestion du Fond pour l'insertion professionnelle des personnes handicapées – AGEFIPH

www.agefiph.asso.fr

Association Nationale de Lutte Contre l'Illettrisme

www.anlci.gouv.fr

Association Nationale pour la Formation Professionnelle des Adultes - AFPA

www.afpa.fr

Centre d'Etudes et de REcherches sur les Qualifications

www.cereq.fr

Centre Inffo

www.centre-inffo.fr

Centres Interinstitutionnels de Bilans de Compétences

www.cibc.net

Centre National d'Enseignement et de Formation A Distance

www.cnefad.com

Commission Nationale de la Certification Professionnelle – CNCP

www.cnnp.gouv.fr

Congé Individuel de Formation

www.c-i-f.com

Conservatoire National des Arts et de Métiers – CNAM

www.cnam.fr

Délégation Académique à la Formation Continue – DAFCO
www.dafco.scola.ac-paris.fr

Droit de la Formation
www.droitdelaformation.com/

Droit Individuel à la Formation
www.droit-individuel-formation.fr

Fonds de gestion du congé individuel de Formation
www.fongecif-idf.fr

Formation de Base
www.formationdebase.net

Génération Formation
www.generation-formation.fr

Groupement d’Etablissements publics locaux d’enseignements
www.greta.fr

Informations sur la Validation des Acquis de l’Expérience
www.infovae-idf.com/

Institut National de la Statistique et des Etudes Economiques
www.insee.fr

Le service public de la diffusion du droit
www.legifrance.gouv.fr

Le site pédagogique du Ministère de l’Education Nationale
www.eduscol.education.fr/

Ministère de l’Education nationale, de l’Enseignement Supérieur et de la Recherche
www.education.gouv.fr

Ministère de l’Emploi, de la Cohésion Sociale et du Logement
www.travail.gouv.fr
www.cohesionsociale.gouv.fr

Ministère de la Jeunesse, des Sports et de la Vie Associative

www.jeunesse-sports.gouv.fr

Ministère de la Justice

www.justice.gouv.fr

Missions Locales

www.missionslocales.gouv.fr

ONISEP

www.onisep.fr

Réseau Cités des Métiers

www.reseaucitesdesmetiers.org/

GERMANY

Abh - Ausbildungsbegleitende Hilfen
www.abh-infoline.de

Ausbildung Beruf Chancen
www.ausbildungberufchancen.de

Bundesinstitut für Berufsbildung - BIBB
www.bibb.de

Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung - BMBF
www.berufsbildungsbericht.info/
www.bmbf.de

Bundesagentur für Arbeit
www.arbeitsagentur.de

Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge
www.bamf.de

CEDEFOP
www2.trainingvillage.gr/download/Cinfo/Cinfo32002/C32C2EN.html

Deutsches Institut für Erwachsenenbildung - DIE
www.die-bonn.de

Eurydice
www.eurydice.org

G.I.B. NRW - Gesellschaft für innovative Beschäftigungsförderung mbH
www.gib.nrw.de

Good Practice Center
www.good-practice.de

GSUB - Gesellschaft für soziale Unternehmensberatung mbH
www.gsub.de

IAB Instituts für Arbeitsmarkt- und Berufsforschung
www.iab.de

Kompetenzen Fördern
www.kompetenzen-foerdern.de/

NQ - Berufsbegleitende Nachqualifizierung an-und ungelernter Junger erwachsener
www.berufsabschluss.de

Lernerorientierte qualitätstestierung in der Weiterbildung - LQW
www.artset-lqw.de

MoZArT Neue Strukturen für Jobs
www.bma-mozart.de

Oanda
www.oanda.com/

ProfilPASS
www.bildungspass.de/

Schule in Baden - Württemberg
www.schule-in-bw.de

Statistisches Bundesamt Deutschland
www.destatis.de

SWA - Schule- Wirtschaft/ Arbeitsleben
www.swa-programm.de

Socialhilfe24
www.sozialhilfe24.de

Sozialgesetzbuch (SGB)
www.sozialgesetzbuch-bundessozialhilfegesetz.de/

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SWEDEN

Cse.se

www.csn.se/Default.asp

Folkbildningsrådet

www.folkbildning.se

Göteborgs Stad

www.balansen.goteborg.se

Nationellt Centrum – För sfi och svenska som andraspråk

www.nationelltcentrum.se

Nationellt Centrum for Flexibelt Lærande

www.cfl.se

Skolverket

www.skolverket.se/

SOIC - The Swedish Ship Göteborg

www.gotheborg.se

ULB Uppsala Läns Bildningsförbund

www.ulb.se/

Valideringsdelegationen

www.valideringsdelegationen.se/

THE UNITED KINGDOM

Adult and Community Learning Fund

www.lifelonglearning.co.uk/aclf/front.htm

Adult Learning Grant

www.ali.gov.uk

Adult Learning Inspectorate (Reports)

www.ali.gov.uk/htm/reports.asp

Adult Learning inspectorate

www.ali.gov.uk

Barclays

www.barclays.co.uk/personal

Basic Skills Agency

www.basic-skills.co.uk

Business Link

www.businesslink.gov.uk

Careers Wales

www.careerswales.com

Connexions

www.connexions.gov.uk

Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment

www.ccea.org.uk

Department for Education and Skills

www.dfes.gov.uk

Department for Education and Skills – Learning and Skills Councils

www.successforall.gov.uk

Department for Employment and Learning

www.delni.gov.uk

Department for Work and Pensions

www.dwp.gov.uk

Department of Education for Northern Ireland
www.deni.gov.uk

East Midlands Quality Centre
www.emqc.co.uk

Education and Learning Wales
www.elwa.ac.uk

Embedded Learning Portal
www.dfes.gov.uk/readwriteplus/embeddedlearning/

Employer Training Pilots
<http://etp.lsc.gov.uk>

Ento - Developing the competence of people who work with people
www.ento.co.uk

Her Majesty Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales
www.estyn.gov.uk

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education Scotland
www.hmie.gov.uk

Higher Education Funding Council for Wales
www.hefcw.ac.uk/index.htm

Highlands and Islands Enterprise
www.hie.co.uk

HM Treasury
www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/

Information, Advice and Guidance Locally for adults in England – Towards a National Framework
www.lifelonglearning.co.uk/iag

Investors in people
www.investorsinpeople.co.uk/

Job Centre Plus
www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk

Learndirect
www.learndirect.co.uk

Learning and Skills Council
www.lsc.gov.uk

Lifelong learning in UK
www.lifelonglearning.co.uk/cdl

National Institute of Adult Continuing Education - NIACE
www.niace.org

National Research and Development Centre
www.nrdc.org.uk

National Statistics
www.statistics.gov.uk/ssd/surveys/labour_force_survey.asp

Network Skills and Education
www.senet.lsc.gov.uk

New Deal
www.newdeal.gov.uk/

Northern Ireland Assembly
www.niassembly.gov.uk

Office for Standards in Education
www.ofsted.gov.uk

Programma New Deal
www.newdeal.gov.uk

**Qualifications, Curriculum and Assessment Authority for Wales
(Awdurdod Cymwysterau, Cwricwlwm ac Asesu Cymru)**
www.accac.org.uk

Qualifications and Curriculum Authority
www.qca.org.uk

Quality standard for information, advice and guidance services
www.matrixstandard.com

Regional Skills Partnerships

www.dfes.gov.uk/skillsstrategy/subPage.cfm?action=progUpdates.viewUpdate&i_progUpdateID=72

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www.scqf.org.uk

Scottish Enterprise

www.scottish-enterprise.com

Scottish Executive

www.scotland.gov.uk/library5/lifelong/lism-00.asp

Scottish Funding Council

www.sfc.ac.uk

Scottish Parliament

www.scottish.parliament.uk/

Scottish Qualifications Authority

www.sqa.org.uk

Sector Skills Development Agency

www.ssda.org.uk/ssda/default.aspx?page=2

Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework

www.scqf.org.uk

Short Intensive Basic Skills courses – SIBS

www.seetec.co.uk/seetec-449

Small Business Service

www.sbs.gov.uk

Small Firms Training Loans Programme

www.aztectraining.com/training/small_business_loans.htm

University for Industry (Ufi)

www.ufi.com

Wales Employment Advisory Panel

www.wales.gov.uk/themesmergers/content/responses/wales-employ-panel-e.htm

Welsh Assembly

www.wales.gov.uk/pubinaboutassembly/index.htm

Welsh Assembly Government/ Training and Education

www.learning.wales.gov.uk/

Widening Adult Participation Action Fund

www.niace.org.uk/Funds/WAPAF/Default.htm

Work Based Learning for Adults

www.direct.gov.uk/EducationAndLearning/AdultLearning/TrainingAndWorkBasedLearning/fs/en

Worktrain

<http://jobseekers.direct.gov.uk/>

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The book presents the results of a comparative research carried out through a survey on the field, aiming at identifying and analysing measures and actions related to lifelong learning policies in France, Germany, United Kingdom, and Sweden.

The research comprehends the study of the European framework on lifelong learning, the description of the different systems of lifelong learning in the four analysed Country and in Italy. Moreover, the book contains the comparison among the measures selected in each country, relating to the supply, the demand, the development of services, and the analysis of their potential transferability in the Italian system, with the aim of strengthening the measures for the participation and the guidance of the adult audience.