

Workshop I. Supporting flexible learning pathways

Education and training pathways are a set of related education or training programmes provided by schools, training centres, higher education institutions or VET providers that facilitate individuals' progression within or between activity sectors⁽¹⁾.

Flexible learning pathways aim to provide people with opportunities to access the education and/or training necessary for learning, training or employment related activity, as well as personal development, in a way that is different from more formal arrangements. For instance, community-based settings can be used as an alternative to more traditional classroom-based learning, which encourages people who have had a negative experience of compulsory education to acquire skills and competences in another setting.

The recent Cedefop policy report⁽²⁾ shows that in many countries learners have the opportunity to choose between a wider variety of upper-secondary VET options that make it easier to move between different types of learning at the same level and to progress to higher level studies. To cater for different learner needs, programmes with higher shares of practical training, modularised existing programmes or partial qualifications have been initiated in many countries.

Validation of non-formal and informal learning, including skills acquired at the work place helps young people to identify their competences and to get them recognised, as well as move easier between education and employment. Individualised, tailored approaches, accompanied by professional guidance are key elements of successful validation measures.

The following issues will be addressed in the workshop:

- What options do young people who can not learn in traditional classroom have to acquire competences needed for lifelong learning and employment?
- Which pathways are provided in your country to young people to prevent them from dropping out of learning or training and meeting their individual needs?
- What is done in your country to reach and encourage young people who are outside of learning, training or employment to become involved in learning or training? What support is provided to them to overcome the barriers to participating learning, training and employment?
- What have you learned from the workshop's presentations? Which messages do you plan to bring back to your organisation?

⁽¹⁾ Cedefop. *Terminology of European education and training policy. A selection of 100 key terms*. Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, 2008.

⁽²⁾ Cedefop. *A bridge to the future European policy for vocational education and training 2002-10*. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2010.

<http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/publications/17297.aspx>