

Preamble

In general, the questionnaire is very much (too much) oriented towards technical skills and economic efficiency. However, in order to understand the world in which we live and to face machine learning and the challenges of the future, training and education should not be limited to only vocational and professional training. Humanities which help us to decode the world around us are extremely important.

Especially for P&Ms these skills may even be more important than the technical competences.

General questions

1. Do you agree with the challenges presented?

Yes. We would like to stress particularly the need for upskilling workers and in particular the lower skilled /unqualified and unemployed persons.

2. In which ways can Social Partners concretely support the update of the Skills Agenda and modernization of VET?

Information is the first step so that the workers use their rights. For the lower skilled, additional assistance (incentives) are needed as they use existing possibilities less than others. For professionals and managers, the accent should be made on senior P&M's who are, according to the statistics, less inclined to participate in adult learning.

Collective bargaining in companies (when large) or branch level is also an efficient way to ensure lifelong learning and the adequacy of skills and competences (GPEC). For instance, in France, the metal industry is faced with a challenge in this respect : they have specific needs and in order to secure those competences they have signed a collective agreement on branch level on skills and competences with a stress on apprenticeship in order to acquire professional certifications.

3. What new action could be taken to empower workers to up/reskill, taking an inclusive approach?

It is important to have the right mix between in-work training (training during working hours) and off-work training (on personal time). Especially for the lower skilled workers, training in working hours is of utmost importance.

In addition, those who have internet access have automatically a better access to training. Access to ITC should be improved for all the population.

4. How further progress can be made in the area of validation of skills?

Sustainable development should be taken into account in the content of training.

Professional training should also give access to a diploma which could be recognized and used in other firms either of the same branch or, if it concerns transversal competences, in other industries.

Inter-European recognition of diplomas and qualifications should be intensified. Especially for professional qualifications /certificates, this is not the case (for example someone with a qualification in metal working (CQPM – certificate *professionnel de la métallurgie*) in France is not necessarily recognised in another country (i.e. Germany).

The transition between learning and working should be smoothed.

5. Do you consider the Blueprint for sectoral cooperation on skills and the Platforms for Centres of Vocational Excellence as a good basis for further work to break silos between different skills stakeholders?

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6. What do you think should be the future priorities regarding skills intelligence?

ITC is an important subject. However, skills in sustainable development are also a key competence, especially in the light of the EU project of a green economy. For P&Ms, managerial and human skills are also important, as well competences in the orientation of training.

Digitalization (through ITC and AI) is deeply changing organizations and ways of working. The training must be able to provide support to P&Ms in order to approach their role in this new environment for managing teams, organizing working process, transferring competences.

7. What new action could be taken to address skills mismatches?

Portable rights are a good initiative, but often, when people change enterprises, they are transformed into money. Training should be an obligation for everyone in an employment relationship. For the unemployed and independent workers training should be a basic right (which it is already in many countries, but that right should be reinforced).

Exchanges of workers between companies (for example a traineeship in customer enterprises for better understanding of their needs) could also be an option to increase skills.

Training courses should also include more practical work and more teachers should come from technical backgrounds.



8. Which action could help to increase social partners' engagement in workforce skills development in general?

In this respect, it is probable that legal provisions or the application of penalties are necessary to incentivise employers to negotiate. For example, for vocational training (apprentissage), a 5% minimum is compulsory, otherwise the employer have to pay a penalty.

Collective bargaining on skills development plans should be mandatory in companies.

9. How could social partners collaborate among themselves and with national governments to ensure more and better investment in the up/reskilling of the workforce?

Legal action, incentives or penalties (quotas for handicapped, vocational training etc).

Taking into account study periods (i.e. starting from the "baccalauréat") in order to gain rights for pension benefits could also be an incentive to continue training.

This is the case of the certifying training courses followed during a period of unemployment: they extend the rights to compensation.

10. What are the key priorities in the field of VET for attention in the coming years to address the challenges of achieving social fairness, a carbon-neutral economy and digital transition?

Improve working conditions for teachers in poor neighborhoods. Avoid ghettoization and get more social diversity in neighborhoods. Improve language skills in poor quarters (with many immigrants).

Open up secondary education: in France, very early in the educational system the future orientation is set in stone and not many bridges exist between the different forms of apprenticeship/education.

Concerning ITC, a purely technical education is leading to people who act as machines. It is of utmost importance to increase transversal skills, humanities, incentives to critical thinking and interpersonal skills. Topics such as philosophy, sociology, history, etc are important to understand the world in which we live.

Too many seniors leave the job market without passing on their skills. The organization of working time at the end of a career and progressive pre-retirement can be a means of ensuring this transmission of knowledge.

Annex

[Les cadres et la formation professionnelle \(apec.fr\)](http://apec.fr)

[Dis moi quel poste tu occupes, je te dirai quelle formation tu suis \(cereq.fr\)](http://cereq.fr)

