

EMPLOYMENT IN TRANSITION — SKILLS FOR THE FUTURE

International Conference
“Skills for Europe”

Conference report

Berlin, 9 October 2023



Senate Department
for Labour, Social Services, Gender Equality,
Integration, Diversity and Anti-Discrimination

BERLIN



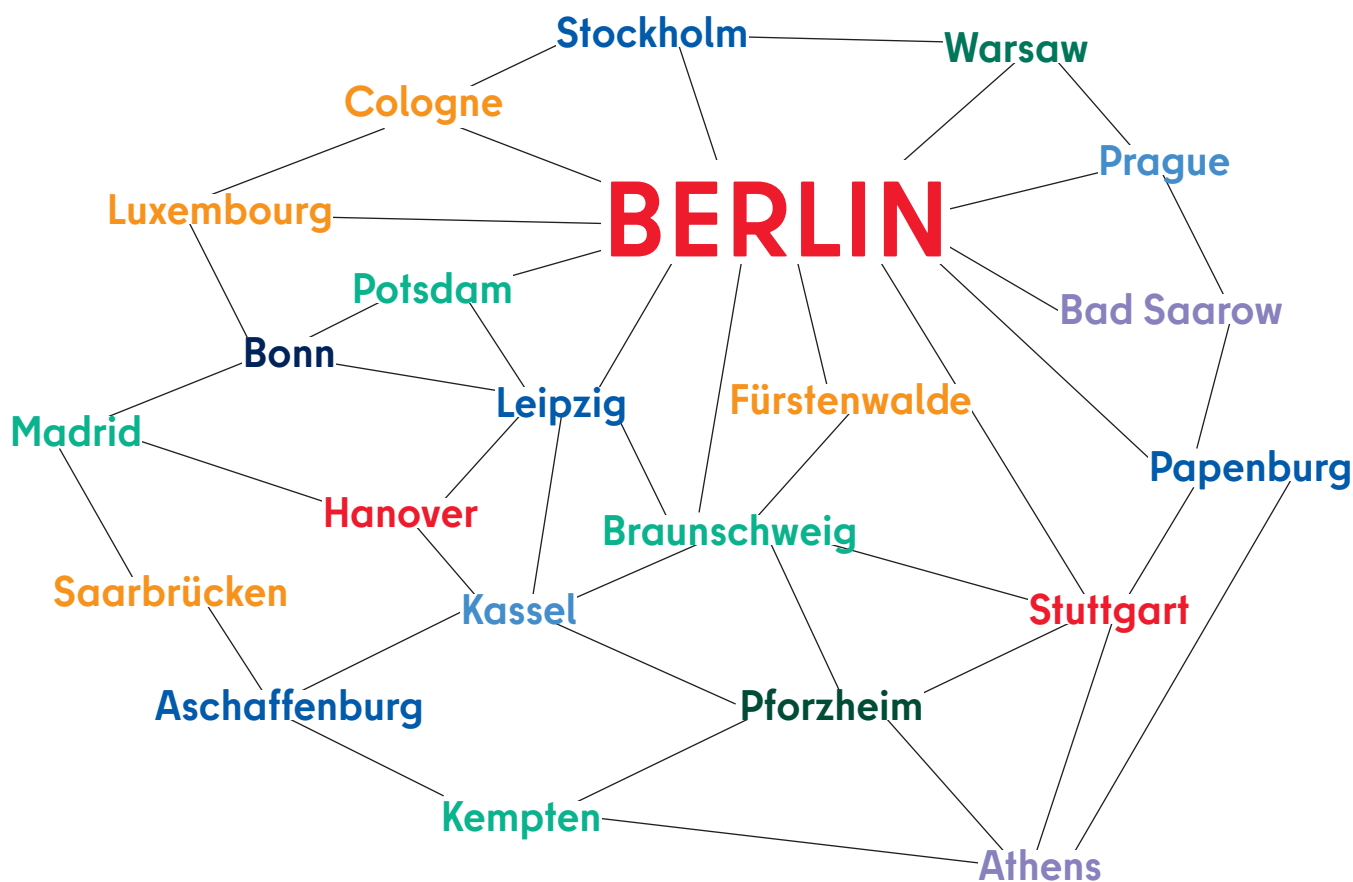


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SURVEY

FROM WHICH LOCATION ARE YOU FOLLOWING THE CONFERENCE?



In total, online participants from 88 European and international cities were connected.

INTRODUCTION

With the “European Year of Skills”, the European Commission has made the topic of qualifications central to its agenda.

To mark this European Year of Skills, the Senate Department for Labour, Social Services, Gender Equality, Integration, Diversity and Anti-Discrimination held the international conference “Employment in Transition – Skills for the Future” on 9 October 2023 to address the question of what continuing education and training (CET) needs to look like in times of constant change.

The main topics were increasing participation in continuing education and training, the role of educational counselling services, and the significance of in-company CET for futureproof employment.

The conference met with a great response both at home and abroad and provided plenty of inspiration. This documentation provides an overview of the contributions, results and discussions.



AGENDA

EMPLOYMENT IN TRANSITION – SKILLS FOR THE FUTURE

International Conference “Skills for Europe”
9 October 2023 Berlin

ORGANISER	Senate Department for Labour, Social Services, Gender Equality, Integration, Diversity and Anti-Discrimination (SenASGIVA), Berlin
VENUE	VKU Forum, Invalidenstraße 91, 10115 Berlin On-site and Livestream
MODERATION	Dr Julia Kropf and Martin Hoffmann

09.00 am**ARRIVAL OF GUESTS ON-SITE****09.30 am****CHECK-IN FOR ONLINE AUDIENCE****10.00–11.00 am****EUROPEAN YEAR OF SKILLS – Welcome and Opening Speeches**

- **WELCOME BY THE MODERATORS**
- **WELCOME GREETING**
Kai Wegner
Governing Mayor of Berlin
- **OPENING AND INTRODUCTION INTO THE TOPIC OF THE CONFERENCE**
Cansel Kiziltepe
Senator for Labour, Social Services, Gender Equality, Integration,
Diversity and Anti-Discrimination, Berlin
- **THE CONFERENCE IN THE LIGHT OF THE EUROPEAN YEAR OF SKILLS**
Dr Nicolas Schmit
EU Commissioner for Jobs and Social Rights
- **MODERATED TALK**
Cansel Kiziltepe
Senator for Labour, Social Services, Gender Equality, Integration,
Diversity and Anti-Discrimination, Berlin
Dr Christoph Nerlich
Member of the Cabinet of EU Commissioner Nicolas Schmit

11.00–11.30 am**COFFEE BREAK****11.30–12.00 am****KEYNOTE SPEECH: Skills for the working world of tomorrow**

Prof. Dr h.c. Jutta Allmendinger, Ph.D.
President of the WZB – Berlin Social Science Center

12.00–1.00 am

PANEL DISCUSSION: What makes continuing education and training (CET) attractive? Participation in CET for futureproof employment

Gaby Bischoff

Member of the European Parliament, Vice-President of S&D Group

Carina Knie-Nürnberg

Managing Director Operative of the Regional Directorate Berlin-Brandenburg, Federal Employment Agency

El Iza Mohamedou

Head of the OECD Centre for Skills, Paris

Dr André Sobczak

Secretary General of Eurocities, Brussels

1.00–2.00 pm

LUNCH BREAK

2.00–3.30 pm

RESKILLING, UPSKILLING, NEW BEGINNINGS – How does good educational counselling work?

– **STORIES OF NEW PROFESSIONAL BEGINNINGS**

Sami Haddaji

Project Lead Arbeit und Bildung e. V. – Counselling project “Beratung zu Bildung und Beruf“ (BBB) in Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg and Mitte, together with Tim Sarianidis, participant of the project, Berlin

– **SHORT TALK ON BERLIN’S COUNSELLING ON EDUCATION AND CAREER – FREE, NEUTRAL, PROFESSIONAL, PUBLICLY FUNDED**

Margrit Zauner

Head of the Labour and Vocational Training Department, SenASGIVA, Berlin

– **THE JOB BROKER – FROM EUROPE TO BERLIN**

Dr Richard Parkes

Managing Director of rinova, London/Malaga

Dubravko Gršić

Project Lead Job Broker, Gesellschaft für soziale Unternehmensberatung – gsub mbH, Berlin

– **NEW APPROACHES TO SKILLS DEVELOPMENT IN EUROPE**

Mary Lyons

Director of Enterprise, Workforce and Skills, SOLAS – Irish Further Education Authority

Maria Tesarz

Deputy Manager of the Department Skills supply and Development at The Adult Education, The Labour Market Administration, City of Stockholm

3.30–4.00 pm

COFFEE BREAK

4.00–5.30 pm

**CONTINUING EDUCATION AND TRAINING on the job to secure skilled workers:
Which strategies lead to success?**

– **IMPULSE SPEECH**

Prof. Dr Enzo Weber

Head of the Area Forecasts and Macroeconomic Analyses (MAKRO)
Institute for Employment Research (IAB), Nürnberg

– **MODERATED TALKS**

1. Strategies for futureproof employment

Christine Vogler

President of the German Nursing Council (DPR) and Managing Director of
the Berlin Education Campus for Health Professions (BBG)

Carsten Vossel

Managing Director of CCVOSEL GmbH & einsnulleins Berlin

Mark Frankenstein

Customer Service Manager, mf Mercedöl GmbH, Heating-Sanitary-Future, Berlin

**2. Continuing education and training in enterprises in the context of digital
and socio-ecological change**

Micha Klapp

State Secretary for Labour, Women and Gender Equality, SenASGIVA, Berlin

Nele Techen

Vice-Chair of the German Trade Union Confederation (DGB) in Berlin-Brandenburg

Anke Fredericksen-Alde

Managing Director of the Education & Career Division, Chamber of Commerce
and Industry (IHK) of Berlin

CLOSING REMARKS

Micha Klapp

State Secretary for Labour, Women and Gender Equality, SenASGIVA, Berlin



CURRICULUM VITAE

KAI WEGNER

Governing Mayor of Berlin



Kai Wegner was born in Berlin-Spandau on September 15, 1972. In 1997, he completed his training as an insurance salesperson and worked with corporate clients for the next two years. Following that, he was employed by a family-owned construction company, where he acted as a member of the management board. He then worked as a business consultant.

In 1995, he was elected to the Spandau Borough Assembly. From 1999 to 2005, he was a member of the Berlin House of Representatives and both the deputy chair of his parliamentary group and its economic policy spokesperson. In 2005, Wegner was elected to the German Bundestag, where he was a member of the Business and Technology Committee. From 2009 to 2017, he chaired the Berlin group within the CDU (Christian Democratic Union) parliamentary group and was the commissioner for large cities from 2014 to 2017.

From 2018 to 2021, Wegner chaired the CDU/CSU parliamentary group's working group on construction, housing, urban development, and municipalities, in addition to his role as the parliamentary group's spokesperson on construction policy.

In 1989, Wegner joined the CDU and their youth organisation, Junge Union, in Spandau. He held various offices in this context, such as chair of the Berlin CDU's organization for high-school students, chair of the Spandau Junge Union, and, from 2000 to 2003, chair of the Berlin Junge Union. From 1998 to 2005, he acted as the deputy chair of the Spandau CDU and then, starting in 2005, chair of the Spandau CDU. From 2011 to 2016, he was secretary general of the Berlin CDU. In 2019, he was elected chair of the Berlin CDU.

Since April 27, 2023, Kai Wegner has been Governing Mayor of Berlin.

CURRICULUM VITAE

CANSEL KIZILTEPE

Senator for Labour, Social Services, Gender Equality, Integration,
Diversity and Anti-Discrimination, Berlin



- since 27 April 2023 Senator for Labour, Social Services, Gender Equality, Integration, Diversity and Anti-Discrimination
- since 2022 Deputy Chairperson of the Social Democratic Party (SPD) Berlin
- since 2022 Federal Chairwoman of the Working Group for Labour in the SPD (Arbeitsgemeinschaft für Arbeit in der SPD, AfA)
- 2022 – 2023 Parliamentary State Secretary in the Federal Ministry for Housing, Urban Development and Building
- 2013 – 2023 Member of the German Bundestag for Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg / Prenzlauer Berg Ost
- 2012 – 2013 Volkswagen AG, working in the staff of the Labour Director, responsible for economic analyses
- 2005 – 2012 Research assistant in the parliamentary office of Ottmar Schreiner, MdB
- 2001 – 2005 Freelancer at the German Institute for Economic Research (DIW) and the German Trade Union Confederation (DGB), among others
- 1995 – 2001 Studies in economics at the Technische Universität Berlin, graduate economist (Diplom-Volkswirtin)

MICHA KLAPP

State Secretary for Labour, Women and Gender Equality, SenASGIVA, Berlin



Micha Klapp has been State Secretary for Labour and Gender Equality in the Berlin Senate Department for Labour, Social Services, Gender Equality, Integration, Diversity and Anti-Discrimination since April 2023. From 2016, Klapp worked at the German Trade Union Confederation National Executive Board, where she first joined the Collective Bargaining Coordination and Minimum Wage Unit, from 2018 as Head of Unit, and in 2020 took over as Head of the Legal and Diversity Department. Before that, she worked as a lawyer in labour and anti-discrimination law. As State Secretary, she is committed, among other things, to better opportunities and participation in the labour market. A major objective for her is the targeted action to prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence. Klapp would like to bring forward the issues of decent work, the creation of sufficient good apprenticeship places as well as the development and securing of the need for skilled workers in the state of Berlin.

CURRICULUM VITAE

DR NICOLAS SCHMIT

EU Commissioner for Jobs and Social Rights



Dr Nicolas Schmit took up office as European Commissioner responsible for Jobs and Social Rights in December 2019. Prior to this, he served as a Member of the European Parliament for the social-democratic Lëtzebuerger Sozialistescher Aarbechterpartei following his election in May 2019. From 2009 to 2018, he held the position of Minister for Labour and Employment in the Luxembourgish government. In 2004, he was appointed Minister Delegate for Foreign Affairs and Immigration. Following a long career of public service, he took up duty as Permanent Representative of Luxembourg to the EU in 1998 for a six-year term. Nicolas Schmit holds a Doctorate in International Economic Relations and a Masters in French Literature from the University of Aix-Marseille.

DR CHRISTOPH NERLICH

Member of the Cabinet of EU Commissioner Nicolas Schmit



Since 12/2019	Member of Cabinet of N. Schmit, Commissioner for Jobs and Social Rights, European Commission
07/2018-11/2019	Member of Cabinet of Marianne Thyssen, Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs, Skills and Labour Mobility, European Commission
04/2016 – 06/2018	Head of Unit, Directorate General Internal Audit Service (IAS), European Commission
10/2012 – 03/2016	Assistant to the Director-General, Directorate General Internal Audit Service, European Commission
02/2011 – 09/2012	Administrator in the Secretariat of the Budgetary Control Committee, European Parliament
01/2006 – 01/2011	Auditor at the European Court of Auditors, Luxembourg
10/2002 – 12/2005	Auditor PwC Berlin

MODERATION



Dr Julia Kropf

Moderation

Short Biography Dr Julia Kropf is a freelance moderator and Systemic Business Coach. She holds a doctorate in occupational sociology, has previously been a consultant and senior manager in the private sector economy and brings about 20 years of professional experience to the table. Discussion is her passion. She seeks empathy without descending into sentimentalism and takes an objective approach which avoids any sense of a know-it-all attitude. She injects humour whilst never losing sight of the seriousness of the situation and is a fan of plain speaking from which provocation is absent. Julia Kropf chairs specialist conferences, panel discussions, strategic meetings and workshops. She is also happy to preside at festive events and citizens' conferences. This often involves working at the intersection between policy makers, trade and industry as well as society. She also coaches individual persons and teams during occupational change processes. www.julia-kropf.de



Martin Hoffmann

Co-Moderation

Short Biography Martin Hoffmann is a freelance moderator, journalist and teacher. He studied sociology and political science and has worked in diverse fields for over ten years, including politics, economics, education, sports and entertainment. Whether in the TV studio, on stage, in workshops or as a reporter, the focus is on good conversations, meeting interesting people, and making topics accessible and engaging to the public. His approach is serious, but fun. His teaching is centred on creative writing, body language and physical presence.

THE SPEAKERS OF THE CONFERENCE

from politics, administration, science, economy and civil society

10.00-11.00 am

EUROPEAN YEAR OF SKILLS — Welcome and Opening Speeches



Kai Wegner

Governing Mayor of Berlin



Cansel Kiziltepe

Senator for Labour, Social Services, Gender Equality, Integration, Diversity and Anti-Discrimination, Berlin



Dr Nicolas Schmit

EU Commissioner for Jobs and Social Rights



Dr Christoph Nerlich

Member of the Cabinet of EU Commissioner Nicolas Schmit

11.30–12.00 am

KEYNOTE SPEECH: Skills for the working world of tomorrow



Prof. Dr h.c. Jutta Allmendinger, Ph.D.

President of the WZB – Berlin Social Science Center

Short Biography Prof. Dr h.c. Jutta Allmendinger, Ph.D. is President of the Berlin Social Science Center (WZB) and Professor of Sociology at Humboldt Universität Berlin. Prior to this position she was a professor at Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität in Munich as well as head of the Federal Employment Agency's Institute for Employment Research (IAB) in Nuremberg.

Her multiple honors and awards include the German Federal Cross of Merit, First Class, the Communicator Award and the Schader Award. Jutta Allmendinger serves on several advisory boards in Germany and abroad, such as the supervisory board of Berlin's Waste Management (BSR) and the editorial board of the weekly DIE ZEIT. In 2021, she was appointed by Pope Francis to the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences, in 2022 she was the chair of the G7 Gender Equality Advisory Council (GEAC) under the German G7 Presidency.

12.00–1.00 am

PANEL DISCUSSION: What makes continuing education and training (CET) attractive? Participation in CET for futureproof employment



Gaby Bischoff

Member of the European Parliament, Vice-President of S&D Group

Short Biography Gaby Bischoff is a Member of the European Parliament and has been Vice-President of the S&D Group since 2021. In the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs (EMPL), she campaigns for decent work and democracy in the workplace. As Vice-President of the Committee on Constitutional Affairs (AFCO), she is committed to a democratic EU capable of acting and to more citizen participation.

After graduating with a degree in political science, she worked in research, for trade unions, at the Permanent Representation of Germany to the EU in Brussels, and at the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (BMAS). From 2015 to 2019, she chaired the workers' group in the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) as President.



Carina Knie-Nürnberg

Managing Director Operative of the Regional Directorate Berlin-Brandenburg, Federal Employment Agency

Short Biography Management of various offices of the Federal Employment Agency (Bundesagentur für Arbeit) throughout Germany as well as management of various organisational development projects



El Iza Mohamedou

Head of the OECD Centre for Skills, Paris

Short Biography El Iza Mohamedou is the Head of the OECD Centre for Skills which supports countries to achieve better economic and social outcomes by taking a whole-of-government approach and engaging with stakeholders to develop and implement better skills policies. She has more than 25 years of international experience working in the field and at headquarters with various international organizations and in the private sector. El Iza holds a PhD in Economics, MBA in International Business and a BA in Economics.



Dr André Sobczak

Secretary General of Eurocities, Brussels

Short Biography André Sobczak works to empower cities in EU decision making through Eurocities, following two terms as Vice-President of the Nantes Metropolitan Area. He is forging new connections with academia, where he has a history of driving social and ecological change, spearheading initiatives on issues like gender equality and precarious employment. He leads with an approach of multi-level cooperation between the public sector, businesses and civil society for tangible positive impact.

2.00–3.30 pm

RESKILLING, UPSKILLING, NEW BEGINNINGS –
How does good educational counselling work?

Sami Haddaji

Project Lead Arbeit und Bildung e. V. – Counselling project “Beratung zu Bildung und Beruf“ (BBB) in Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg and Mitte

Short Biography After completing his master’s degree in philosophy and Arabic studies, Sami Haddaji worked as teacher of German as a foreign language. His first job in counselling was as a mobile education counsellor for refugees in the LernLaden Pankow. Since December 2021, he has been in charge of the counselling centres on education and careers (Beratungsstellen zu Bildung und Beruf) in Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg and Mitte and coordinates the Alpha-Bündnis Mitte.



Tim Sarianidis

Multimedia editor and author

Short Biography

- Studied geography and history
- Media lecturer
- Book author
- Multimedia editor



Margrit Zauner

Head of the Labour and Vocational Training Department, SenASGIVA, Berlin

Short Biography Margrit Zauner is a qualified bank clerk, she holds a qualification as Master of Business Administration and a master’s degree in adult education. Since 2017 she is Head of Unit for Labour Policy and Vocational Training at the Senate Department for Labour in Berlin. Before, she has been actively involved in labour, vocational education and training and gender equality policy for the State of Berlin (head of the office of the Senator for Work, Vocational Education and Training and Women, direction of the unit for women’s equality in the world of work, and of the professional training unit). She is Berlin state representative on the Federal Institute for VET (BIBB) board. Furthermore, she is also Berlin state representative and chairwoman of Berufsbildungswerk Berlin e. V. (sponsor of the Annedore-Leber-Vocational-Training-Centre).



Dr Richard Parkes

Managing Director of rinova, London/Malaga

Short Biography Over a 30-year career in lifelong learning, employment, business advice and cultural education, Rick has designed and directed many large-scale and innovative active labour market, entrepreneurship and social action in London and through the framework of EU programmes (and, since 2018, in Malaga, Spain). These programmes have assisted over 20,000 start-ups, SMEs and social enterprises, whilst others that have supported many thousands of learners and job entrants. He has worked in partnership over many years with gsub in Berlin, where he is known as the architect of the ‚Job Broker‘ concept – an award-winning European project concept, informed in part by ‚payment by results‘ reforms in UK employment schemes, that has been subsequently adopted in various EU countries.



Dubravko Gršić

Project Lead Job Broker, Gesellschaft für soziale
Unternehmensberatung – gsub mbH, Berlin

Short Biography Dubravko Gršić has more than 15 years of experience in labour market and vocational training policy. He has managed many different European projects and has experience in coaching and counselling the long-term unemployed and young people. He has a master’s degree in communication sciences and is a trained systemic counsellor. Since 2015, he has also worked as a project manager and consultant in the field of change management and organisational development, among other things.



Mary Lyons

Director of Enterprise, Workforce and Skills, SOLAS –
Irish Further Education Authority

Short Biography Mary Lyons, Director of Enterprise, Employees and Skills at SOLAS, the Further Education and Training Authority (FET) in Ireland has extensive experience as a researcher, lecturer, and a skills development specialist in a range of education and industry settings. Focussing on national workforce development policy and strategic skills initiatives through collaborative innovation with education and enterprise partners to upskill and reskill employees at risk of displacement due to technological and market developments and to support SMEs to grow their business by developing an agile workforce. Promoting FET as a key resource for enterprise skills responding to evolving industry needs is central to her role. Equally the development of a micro-qualifications model to enable FET to target priority skills areas and digital transformation to make learning accessible and flexible for everyone.



Maria Tesarz

Deputy Manager of the Department Skills supply and Development at The Adult Education, The Labour Market Administration, City of Stockholm

Short Biography The Municipal Adult Education in the City of Stockholm, Vocational Training/ Education for Adults. Collaboration with employers and industries around the supply of skilled labour force.

4.00–5.30 pm

CONTINUING EDUCATION AND TRAINING on the job to secure skilled workers:
Which strategies lead to success?



Prof. Dr Enzo Weber

Head of the Area Forecasts and Macroeconomic Analyses (MAKRO) Institute for Employment Research (IAB), Nürnberg

Short Biography Professor Dr Enzo Weber is head of the research area “Forecasts and Macroeconomic Analyses” at the IAB and holds the Chair of Empirical Economics at Universität Regensburg. Previous positions as a research assistant at Freie Universität Berlin, member of the Collaborative Research Center 649 “Economic Risk” at Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, visiting researcher at the Japan Center for Economic Research, postdoc at Universität Mannheim, junior professor at Universität Regensburg.

Professor Weber is a labour market researcher, macroeconomist, forecaster, and econometrician. His topics include macroeconomic labour market development and business cycles, technological change and economic transformation, labour market reforms and policy, economic crises, demographic change, and social security. Prof. Weber publishes in academic journals such as Journal of Business & Economic Statistics, European Economic Review, Review of Economic Dynamics and Journal of Money, Credit and Banking. He advises national and international governments, parliaments, institutions, parties, and associations. Prof. Weber develops current policy proposals for labour market and economic challenges and is a member of high-level advisory bodies. He frequently appears on TV, radio, print and online media.



Christine Vogler

President of the German Nursing Council and Managing Director of the Berlin Education Campus

Short Biography Christine Vogler, born in 1969, is the managing director of the Berlin Education Campus for Health Professions (Berliner Bildungscampus für Gesundheitsberufe gGmbH), the largest educational institution for health professions in Germany and the joint training centre of Charité and Vivantes. She is also the president of the German Nursing Council (Deutscher Pflegerat), which represents about 140,000 nurses in Germany. Having worked in the health sector for 30 years, she has insights into all areas of health care. She is a nurse, certified nursing educator (Diplom-Pflegepädagogin), manager and quality auditor. In 2018, she received the Berlin Women's Award (Berliner Frauenpreis) for her commitment to ambitious and attractive nursing education. In 2022, she was awarded the Nursing Manager of the Year (Pflegermanagerin des Jahres) 2022.



Carsten Vossel

Managing Director of CCVOSSSEL GmbH

Short Biography Carsten Christian Vossel was born in Lippstadt on 25 May 1975. As a student at the age of 21, he founded his first company in 1996. At CCVOSSSEL, 60 employees ensure that companies are positioned against cyber threats. A broad spectrum is offered, from phishing, penetration tests and the development of security concepts to 24/7 monitoring. In the second company, einsnulleins Berlin, his team supports SMEs in IT infrastructure topics for modern & digital work. He attaches great importance to fair cooperation in a spirit of partnership and to dealing with each other at eye level within the team. As a speaker, Mr Vossel is also happy to pass on his knowledge and experience of information security and corporate governance beyond the boundaries of the company.



Mark Frankenstein

Customer Service Manager, Mercedöl,
SHK – company

Short Biography

- Dual studies with a focus on SME management
- 4-year employment with a leading manufacturer in the heating industry
- Working in the family business for 7 years
- 3rd generation in the company / generation change is imminent

Current activities:

- Head of customer service (service, maintenance of systems)
- Strategic direction of the company for the future



Nele Techen

Vice-Chair of the German Trade Union Confederation in Berlin-Brandenburg (DGB)

Short Biography

- Business school graduate (Diplomkauffrau)
 - Project manager at the consulting firm Innovation, Strukturpolitik, Arbeit GmbH
 - Trade Union Secretary at the German Trade Union Confederation (DGB) in Berlin-Brandenburg
 - Trade Union Secretary IG Metall Berlin-Brandenburg-Saxony
 - Since 2022 Vice-Chair of the DGB in Berlin-Brandenburg
-



Anke Fredericksen-Alde

Managing Director of the Education and Career Division, Berlin Chamber of Commerce and Industry (IHK)

Short Biography With her degrees in business administration and law as well as her many years of experience at the Berlin Chamber of Commerce and Industry (IHK Berlin) as managing director, the topic of continuing education has always played a major role in Anke Fredericksen-Alde's work content and personal development. In her career she has successfully implemented projects such as setting up a Corona Hotline, developing a continuing education strategy for the IHK Berlin and establishing the Berlin qualification recognition hotline with partners. The focus was always on the individual needs analysis in order to find customised solutions. Through her work in the field of foreign trade and law, she also had early contact with internationally active companies. She is currently working on the exciting project Weiterbildung.berlin, which bundles all relevant information and offers on continuing education in Berlin for companies.



Micha Klapp

State Secretary for Labour and Women, and Gender Equality, SenASGIVA, Berlin

EMPLOYMENT IN TRANSITION — SKILLS FOR THE FUTURE



WELCOME GREETING

Kai Wegner

Governing Mayor of Berlin

Based on the conference title “Employment in Transition – Skills for the Future”, the Governing Mayor of Berlin, Kai Wegner, begins by talking about change. For many people, he says, change causes anxiety and concern. Politics, business and science are also facing enormous challenges. Companies are desperately looking for employees, digitalisation is progressing, and some feel they can no longer keep up. More challenges include climate change and global competition in market performance, influence, and business models. However, he continues, change is always an opportunity that must be used – also with regard to this conference.

The labour market, vocational training and CET all need this positive perspective. This is the only way it will be possible to allay millions of people’s fears of change. After all, “everyone is needed, everyone brings something to the table”. This potential must be brought to the surface and the “concentrated expertise” of this conference plays an important role. Kai Wegner points out that the Berlin conference is embedded in the European Year of Skills. He describes skills as key to helping employees play to their strengths in times of change. It is therefore important to raise awareness of lifelong learning and continuing education and training – in Berlin and across Europe. As an appealing hub for business and technology that attracts companies from all over the world, particularly in future-oriented fields, Berlin is showing how change can be seen as an opportunity. Brandenburg and the Berlin-Brandenburg metropolitan region form a unique centre for company settlement, networking and innovation. The idea that cooperation makes you stronger is also the basis of the “Alliance for Vocational Training”, which pools all the forces of employee and employer organisations, vocational training stakeholders, science, and administration. New skilled workers could be recruited with the help of this alliance, says Wegner.

With this optimistic view of change, the Governing Mayor wishes the participants many good ideas, fruitful discussions, and a successful conference.

OPENING OF THE CONFERENCE AND INTRODUCTION TO THE TOPIC

Cansel Kiziltepe

Senator for Labour, Social Services, Gender Equality,
Integration, Diversity and Anti-Discrimination Berlin



Senator Cansel Kiziltepe welcomes the speakers and guests. For over 30 years, the Senate Department for Labour has organised annual European conferences on current topics in the field of work and vocational education and training. This year, she says, the “European Year of Skills” was the ideal occasion to organise an international conference to facilitate exchange between policymakers, academia and practitioners on this topic and learn from each other. A particular focus of her organisation is preparing the (decreasing) working population for the challenges of changing working conditions and requirements. Skills acquisition and skills development are the key to future-proof employment. As in-company continuing education and training and lifelong learning becomes increasingly important, the question as to how we can ensure that everyone benefits from CET – “including those we have not yet reached” becomes even more urgent.

One of the aims of the European Year of Skills is to raise awareness of lifelong learning and CET for all European citizens and to increase participation in continuing education and training – “because only 37 percent of adults participate in further education on a regular basis”.¹ In Berlin, incidentally, company training programmes reach just under 15 percent of employees.² With today’s conference, Berlin seeks to contribute to the objectives of the European Year of Skills and shed light on the topic from different perspectives.

The first focus of the conference and the keynote speech by Professor Dr Allmendinger is the question of what skills will look like in the working world of tomorrow. After all, the ongoing transformations are already shaping today’s world of work: such as the 3 Ds, digitalisation, decarbonisation, and demographics, which are changing both the economy as well as the demands on employees. This change increases the need for

¹ https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_22_6086

² https://www.berlin.de/sen/arbeit/_assets/top-themen/gute-arbeit/betriebspanel-berlin-2021_bf.pdf

employees to continuously update their skills. Challenges include the acquisition of digital skills, the increasing importance of artificial intelligence, training for ecological change, and issues of equality in skills acquisition. Equality includes topics such as increasing the proportion of women in technology-related professions.

A second focus of the conference is on the questions: What makes continuing education and training (CET) attractive? And how can participation in CET programmes be increased? Continuing education and training is a central element of decent work because it enables career opportunities and participation, as well as a higher income. Its attractiveness also depends on easily accessible information services and the creation of a culture of lifelong learning. Previously under-represented groups need to be supported in particular – workers with fewer formal qualifications, recently arrived immigrants, people with a migration background, and part-time employees. However, small and medium-sized companies also need effective financial and organisational support so that they can implement CET as the central pillar for securing skilled workers.

The social partners, employers and trade unions, who can exert a positive influence on the attractiveness of CET for employees by means of in-company training and corresponding collective agreements, are important partners in this regard. “I look forward to good examples from Europe,” says Senator Kiziltepe.

The third focus of the conference is the topic of how good educational counselling can succeed. Berlin has a wide range of continuing education and training programmes. The Berlin model of educational counselling is a central component of this.

Ten educational counselling centres provide free advice to interested Berliners on all questions relating to training, studies, careers, and professional and personal development opportunities. Qualification counselling is also offered specifically for companies and their employees. The Berlin Educational Counselling and Career Guidance project aims to ensure that all interested parties receive high-quality advice, regardless of their life situation.

The “Alliance for Vocational Training”, which the Governing Mayor already mentioned, is very important to her too. However, approaches to CET and skills development would be presented at the conference not only from Berlin, but also from other countries.

The last part of the conference focuses on strategies for securing skilled workers, says the Senator. The shortage of skilled workers is also a reality in Berlin. 68 percent of companies complained about a shortage which poses major risks – securing skilled workers is therefore very important.³ In order to make in-company training more attractive, the SenASGIVA in

Berlin supports small and medium-sized companies with specialist guidance on staff qualifications. Among other things, it advises on CET requirements and funding options.

In addition to training and skilled worker immigration, improving the working conditions of all employees as a whole and leveraging existing employment potential are equally important when it comes to securing skilled workers. Strategies for securing skilled workers must always be strategies for “decent work”. This connection between securing skilled workers, acquiring skills, and decent work is particularly important to Senator Kiziltepe. She hopes that the conference will stimulate new ideas and solutions.



The Senator emphasises that efforts to promote lifelong learning must be stepped up to ensure that no one is left behind and that CET is accessible to all. CET for employees was initially not even considered at the state level, but the law to strengthen the promotion of vocational education and training by Federal Labour Minister Hubertus Heil has changed this. The transformations, be it through digitalisation, decarbonisation or demographics, are unstoppable. “But we have the opportunity to actively shape this change by investing in skills development.”

The European Year of Skills is an excellent framework for stepping up efforts across Europe and learning from one another. The Senator cordially invites all participants to discuss the speakers’ contributions in person and in the livestream, and to contribute comments, ideas and suggestions. She wishes them an exciting and stimulating conference.

Finally, she thanks the employees of her administration who have organised and prepared the content of this conference. Special thanks go to Karin Reichert, “the person behind the international conferences”.

³ <https://www.ihk.de/berlin/presse/presseinfo/pm-2023-08-30-weiterbildung-berlin-5905122>

THE CONFERENCE IN THE LIGHT OF THE EUROPEAN YEAR OF SKILLS

Dr Nicolas Schmit

EU Commissioner for Jobs and Social Rights



EU Commissioner Dr Nicolas Schmit names the shortage of skilled workers as one of the most pressing challenges of our time. More than 70 percent of companies in the EU say they cannot find the skilled workers they need. There is an increasing demand for highly qualified workers in a simultaneously dwindling talent pool — a scenario that also affects Germany in particular. The Federal Employment Agency reported around 770,000 vacancies in June 2023. This, Commissioner Schmit says, particularly affects the catering, transport and logistics sectors, sales professions, healthcare professions, and STEM specialists. The shortage of skilled workers is also hampering investment in the green and digital transition and in economic growth as a whole. Urgent action is required. This is one of the reasons why the European Year of Skills was launched. The aim is to close skills gaps, promote CET and retraining, and strengthen lifelong learning.



The EU's goal is for 60 percent of adults to take part in at least one (continuing education and training) programme per year by 2030. Investment in lifelong learning must become the norm in order to cope with the rapidly changing world of work. However, Brussels cannot solve problems such as a shortage of skilled workers and skills gaps alone. Close cooperation is needed at the European, national and regional levels. Social partners, employment agencies, and companies are important players in this regard. Companies should provide sector- and skill-specific training opportunities, says Commissioner Schmit. A total of 65 billion euros is available from the EU for the period 2021 to 2027 to support the member states in the area of skills development.

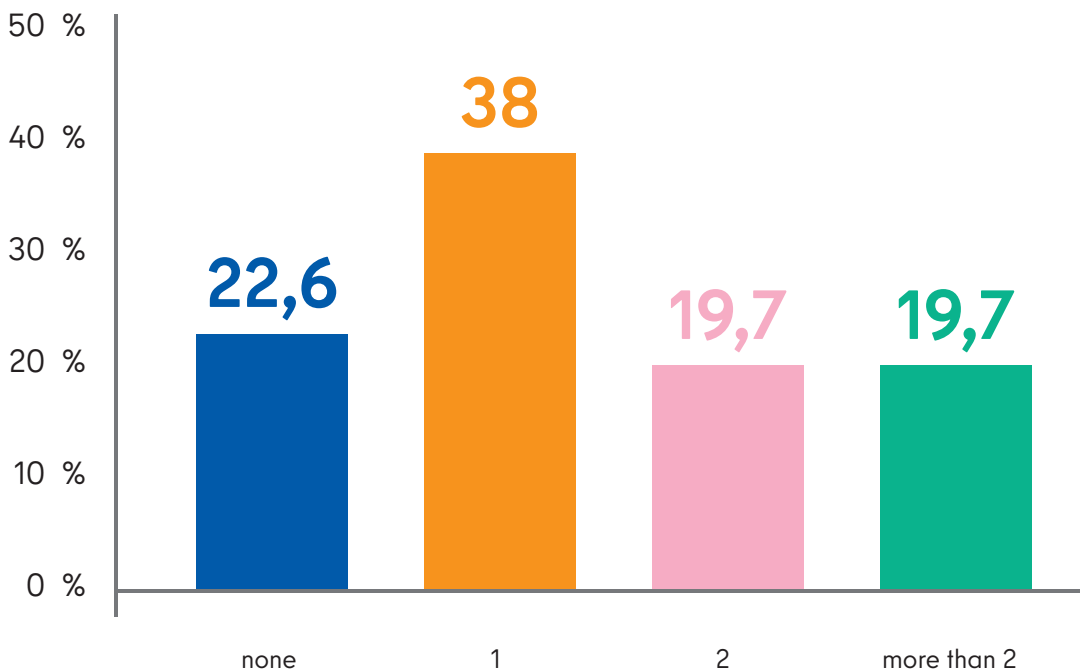
The European Year of Skills places a strong focus on numerous existing EU initiatives, such as the EU Skills Pact, which was created under the German Council Presidency. It brings together the most important players in CET and VET in 18 large-scale partnerships to invest in training and retraining

programmes for 10 million employees to date. Commissioner Schmit also mentions three Council recommendations: on vocational education and training, on individual learning accounts, and on a European approach to “micro-credentials”. But new initiatives are also being taken, such as improving learning mobility to create more opportunities for learning and teaching abroad. Working together to shape the future of jobs is also “a top priority” in Berlin. The Commissioner refers to the Youth Employment Agency Berlin as a very effective means of providing counselling at the transition from school to

work and opening up new opportunities for early school leavers. He describes counselling at the interface between school and work as particularly important because it encourages the skilled workers of tomorrow. A package of measures from ESF and other funds worth 43 million euros complements the offer in Berlin, especially for young people, but also for other groups. EU Commissioner Schmit concludes by thanking the Berlin state government for participating in the European Year of Skills.

SURVEY

HAVE YOU ALREADY TAKEN PART IN FURTHER TRAINING THIS YEAR?



76 people took part in the survey.

MODERATED TALK

Cansel Kiziltepe

Senator for Labour, Social Services, Gender Equality,
Integration, Diversity and Anti-Discrimination Berlin

and Dr Christoph Nerlich

Cabinet Member of EU Commissioner Dr Nicolas Schmit



When asked whether the EU’s goal of having 60 percent of adults in the EU completing at least one CET course per year by 2030 is too ambitious, **Dr Christoph Nerlich** admits that there is a still long way to go, with the current figure at 40 percent. Nevertheless, there is a need to pursue this goal. This is one of the EU’s three central goals in the area of employment and social policy up to 2030. The first six months of the European Year of Skills have already triggered a huge mobilisation: Over 1,300 events in total took place in the member states. Skills acquisition could become a strategic competitive advantage for Europe, says Dr Nerlich. There are also several larger initiatives in the context of the Year of Skills, which are closely linked to European industrial policy. While the Year of Skills has already helped “us to make progress”, one year is not enough; it must become a decade of skills.

Senator Kiziltepe also emphasises that this is an ambitious goal. Greater attention needs to be paid to this topic, especially in small and medium-sized companies. She welcomes Europe’s strong commitment to this issue, as well as the 65 billion euros in EU funds being made available to the member states. Important instruments in this regard are the ESF+, which is well used by Berlin, but also the ERASMUS+ programme that facilitates communication between students and teachers.

Dr Nerlich emphasises that the shortage of skilled workers is currently the biggest problem facing the European labour market. Fortunately, the coronavirus pandemic and Russia’s war of aggression against Ukraine did not lead to greater unemployment in Europe as initially feared. This is why, she says, the skilled worker shortage is now a major problem for companies and, while CET is a key element in remedying it, it is not the only one. It is also important to mobilise more of the population for the labour market, such as the elderly, women and young people. 8 million young people in Europe are neither in training nor in employment. These are the resources that need to be mobilised first. The improvement of working conditions, as mentioned by the Senator, is also an important

element, as conditions do not correspond to what employees expect. In addition, Dr Nerlich points out that the topic of artificial intelligence should also be considered in terms of mitigating the labour shortage. The influx of skilled workers from third countries must also be addressed.

According to **Senator Kiziltepe**, there is a major discrepancy in Berlin in that employers refer to vacant training places, while there are over 3,000 applicants without a place. This is why she describes the Alliance for Vocational Training with the social partners and other stakeholders as very important for Berlin. The aim is to conclude more training contracts in future. Collectively agreed wages, good working conditions, and further training opportunities are essential to make employers appealing. In addition, more companies need to provide training, as only around 20 percent of companies in Germany and only 11.7 percent of companies in Berlin currently provide training.

When asked if he also sees major challenges for Berlin, **Dr Nerlich** says yes, simply owing to its size and history. However, he says, Berlin has succeeded in attracting many companies, especially in the digital sector. Other than that, the city faces similar challenges to other major cities in Europe. The main aim is to combat poverty and homelessness. The EU has created a platform for this issue (European Platform on Combatting Homelessness⁴).

In response to the question of whether CET also reaches the people who need it most or are most likely to benefit from it, the **Senator** once again refers to the Alliance for Vocational Training, as well as to the Youth Employment Agency Berlin, which provides advice at the point of transition between school and work and helps prevent early school leavers. The Youth Employment Agency is also very active in outreach work, i.e. it approaches people and does not wait for them to make first contact. Berlin's particular structure, with many solo self-employed people and the largest proportion of start-ups in Germany as well as a large number of small and micro businesses, should also be taken into account. This structure differs from more industrialised areas, in which CET is shaped to a greater extent by the social partners and within the framework of collective agreements. Against the background of a high proportion of people with a migration background, the Senator also emphasises that migration should be seen as an opportunity and that the potential of these people should not be underestimated. She positively emphasises the Skilled Immigration Act passed by the German federal government.

But how can Berlin and Europe join forces? As far as the European Social Fund is concerned, the bureaucratic effort involved in its implementation is often criticised. Is there any hope? "Hope dies last," says **Dr Nerlich**. The EU Commission has proposed a significantly streamlined set of rules for the 2021 to 2027 funding period, he explains. However, additional regulations have been added by the European legislators, and



the member states have also introduced further regulations, creating new bureaucracy in turn. These hurdles must be further reduced by all parties involved. However, the funds must also be used in a targeted manner and billed unbureaucratically using simplified cost options.

According to the **Senator**, Berlin also wants simplification and would be pleased if the EU could make progress in this respect. A working group has been established at the Senate level to acquire EU funding. With reference to the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+), she highlights that the ESF+ is aimed at the individual, for example with qualification measures to secure employment. Furthermore, the ESF+ and its achievements should be made more visible. "Many people don't know what Europe is doing for them." She returns to the housing shortage issue: For many people in Berlin, it is either impossible to find a flat or available flats are too expensive. In the past, for example, there would have been company housing. She recommends that employers consider "employee housing" again in order to counteract the shortage of skilled workers.

When asked what he would like to see before next year's European elections, **Dr Nerlich** begins by referring to what has been achieved so far. For example, the EU has enforced a framework for minimum wages so that they tend to rise throughout Europe. More needs to be done for solo self-employed people in Europe, especially when it comes to improving working conditions for platform employees. He assumes that the Commission Proposal for better working conditions in the platform economy, currently being negotiated between the Parliament and the Council, will be adopted before the European elections.

⁴ https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_21_3044

KEYNOTE SPEECH

SKILLS FOR THE WORKING WORLD OF TOMORROW

Professor Dr h.c. Jutta Allmendinger, Ph.D.

President of the Berlin Social Science Center (WZB)



According to Professor Dr Jutta Allmendinger, the title of the speech “Skills for the working world of tomorrow” raised three questions at once: What are skills? What is the world of work and what is tomorrow? Instead of “world of gainful employment”, Professor Allmendinger prefers the term “world of activity”, which includes both paid and unpaid activities. She explains it is easier to describe which “skills” are required using the concept of “activities”. You need time for all kinds of activities, but the current discussion is mostly limited to gainful employment. Yet the following also applies: “Paid activities are absolutely necessary in order to carry out unpaid activities, but unpaid activities are also absolutely necessary in order to carry out paid activities.”

She relates the morning’s question to multiple requirements that need to be brought into a convergent scheme in terms of activities and skills. Skills similar to those we already have today will be important for the activities of the future, explains Professor Allmendinger. According to the World Economic Forum, 85 million jobs will be lost as part of the transformation, but at least 97 million new jobs will be created. In other words, it is not a question of running out of work, but of mastering the upheavals that occur within someone’s lifetime and employment history. Tailoring training at the beginning of a person’s (professional) life to be sufficient for their entire career is no longer feasible. Much more needs to be done in the area of lifelong learning; it was better twenty to thirty years ago. In 1991, for example, her students were much more diverse, including older people who were on courses for senior citizens that enabled them to lead their lives more independently. Today, there are mainly young students — 27 is already considered “old” for master degree programmes.

A second challenge, closely linked to technological change, is demographics. The “baby boomers” are retiring, and while the age composition is changing from the original age pyramid to the “cylinder” to the “pillar”, this change only occurs following a transitional period. This transitional period must be mastered through various processes, says



Professor Allmendinger. Labour force potential must be much better utilised. The current low birth rate will not change much, on the contrary. As far as employment is concerned, various legal regulations have proven supportive for women. While women felt more secure in their working lives, they have to defend their private lives if, for example, they stop working for a while. In contrast to the world of work, this problem is individualised although it is a structural problem.

Enormous changes can be observed in the area of employment: 2.5 million people in Germany have no vocational qualifications. This share at 17 percent, has never been so high, and these figures are rising. The best way to tackle this is through early childhood intervention, but later interventions at the age of 15 to 16 should also be utilised. There is not enough willingness to welcome young people with open arms – even those with a secondary school leaving certificate. Some employers reacted very harshly, as Professor Allmendinger explains with a striking example, and sometimes gave abstruse reasons for rejecting applicants. Such “unfriendly” behaviour “does something to people” and creates frustration. On the other hand, we should be ensuring that many more people enter the labour market instead of excluding them.

“There is still a great deal to be done” in the care sector, be it nursing care for the elderly or the sick, in childcare or in schools, according to Professor Allmendinger. Using nursing as an example, she demonstrates that people are not treated in ways that would enable them to do their job in the long term – “they are finished after 10 to 15 years”. People then often leave precisely those professions “in which we have the greatest shortage of skilled workers”. These people are not lacking in motivation, but are understandably mentally and physically

unable to carry out these activities for long periods of time. Many then have to take early retirement or change jobs. Another problem in the world of work is the high proportion of administrative work.

The “hard” age limits in Germany, according to which professors have to retire at 65, for example, do not exist in other countries. This also plays a role in other professions, even if people are still highly competent in old age. This is a kind of “forced retirement”. There are professions in which you can work long hours and those in which you cannot, so we should not lump everything together.

Climate change represents another major upheaval factor, as the transition to a “green economy” is altering both activities and skills requirements. In this area, people must above all acquire the skills to change their behaviour – with incentives rather than bans. Alongside technological upheavals, social innovations are indispensable when it comes to mastering this transformation process. Finally, Professor Allmendinger addresses the topic of migration as another upheaval. Surveys show that migration is the only transformation process that people believe they can control. While there is still room for manoeuvre here, most people believe that they do not have the power to do anything about the other upheavals. This is why migration is attracting so much attention. However, we need to learn how to deal with foreignness, otherness and diversity instead.

Professor Allmendinger then outlines possible solutions. The first priority is to give children better opportunities. The current “Startchancenprogramm” does this too half-heartedly. Educational poverty must be reduced in a targeted manner. Investments in schools must be made because the policy failures



will be passed on to the next generation if no action is taken now. Career counselling also needs to change completely: Although there has been great progress, the Federal Employment Agency is too half-hearted in this regard, as well as in the profiling methods.

The shortage of skilled workers must be tackled with determination. Women should have a greater chance at gainful employment. In addition, more CET must be implemented for everyone, not just for those in good positions. Much more courage is needed to follow a hybrid lifestyle, e.g. to be active in the labour market and the education system at the same time, to be retired and employed at the same time, instead of the “unhealthy” traditional tripartite division – preparation phase, employment, rest from employment.

What skills do we need for this? Knowledge of a particular discipline, digital skills, basic economic skills and knowing “which community of law we live in” is crucial here. Better training in analytical skills (critical thinking) and the ability to scrutinise and think more about ethical issues is also needed.

Social skills should be analytically separated from these skills. These include multicultural competence, the culture of debate, and the reacquisition of lost writing skills. Social skills also need to be further developed in companies. This is particularly necessary because, according to Prof Allmendinger, “we live in a decentralised society with a simultaneously interconnected economy”.

Ultimately, it’s a matter of personal skills, self-esteem and fostering the awareness that life can be shaped by the individual and that people also have to do something for their own work-life balance. According to health insurance company data,

the number of “exhausted people” is rising rapidly, particularly among women, but increasingly among men too.

As a final point, Professor Allmendinger emphasises that skills acquisition and lifelong learning is a task for society as a whole and not just for individuals. Not only the education system, but also the employers, the social partners and the trade unions are called upon. Anything new that comes along can be tackled with the “set of skills” described. Many of Germany’s neighbouring countries have had great success with this approach. On the other hand, we would have to leave behind a traditional life course structure.

When asked about the limitations of time and money in CET in relation to the mental shift required from society as a whole, Professor Allmendinger first refers to the evaluation of employee data sets of 350,000 people from IG Metall which she is carrying out. One of the things this shows is that while in contrast to earlier times there is a willingness to participate in CET, people do not know where to go. Laws alone are not enough, facilitation is crucial. People already in a high position often undertake further training or a second qualification, while others fall behind in terms of CET. This increases social inequality. There are also knowledge deficits “that we cannot afford”. For example, 50 percent of respondents did not know about the ten days of paid educational leave they are entitled to. In response to further questions, Professor Allmendinger revealed that she would very much welcome the Federal Employment Agency being further transformed from an “unemployment agency” into a “qualifications agency”.

PANEL DISCUSSION

WHAT MAKES CONTINUING EDUCATION AND TRAINING (CET) ATTRACTIVE?

Participation in CET for futureproof employment

Gaby Bischoff

Member of the
European Parliament

**Carina Knie-
Nürnberg**

Managing Director
Operative of RDBB
(Regional Directorate
Berlin-Brandenburg of
the Federal Employment
Agency)

El Iza Mohamedou

Head of the OECD
Centre for Skills, Paris

Dr André Sobczak

Secretary General of
EUROCITIES, Brussels

To start, all panellists were asked whether they thought the EU's goal of having 60 % of adults participate in continuing education and training every year by 2030 was realistic. There was full consensus that achieving this was a major challenge, but that it was also important to define such goals in order to raise awareness and provide guidance.

For **Gaby Bischoff**, the fact that continuing education and training (CET) is being prioritised in this EU legislative period represents a major “leap forward in quality”. The topic of “lifelong learning” was already anchored in the EU's Lisbon Strategy (2000–2010). Compared to other European countries, Germany is performing at an average level in this regard, while other countries, such as Scandinavian nations, are doing better, Bischoff continued. In the further course of the discussion, she points out that the continuing education and training objective must be considered in the context of other objectives, such as the fight against poverty⁵, as the EU's other objectives are also linked to education. The right to CET should be enshrined at the European level. In November, the EU treaties are scheduled to be amended by the Parliament. According to Bischoff, it must be recognised that the European member states have different starting points. In addition, she calls for strategies to be developed locally in the regions and cities. The common European employment strategy should serve as a platform for dialogue. Dual vocational training is highly recognised at the European level due to the advantages it brings, such as lower youth unemployment. The transition from school to work, but also from university to working life, are important, Bischoff claims. In addition, she continues, available offers must reach people in order to increase their willingness to engage in (lifelong) continuing education and training. If vocational education and training and CET resulted in a better salary and career opportunities, it would be easier to persuade people to participate.

Carina Knie-Nürnberg also confirms that the targets set by the European Union could lead to greater attention being paid to the issue. The Federal Employment

⁵ Poverty reduction target by 2030: The number of people at risk of poverty and social exclusion should be reduced by at least 15 million, including at least 5 million children, compared to 2019, see https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_22_3782



Agency would then be ready to provide consultation and support with implementation. The goal in Berlin, she says, must be that every company and every employee is informed about the possibilities of education counselling. However, the goals and offers need to be communicated “more loudly”. She says the Federal Employment Agency (BA) is experienced in adapting to new developments, as was demonstrated during the pandemic or with the introduction of the Citizen’s Income, for example. The BA is Europe-oriented and works together with other European employment services. It has an office in Brussels and is part of a network of European employment agencies. There is a special cooperation, for example, with Austria as well as with Belgium. This is a two-way street: The BA often receives visitors from other European countries who are looking to establish a dialogue.

Dr André Sobczak emphasises the role of cities, saying that mayors and other stakeholders at the local level often have good ideas. They are also familiar with local companies and citizens and can implement innovations more quickly. He refers to examples of good practice in Gothenburg (cooperation with SMEs at the local level) and Twente (mentoring approach to show citizens how CET can help them). Berlin, too, is closely involved in EUROCITIES. There are good education and training initiatives in Berlin, aimed at young people, for example. Other successful examples can be found in Vienna, which works with influencers on the topic of CET, or in Barcelona, where mentors from the fields of sport and culture have been successfully introduced. Finally, he refers to a project from Munich in which women with a migration background are informed about low-threshold CET courses via WhatsApp. Dr Sobczak also addresses the cross-border recognition of skills and the problems this entails. Europe must become more flexible in this regard

and allow other options rather than just a formal qualification to provide evidence of skills.

El Iza Mohamedou does not consider the exact percentage of participation in continuing education and training to be decisive per se, but rather the long-term efforts taken to achieve this. She points to the low proportion of completed CET (23 %) among people with lower educational qualifications. In this respect, it will be difficult to reach the 60 % mark. She also refers to the OECD study mentioned by the moderator, which focussed on continuing education and training in Berlin and Germany. CET in Germany is very complex; there are 18,000 providers and 200 online platforms, for example. It is extremely difficult for prospective students to find the right CET programme. She says there are good examples of skills development in Germany, but access to continuing education and training needs to be simplified and improved. One-stop-shop facilities, in which all services are bundled, represent one approach to solving this problem. Such an approach requires continuous investment and rigorous quality assurance in view of the large number of providers. People must be able to trust that they will receive quality CET. There are good examples of this in Finland among others. Key skills, such as “learning to learn”, should also be taken into account. With regard to career counselling, local authorities should also be involved alongside the Federal Employment Agency. Recognising qualifications below the academic level is also important, concludes El Iza Mohamedou.

Carina Knie-Nürnberg confirms the complexity of the German system but says there are many professions for which the recognition of qualifications is not necessary. Formal qualifications are only required in the “regulated professions”, such as



doctor, nurse or teacher. Employers make far too little use of the fact that they can categorise applicants in non-regulated professions according to their “true skills”. She explains that, in Berlin, a “one-stop agency” has been created in the form of a platform to make it easier for companies to do this. According to Carina Knie-Nürnberg, Germany need not be ashamed of its position relative to other countries; Germany can be proud of its labour market policy in recent years. The introduction of the Citizen’s Income, CET in enterprises, the qualification allowance, and lifelong career counselling also drew on the experience of other countries. Outreach counselling, i.e., going out to companies and employees, had also previously been observed in the practices of other countries. Germany also has the strength of its social partners, who are valuable promoters of CET.

Gaby Bischoff talks about the different target groups. In comparison to the rest of Europe, for example, young people in Germany are not particularly affected by unemployment. Germany is also successful when it comes to other target groups. One weak point, however, is the lack of childcare options and the high proportion of women’s part-time work associated with this. She is in favour of considering input from other European countries with regard to these aspects.

A comment from the audience stated that Germany is “very reluctant” to recognise non-formal skills and informal knowledge, including in the area of collective agreements, although the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) and the German Qualifications Framework (DQR) make this possible. **André Sobczak** responded that due to the need for skilled workers it is quite common for companies to recognise informal skills more. Gaby Bischoff suggests differentiating between sectors.

In the IT sector, it’s important to prove that you are “up to date” with the qualifications you have acquired. This is not necessarily the case in other sectors. The European Parliament has also spoken out in favour of taking informal knowledge into greater consideration, rather than formal qualifications. In countries where there is no dual vocational education and training, there is “broader access”. The recognition of such qualifications, however, must meet overarching European quality standards. She also notes that Germany used to benefit from the labour pool of other countries, but that this no longer works as there is a shortage of skilled workers everywhere. Germany must therefore invest more in skilled workers.

Carina Knie-Nürnberg answers an audience question about work permits and the potential of refugees. She says that a distinction must be made between people fleeing persecution and migration. There are people who need security first and foremost, i.e. are fleeing persecution. It’s important to differentiate between those people and economic migrants. The German Skilled Immigration Act opens up new avenues for economic migrants. This means that, for example, people can come to Germany as a jobseeker under certain conditions. As far as asylum seekers are concerned, the Federal Employment Agency advises them to take the opportunity to apply for a different residence permit, e.g., to change from asylum status to employee status if they find a company that offers them a job.

Gaby Bischoff points out another aspect: The general conditions for “care-giving work” need to be improved. Care-giving work cannot just be “dumped” on women, and instead there should be a focus on social innovation in this area. In view of the transformation processes, it must also be ensured that budget cuts are not made across the board. Instead, targeted



investments should be made in participation and social issues, “lest we ruin our own future”.

Dr Sobczak then emphasised that continuing education and training should be seen as an investment and that cities should be given better opportunities to invest in this area, for example via the European Social Fund. Maintaining both long-term visibility and proximity to people is very important.

El Iza Mohamedou discusses financial incentives for CET. Individual learning accounts provide an interesting flexibility for users. In addition, the focus should not only be on academic qualifications; this could also create incentives.

In her closing statement, **Gaby Bischoff** called for a “new dawn in continuing education and training”. While changes are generally regarded as difficult, support measures should be emphasised, and it should be made clear that pursuing (continuing) training and education is worthwhile. Bischoff herself, “a Catholic working-class girl from the countryside”, was the first in her family to obtain A-levels and an academic degree. Transformation requires a common starting point.

Carina Knie-Nürnberg concludes the panel with a practical idea aimed at employers: Continuing education and training should be part of every job description. It should be integrated into working hours and fully paid.

WHAT MAKES CONTINUING EDUCATION ATTRACTIVE?



Note in chat:
<https://www.bmas.de/DE/Service/Presse/Meldungen/2023/konferenz-soziales-europa.html>

RESKILLING, UPSKILLING, NEW BEGINNINGS — HOW DOES GOOD EDUCATIONAL COUNSELLING WORK?

Stories of new professional beginnings

Sami Haddaji

Project Lead counselling project “Beratung zu Bildung und Beruf” (BBB)
in Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg and Mitte, Arbeit und Bildung e.V.

and Tim Sarianidis

participant/client



Sami Haddaji reports on his work at the counselling centre as part of the “Beratung zu Bildung und Beruf” (Educational Counselling and Career Guidance) project in Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg and Mitte, which is funded by the State of Berlin (SenASGI-VA). He describes one special feature of his counselling work as being that people who come for advice “find what they are looking for”. The counselling is independent, for example from organisations that offer CET. Counselling is voluntary and consists not only of finding further training for the client, but also of helping them to find suitable CET themselves.

Tim Sarianidis, a client of the aforementioned counselling centre, points out that the educational advice service is not as well-known as it should be and links this with a call to raise awareness of it “because it is a great institution”. He himself came into contact with the educational counselling service more by chance; he had not known about it before. He had been self-employed in the media industry for a long time, but one day came to the conclusion that a reorientation was necessary. With Sami Haddaji’s guidance, he discovered there were many more opportunities within the media industry than those he had previously been aware of. For example, he had not realised that, because he used to teach at a university, he could also work in the field of adult education on the subject of media skills. The education counselling helped him broaden his horizons.



The counselling focuses on “enabling action”, says Sami Haddaji. This creates a sense of achievement. All adults who come to the centre receive counselling, not just academics. The starting point is “what the person standing in front of us wants, and what they bring to the table”. The individual’s history is also taken into account when looking for CET opportunities. One challenge is the complex education system. There are around 350 training occupations, over 200 school-based training programmes, and over 3,000 employment opportunities following further training or studies. However, most of the professions are unfamiliar to clients. In this context, educational counselling is a good way to show people their options.

Tim Sarianidis confirms from his experience that gaining an overview of today’s labour market has become “extremely difficult”. But you have to have an overview of the labour market, “otherwise you’re stuck”. In the past, people were already too old for the labour market at the age of 50, but today it’s different, he says.

Sami Haddaji goes on to explain that the counselling is carried out in several languages in order to truly reach everyone. This also applies to the other counselling centres in Berlin, although there are specialisations. Internationality is important. Since 2015, mobile educational counselling for refugees in various languages also takes place in refugee accommodation and at the Berlin Commissioner for Integration’s “Welcome Centre” on Potsdamer Strasse.

Sami Haddaji would like to reach more working people. However, the “psychological strain” is often not high enough for them to find their way to the counselling centre or to participate in CET. It is often simply too strenuous for them to complete further training alongside their work. Employers must therefore be approached or appropriate advertising campaigns must be organised for employees. Many employees do not realise that they can replace an “unloved job” with a better one through CET, for example.

Tim Sarianidis has now found a permanent position in the education sector. However, finding the right job was a “big problem”. He had sent out 40 applications and only received five responses. When asked about the importance of training and qualifications, he adds that further training will always play a major role, “especially for me in the media sector”.



SHORT TALK

BERLIN'S EDUCATIONAL COUNSELLING AND CAREER GUIDANCE

Margrit Zauner

Head of the Labour and Vocational Training Department, SenASGIVA



The Berlin tradition in education counselling has existed since 1988, says Margrit Zauner. The idea is to help people in situations where they need such support, as the previous talk made clear. People are often more informed about consumer goods — for example, when buying a toaster — than they are in educational decisions, she says. The counselling must be tailored to the personal perspectives and opportunities of those being advised — “and in a city where we have always had a wide range of services”, more so than elsewhere. The distinctive feature of educational counselling in Berlin is “that there is no educational institution behind it that has to meet sales figures”. Educational counselling is also independent of the job centre and employment agency, i. e. institutions where the customer, whether justified or not, could fear that the counselling would be connected to the receipt of social welfare support and thus not be willing to open up.

Background to the Berlin Educational Counselling and Career Guidance: Berlin’s educational counselling service is easily accessible and is publicly funded. The Berlin Senate Department for Labour initially supported these facilities via the European

Social Fund, and later from the State of Berlin's own funds. A specialist concept has been developed which is being implemented by the counselling centres. Its own brand ensures visibility and is also underpinned by a quality assurance concept with defined standards, including regular training for advisors, for example.

Margrit Zauner explains that the Senate lays out the framework conditions for implementation on the basis of an expression of interest procedure but does not intervene in the counselling itself.

She regards the stability of the service as a major success, even if the conceptual approach is constantly being developed further. The OECD also rated Berlin's educational counselling services positively in a study. One challenge – despite its long existence – is to achieve the highest possible level of awareness. It will take a long time for people to take up the counselling offer. "This is an uphill battle". However, it is important to offer reliable structures and maintain the common brand name. The fact that it takes some time for people to visit the educational counselling centre when it moves to a new location or a new one opens, shows just how difficult it is to navigate the multitude of offers in Berlin.

The ongoing stability of the offer is aimed at people who would not actively seek out such a service. Everyone should be able to find their way to educational counselling, "counselling should reach out to them". Clients should know that they do not have to fulfil any requirements in order to receive advice. "They can come as they are." A special counselling approach as part of the "Educational Counselling and Career Guidance" concept also ensures that employees are reached.

For Margrit Zauner, individual counselling is essential because educational needs vary greatly and depend on certain points in time and requirements within a person's life. Humour also plays a role, but of course this applies to life in general, not only educational counselling.

According to the IHK Skilled Labour Monitor, the Berlin labour market will have 423,000 fewer skilled workers in 2035 than it does today.⁶ The moderator, Dr Julia Kropf, therefore poses the question of what role educational counselling plays in combating the shortage of skilled workers. Margrit Zauner replies that Berlin's educational counselling service has always tried to address this issue. However, it's more important that the employer and employee both know what they want. Some of them have "very unrealistic perceptions of each other". The trick is for both sides to come together on the basis of this knowledge.

For the future, Margrit Zauner hopes that the current service can be maintained, perhaps with some changes, as reliability is important.



⁶ See also <https://www.ihk.de/berlin/politische-positionen-und-statistiken-channel/arbeitsmarkt-beschaefigung/fachkraeftesicherung/fachkraeftemonitor-update-2021-5108316>

WHAT CHARACTERISES GOOD EDUCATIONAL COUNSELLING?



**INDIVIDUAL
CONSIDERATION &
COUNSELLING**

POINTING OUT OPPORTUNITIES

LOW THRESHOLD

GOOD KNOWLEDGE of
PROFESSIONS and EXPERTISE

HUMOUR AUTHENTICITY and
TOPICALITY

OPENNESS to RESULTS

EMPATHY CULTURAL SENSITIVITY

VOLUNTARINESS OPENNESS

OUTREACH COUNSELLING ACCESSIBILITY

CREATION of PERSPECTIVES

DIGITALITY

GOOD AVAILABILITY

**CONSULTANCY
EXPERTISE**

INDEPENDENCE

EASY ACCESS

GOOD OVERVIEW of ORGANISATIONS
and FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

RELEVANCE and EASY LANGUAGE
USABILITY

EMPOWERMENT FLEXIBILITY

CUSTOMER-ORIENTATION

MOTIVATING

GOAL-ORIENTATION FREE of CHARGE

MULTILINGUALISM PATIENCE

EYE LEVEL

REALISTIC
FEASIBILITY

BUILDING TRUST

ABILITY to
LISTEN

Note in chat:
There are also further training initiators in Bavaria.
Information at: <https://www.kommweiter.bayern.de/>

THE JOB BROKER — FROM EUROPE TO BERLIN

Richard Parkes

Managing Director of rinova
London/Malaga

and Dubravko Grčić

Project Lead Job Broker,
Gesellschaft für soziale
Unternehmensberatung mbH Berlin



The job broker's new occupational profile originated in the United Kingdom and was developed in the context of employment and career counselling and job coaching, says **Dr Richard Parkes**. The distinctive feature of this profile is that the job broker now intervenes more actively, mediating between jobseekers on the one hand and companies and employers on the other. Like a career counsellor or job coach, job brokers support jobseekers in areas such as CV development, skills analysis, personal and professional development with regard to their ability to compete in the labour market and finding suitable job vacancies. In addition, he explains, the aim is to secure long-term employment after successful placement.

Dr Parkes provides an overview of how the project came about. The job broker concept originated in the context of the “Payment by Results (PbR)⁷ reforms”, which have been implemented in the UK since the 2010 financial crisis. In the course of these reforms, the aim was to increase the effectiveness of career counselling and job placement by making funding increasingly dependent on demonstrable success.

Dr Richard Parkes explains that many job advisers and employment agencies were initially not very aware of their work's effectiveness and results and had little contact with companies and employers.

The first European Job Broker project, carried out from 2015 to 2018, investigated the extent to which the concept developed in the UK could be transferred to and implemented in other countries. During this phase, a methodology and a series of online offers for continuing vocational education and training were developed, which were used and adapted jointly by the European partners. It was noted that, due to their qualifications and experience, counsellors who worked with jobseekers were able to

⁷ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Payment_by_Results



complete many modules without any problems. He says that many counsellors found the modules dealing with co-operation with employers and companies more difficult. On the other hand, while employees of commercial employment agencies were much more accustomed to dialogue with companies, they had little experience and knowledge of working with jobseekers and their specific support needs as well as existing barriers on the labour market. Dr Parkes explains that a programme for active learning and online skill sharing was used to compare modules, develop skills, and create learning materials. The Job Broker project was awarded the Erasmus Best Practice Award by the National Agency for Erasmus+ in the UK.

Background of the project realisation in Berlin: In the European follow-up project from 2018 to 2021, the aim was to develop a certification framework for the training programme in cooperation with gsub mbH from Berlin and many other European partners. As a result, the Job Broker training programme was certified in accordance with the international ISO 17024 standard. The qualification achieved by completing the training programme corresponds to level 6 of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF).

Dr Parkes and Dubravko Gršić are currently working on the further development of the concept, focusing on the specific challenges of certain industries. For example, finding vacancies for skilled workers in the tourism industry and the construction industry are two different things, says Dr Parkes. New

approaches and solutions are being developed for the many new challenges this presents for all practitioners.

Following Dr Parkes' presentation, **Dubravko Gršić** describes how Berlin is implementing the Job Broker training project. It began with training courses for 14 volunteers in Berlin based on the English-language curriculum developed by the European partnership, he explains. During the pandemic, the concept was further developed at the Berlin level by gsub mbH. The Berlin Senate Department for Labour (SenASGIVA) was interested in the job broker's qualification concept as part of the relaunch of the established labour market instrument "Berliner Jobcoaching".⁸ In January 2022, gsub mbH then set up a team, trained lecturers, and submitted its concept to the Senate Administration. The first two courses started in August 2022 and the tenth course is currently ongoing (October 2023). According to Dubravko Gršić, 120 participants will have completed the Job Broker training programme by the end of the year. The requirements for those interested are at least a secondary school leaving certificate and two years of professional experience. Dubravko Gršić describes the six modules of the Job Broker training programme: **(1)** Working in the labour market context (EU, national, regional, local), **(2)** Working with jobseekers, **(3)** Working with employers, **(4)** Matching jobseekers with employers, **(5)** Networking, and **(6)** Self-management. The training programme concludes with an examination.

He points out how it started with field research in eight European countries, which ultimately led to a product that is in high demand. A contributing factor, he says, is the fact that the content of the training is also in line with the European Pillar of Social Rights (EPSR) and the Berlin concept of Decent Work. This is reflected, among other things, in the fact that two thirds of people who obtained the ISO 17024-certified job broker qualification in Berlin this year and last year were evaluated more favourably by their employers. This means that the additional training to become a job broker "literally" pays off in these cases, which was also a stated goal. When asked what the most important factors are in achieving such success, Dubravko Gršić replies "Conviction and perseverance".

⁸ <https://www.berlin.de/sen/arbeit/beschaefigung/jobcoaching/>

NEW APPROACHES TO SKILLS DEVELOPMENT IN EUROPE

Mary Lyons

Director at the Irish Further Education Authority SOLAS
(an agency of the Ministry of Education)

and Maria Tesarz

Deputy Manager of the Skills Supply and
Development Department at the City of Stockholm's
Adult Education and Labour Market Administration

Mary Lyons works for SOLAS, a statutory organisation in Ireland that oversees the provision of Further Education and Training opportunities (FET) for over 250,000 people a year, including measures for early school leavers, pathways into the world of work and higher education, and workforce upskilling. This also includes CET measures in the areas of literacy and numeracy, digital skills, and the further training of employees, especially those who are at risk of losing their jobs due to structural changes or technological advances. SOLAS is responsible for the strategic orientation, funding and coordination of the training programmes. There are sixteen Education and Training Boards, which are responsible for implementing CET measures throughout Ireland.

Mary Lyons explains that CET is offered to everyone, especially in certain transitional phases, such as when young people leave school and decide whether to attend university or to start work or training. Course duration varies from very short units of learning delivered on a part-time basis to full-time programmes of 1-2 years. There are also programmes for vulnerable groups who have not had positive educational experiences and benefit from an alternative learning environment. The measures take place either directly after school, during periods of unemployment or while working in a job. Now, thanks to new technologies, online learning methods and blended CET are also available. Another priority is developing teachers/trainers, support staff and management accordingly. The focus is currently on adapting these CET measures to the transformation of learning during the life cycle and aligning them even more precisely with Future FET goals in order to create better labour market opportunities and improve access to lifelong learning as well as to higher education.

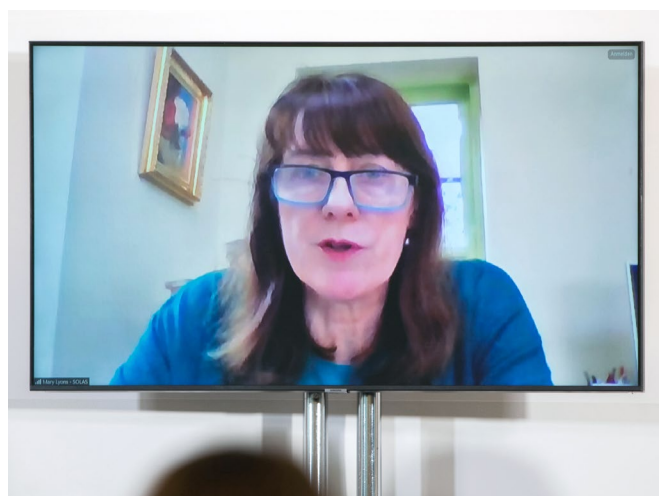


Maria Tesarz explains that adult education in Sweden is organised on a municipal basis, with Stockholm being the country's largest municipality with around 50 000 students in the Adult education on a yearly basis. The goal of the municipal adult education is to support and stimulate adults in their learning, provide adults with the opportunity to develop their knowledge and skills so that they can strengthen their position on the Labour Market, provide a solid foundation for students' further education and not the least provide a basis for the national and regional skills supply for the employers and the Labour Market. The residents in the City of Stockholm are offered many opportunities for continuing education and training: advanced training, reskilling, degree preparation courses, studies in the Swedish language for immigrants and much more. The City of Stockholm's Labour Market administration and its Adult Education works closely with the Swedish Public Employment Service which are responsible nationally for unemployed people. Since upper secondary vocational education is the educational background most in demand from companies when recruiting, the Adult Education makes many outreach activities to make residents aware of the wide range of vocational education and training programmes that lead to a job, says Maria Tesarz. Both authorities inform each other about the respective offers. The number of long-term unemployed people in Sweden has increased since the pandemic. The National Swedish Public Employment Service and the municipalities face the major challenge of how to make Adult educations more attractive for this group and how to reach out and guide them to applying to the Adult educations various vocational programmes.

As in Berlin, there are also study counsellors in the city of Stockholm's Labour Market Administration and Adult education who provide information and guidance about the various vocational training programs that are offered, and professions needed in the Labour Market. The study counsellors are also present at the City's libraries in the City Districts to be more accessible and reach out to more residents. Particularly in

neighbourhoods with a higher number of unemployed people and more resident with a shorter educational background. Maria Tesarz concludes that it is crucial to reach those who need guidance to adult education and vocational training the most.

When asked about success factors in Ireland, **Mary Lyons** first emphasises the data-based approach. A specific workforce upskilling initiative, Skills to Advance, was launched following research which identified that, it was found that 43 % of employees have either no qualifications or a qualification below secondary school level. Employees in lower skilled work in particular tend to be less motivated regarding CET. In addition, this group is particularly at risk of losing their jobs in the future. The aim is therefore to reach the employees who work in less qualified jobs and those whose jobs are undergoing change due to automation and digitalisation and to close the existing gaps in supply. There is also little awareness in this group of what skills will be needed in the future. Another finding was that around a third of those availing of upskilling from the Education and Training Boards are university graduates who need to develop relevant employment skills and need additional training or further education for better career opportunities. Mary Lyons says that the SOLAS initiatives have been very successful, and the number of participants has risen from 5,000 in 2019 to over 20,000 in 2023. And demand continues to rise.



SOLAS is also looking more closely at the reasons for the lack of motivation around continuing training and education, such as high costs, no access, relevance of further training not being recognised, lack of awareness of the need for skills development, or people feeling too old to take part in CET. The FET sector is countering these hurdles with financial incentives, both for employees and for companies. Blended learning formats i.e., the combination of online learning and in-person lessons, are also being created. Introductory courses for digital skills and flexible times for further training – depending on family or individual life situations – are also offered. A strategic approach by Education and Training Boards (ETBs) in working with companies is also being developed to foster sustained engagement in upskilling opportunities for their workforce.

Maria Tesarz emphasises joint action with the Swedish Public Employment Service at the regional level, the City Districts, the other municipalities in the region and, crucially, with employers and companies, as a success factor. In the City of Stockholm and the surrounding region, there is a high demand for skilled labour force in professions on an upper secondary school level. At the same time, only 10 % of young adults in the Stockholm region apply for vocational programmes that would enable them to obtain these higher qualifications. This gap makes the Adult education even more important, so the further plans is a keep the focus on working in close cooperation with the businesses around the challenges connected to the shortage of

skilled labour in order to attract more residents to the Adult educations for vocational training and reskilling.

Finally, **Mary Lyons** would like to see an expansion of the Skills to Advance initiative in order to reach even more people with further training opportunities. More resources are needed for this, as working with both employees and companies is labour intensive even with optimum use of technological resources.

Maria Tesarz would like to continue working closely with all those involved and welcome the EU Commissions initiative Pact for skills.



IMPULSE SPEECH

CONTINUING EDUCATION AND TRAINING ON THE JOB TO SECURE SKILLED WORKERS

Which strategies lead to success?

Prof. Dr Enzo Weber

Head of the Area Forecasts and Macroeconomic Analyses (MAKRO)
Institute for Employment Research (IAB), Nürnberg



Demographic change — we will lose 7 million workers in Germany by 2035 — recession, de-industrialisation, the world closing itself off and globalisation no longer what it used to be — that is roughly the general tenor. Professor Weber counters this with a different and more optimistic scenario. It is true that growth via mass no longer works, but “growth via class” does. We are seeing transformation, not de-industrialisation. Artificial intelligence (AI) can be used for a broad range of things, he says. It is not a question of doing justice to the transformation but implementing it. This country’s raw material is expertise, and this can be used to implement innovations. (Labour) shortages and transformation have meant that there have never been so many training opportunities as there are now. For decades, too little has been invested.

On the basis of known studies, he summarises that although climate policies will wipe out some jobs, the overall balance is positive. Based on climate policies as described in the governing parties’ coalition agreement (Germany) alone, the number of jobs gained is considerably greater than those lost. A long bureaucratic process such as in the development of the fossil fuel economy is no longer necessary, “now leaps are possible instead”. But what kind of jobs are we talking about? Energy technology, electrical jobs, technical jobs in industry and, above all, the skilled trades play a major role, according to Professor Weber. The high demand triggered by climate policies could raise skilled trades jobs to the same level as industrial jobs. However, this requires appropriate training and qualifications.

Professor Weber also dispels another common myth: Masses of jobs have been lost as a result of the mobility transition, i. e. e-mobility. It is true that fewer people are needed for the production of electric motors than for fossil-fuelled vehicles. But all the necessary activities relating to the electric car, digital mobility, smart mobility, etc. means that the outlook is positive overall. However, this is not, contrary to popular belief, an exchange of “good jobs for bad jobs”. There will also be good jobs in the future.

Digitalisation, formerly known as Work 4.0, was also considered a threat until recently: “Now we’re saying we have no more people, when will AI finally arrive?” Digitalisation and AI therefore lead to radical change, not a slump in employment. Overall, technological progress does not lead to fewer jobs, but to more. Making better use of the productivity potential is also possible. “0.3 percentage points per year are feasible,” and that is on top of basic development – a third of productivity growth. The Federal Republic of Germany has been very good at increasing employment over the last 15 years, but not at increasing productivity.

Moreover, the upheaval no longer only affects skilled jobs in production and other areas, but digitalisation and “generative AI” are also making inroads into academic jobs. For example, AI is now also affecting journalists, lawyers and doctors – “it’s now about higher-value jobs”, i. e. new technologies are also being integrated into these jobs. The change in activities is important in this regard, not the loss of jobs. There is now a different mix of activities and expertise.

Comparing companies that have invested in digital technologies with those that have not shows that the former perform significantly better, e.g. in terms of learning ability, thinking in processes, abstraction and communication skills. Professor Weber also emphasises the difference between classic automation and AI. Classic automation sets rules that have to be learnt, whereas AI makes it possible to “shape and design activities yourself”. Furthermore, self-organisation skills play an important role. “Initiative skills” are required. This is why we should be happy if we have a job affected by AI. We are disconnected from technological developments if AI does not play a role.

But how can suitable training be achieved? The classic answers as to why people do not participate in training are a lack of time and money. Training policy must take this into account. However, the most frequently chosen answer category by respondents was “I am no longer used to learning”. Overcoming this presents a major challenge.

Professor Weber’s interim conclusion is therefore that although great progress has been made in training policy, including in the funding opportunities offered by the federal and state governments, training and funding policy is still too reactive. Initial and further education and training should be combined in one system – based on a proactive and continuous policy. This is



the groundwork for a good implementation of the transformation. An intensive initial training phase that leads seamlessly into a phase alongside work is needed. In addition to funding policy, it is important to address employees personally via works councils and employers or anyone with the necessary credibility.

Professor Weber would rely less on retraining and believes it is better to develop existing strengths, as retraining largely devalues work experience and is increasingly difficult at an advanced age. The hydrogen economy and many other industries are looking for employees. While investment in CET is necessary “you don’t have to do a completely new apprenticeship for two years”. He believes that the more successful way is to develop specific skills from within a job.

Of course, the aforementioned problem of the lacking 7 million skilled workers by 2035 cannot be solved with training and skilled worker policies alone. But there are ways to master the problem. This requires the potential of older people. The focus is not on professional groups such as professors, but on employees in “stressful professions”, who “can’t do much after their mid-50s”. However, the reduced earning capacity pension is not a solution here. It makes more sense to take up other activities from the age of 50 if work is strenuous. The question therefore arises as to how employees can switch from job X to a new but not completely different job XY at the age of 55. Training is key, as the new job requires additional qualifications or the further development of existing qualifications. The “50+ training wave” is therefore one of the key areas that is still under-represented.

The same applies to immigrants. While Germany has been successful in attracting many people, it has not fully exploited their labour market potential. Immigrants often work below the level of skills they bring with them and often lack long-term

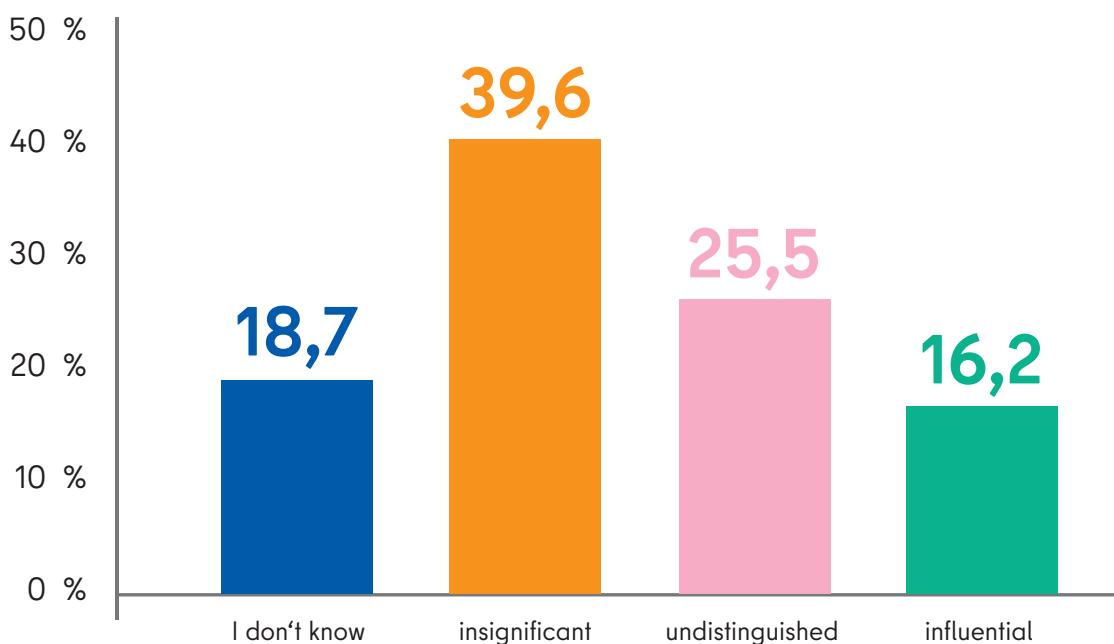
prospects. This is related to qualifications and training, too. Recognition procedures need to be improved. There are considerable obstacles that need to be removed – even though high-quality formal qualifications are a legitimate issue. You have to take a close look at the skills of the immigrants and then decide how you can foster language and skills parallel to work. Much better use has to be made of the “gifted potential of migration”.

When asked about the importance of artificial intelligence, Professor Weber explains that AI offers great potential when it comes to selecting the “right qualifications and training” and skills. AI also offers a way to deal with human shortcomings,

such as prejudices. That said, AI also tends to perpetuate patterns – you have to be vigilant. AI is also important when it comes to ensuring that the content of qualifications does not bypass the labour market, and instead trains the skills required for using new technologies. Professor Weber advises people to “make bold choices when choosing a training course” and not just learn what they need for a specific job. When asked whether CET should be an integral part of working life, he emphasises that the majority of CET, up to 75 percent, already takes place informally. This can be seen as both a strength and a weakness. The combination of informal training plus more extensive formal qualifications-based training is the right mix.

SURVEY

WHAT ROLE DOES AI CURRENTLY PLAY IN CONTINUING EDUCATION?



43 people took part in the survey.

MODERATED TALKS

STRATEGIES FOR

FUTURE-PROOF

EMPLOYMENT

Christine Vogler

President of the German
Nursing Council and
Managing Director of the
Berlin Education Campus

Carsten Vossel

Managing Director of
CCVOSEL GmbH

Mark Frankenstein

Customer Service
Manager, Mercedes,
SHK — company



Christine Vogler explains that continuing education and training plays a “huge role” in the nursing and healthcare professions, as being up to date is very important. On-the-job training plays a major role in this regard. Carers in other countries have much better action skills than in Germany. While training is very good in Germany, “we are being prevented from utilising this potential.” Christine Vogler cites vaccination during the pandemic as an example: 20,000 carers in outpatient care alone had the appropriate qualifications, but due to existing regulations they were not allowed to carry out vaccinations. The aim is also to find new professional fields for older, experienced carers. They could be deployed in regional administrative activities to supply the population, for example. But in Germany there is a “high silo mentality”, without taking into account the skills of the employees. The fact that it takes between 230 and 280 days across the various professions to fill vacant positions is also indicative of the precarious skilled worker situation in the nursing and healthcare professions. Continuing education and training is currently also taking place in the area of telematics. A corresponding infrastructure similar to that in the medical professions could also be established in care. But this also fails due to the (un)available options for action. There are also problems with technology development. The IT industry is moving forwards, but “is leaving us behind”. However, the Pfliegerat (German Nursing Council) is working on this.



Christine Vogler adds that she has surveyed her employees regarding CET. According to the survey, there is a preference for “highly flexible training modules” that are completed as individual modules and not only after one and a half years of training, e.g. in “digital aspects”. The employees wanted to be supported in their CET. Employees from abroad also have to complete an unbelievable number of administrative procedures. Furthermore, CET must be financed by employers. Vocational education methods must also be further developed and more teachers are needed. There is also a lack of international connectivity. While Germany is “very special” in many areas, it is important that skilled workers from abroad see internationally known structures in Germany – for example bachelor’s and master’s degrees.

According to **Carsten Vossel**, there is fierce competition for skilled workers in the IT sector. High salaries are paid to attract skilled workers and CET also plays an essential role: New employees must first be prepared for the particular activities in his company and receive further training.

The central focus of his company is IT security. Yet there is no training for this and hardly any degree programmes, so an “upgrade” has to be carried out internally within the company. When asked about the availability of apprenticeships, Carsten Vossel explains that this is difficult at his company, as 95 percent of employees now work remotely. This works very well, but not when it comes to training.

Carsten Vossel uses the example of cybercrime to emphasise the importance of constant further development and “keeping up to date” on a weekly basis. He favours the term “lifelong learning” instead of continuing education and training, because that’s what it comes down to. There are employees in his company who “sprint ahead” and then pass on their knowledge to colleagues. This also trains skills such as presentation techniques, which are also needed when working with customers.

While CET is an important part of securing skilled workers, integrating older and younger employees is also key. He likes to deploy mixed-age teams that complement each other’s skills. The employees themselves also think about CET. His company has 60 employees and with a company of this size, CET can be organised via a personnel department. However,

Carsten Vossel wonders how companies with only 5-10 employees deal with the issue, as the requirements are “definitely increasing”.

He would like politicians to act more quickly and show more commitment to training. The Chamber of Industry and Commerce (IHK) also plays an important role when it comes to training and qualifications.

Mark Frankenstein comments that the shortage of skilled workers in his industry is noticeable every day. The order volume is very good, but skilled workers are lacking. The aim is to increasingly reintegrate the older generation into companies.

The demand for CET is high because the “heating of the future” is becoming more electric and the occupational field more technological. Care must be taken to ensure that those who have been in the profession for 20 years are not left behind. His industry has been experiencing change for generations – from coke heating to heat pumps. That’s what makes the job so exciting, he says. Nowadays you can also earn “good money” in the industry.



According to Mark Frankenstein, Mercedöl could not exist without initial and continuing education and training. The future prospects for the industry are very good, but it depends on the personnel. AI might play a role, “but so does manual work just like before”. One challenge is that the work is (physically) demanding. Approaches are being made to relieve the physical strain on staff in order to ensure they remain in the industry.

With regard to CET, he would like politicians to provide quick and short-term support with fewer bureaucratic procedures and “leaner” processes. They themselves could also improve as a company, for example by devoting more time to staff development, as “personnel development is the be-all and end-all”.

CONTINUING EDUCATION AND TRAINING

in the context of digital and socio-ecological change

Micha Klapp

State Secretary for Labour, Women and Gender Equality, SenASGIVA, Berlin

Nele Techen

Vice-Chair of the German Trade Union Confederation in Berlin-Brandenburg (DGB)

Anke Fredericksen-Alde

Managing Director of the Education and Career Division, Berlin Chamber of Commerce and Industry (IHK)



State Secretary **Micha Klapp** (SenASGIVA Berlin) summarises that this conference presents an excellent opportunity to adopt a European policy perspective — also against the backdrop of next year’s European elections — and to show what Berlin has to offer. In the area of CET and lifelong learning, there is a broad spectrum of challenges and opportunities, as Professor Weber, for example, discussed. CET is therefore high on the political agenda.

The National Continuing Education Strategy and the federal government’s Act to Strengthen the Promotion of Education and Training are important foundations, which she emphasises as key measures in terms of state policy and the training allowance contained in the law, for example. The issue of part-time education should be further differentiated in the context of an employee-oriented labour market. Lifelong learning must be carried out while working, which means it is important to make time for it. The involvement of staff and works councils in the context of CET is of course also on the agenda, in order to tailor continuing education and training to the specific needs of individual companies and organisations — also with the help of collective agreements.

State Secretary Klapp introduces the topic of non-discriminatory access to CET into the discussion and emphasises gender equality and women’s perspectives. CET must also be made possible on a part-time basis. She also emphasises the socio-ecological transformation in connection with lifelong learning. The current political situation and the two important state elections the day before (Bavaria and Hesse) are also related to accessing CET, and labour market policy instruments need to be considered when integrating refugees, for example.

With regard to discrimination mechanisms, it is also important to “tighten up” the General Equal Treatment Act (AGG). AI, which is absolutely necessary and represents an opportunity, must also be regulated in terms of non-discrimination.

The State Secretary for Labour is looking forward to working with other partners (trade unions, chambers of commerce and industry, employers’ organisations) to further promote the Berlin CET instruments that were already in place when she took office and which she regards in a positive light. Many players are involved in the financing of CET, and the money comes from various sources.. The current parliamentary procedure for budget legislation is decisive for financing. The Federal Employment Agency (and in Berlin and Brandenburg the regional directorate of the two federal states) also contributes to the funding. The Senate Administration will make its contribution on the basis of Berlin State law and within the scope of the double budget.

When asked about the Educational Leave Act passed in Berlin in 2021 (note: Amendment of the previous Educational Leave Act), she states that still too few people are aware of it and that the opportunities it offers are underutilised. The SenASGIVA is in dialogue with the other federal states, but employers should also be involved and are not as committed to the law as would be desirable. She assumes that the company management culture will change in this respect, if only because of the employee-oriented labour market, and that this also applies to administration.

At the Berlin level, a skilled worker strategy is also being developed based on the coalition agreement between the CDU and SPD parties.

According to **Nele Techen**, the opportunities for CET need to be expanded even more. The number of companies and employees that provide or participate in CET has fallen dramatically since 2020 and during the coronavirus pandemic. This development must be reversed in the face of transformation and structural change. CET must be permanently anchored as a “culture” in the minds of employers and employees. In Berlin, in-company training has been on the agenda for decades. A further training analysis is needed in order to implement CET tailored to employees. More commitment is needed, and there must also be room for manoeuvre, i.e. time and places for further training. Using the example of the automotive industry and the “ReTraNetz” project, Nele Techen illustrates how while



more than half of companies say transformation and training play a major role, reality often still lags behind. “Not all employees and companies know where the journey is heading”. She suggests setting up innovation workshops with employees. The best way to define a framework for this is via works agreements and collective agreements.

She cites the collective training agreement of the IG Metall trade union as a good example, in which it is precisely defined what employers and employees each contribute in terms of time and money. The aim is to involve all employees, not just those who are already motivated. She would like this example to be transferred to other sectors and for there to be more collective agreements, as collective bargaining coverage in Germany is not very high.

The Educational Leave Act is relatively unknown among employees and the right to avail of it needs to be publicised much more – through events like today, but also through the various channels of all players in this field. In order to counteract previous experiences of failure and to motivate people, a sense of achievement in CET is needed, starting in schools, then with the organisations and CET providers.

Expertise is a key issue and has been added to the agenda almost too late, states **Anke Fredericksen-Alde**. While many people are involved in CET, there are also many hurdles. Following the slump during the coronavirus pandemic, the potential must now be realised. She agrees with the previous statement that visibility and transparency in CET must be improved and says that companies need support with this. The initiative weiterbildung.berlin⁹ also serves this purpose. The Berlin Senate Department for Labour, the administrative departments responsible for the economy, the Berlin Chamber of Crafts and Trades, and the Federal Employment Agency are involved alongside the IHK in this initiative. This shows that the issue is being tackled jointly in Berlin and the aforementioned laws provide a good basis for this.

Financing is about finding a balance between the employer and employee and the source of funding. Here, too, companies are not sufficiently aware of what they can apply for and

⁹ <https://weiterbildung.berlin/>

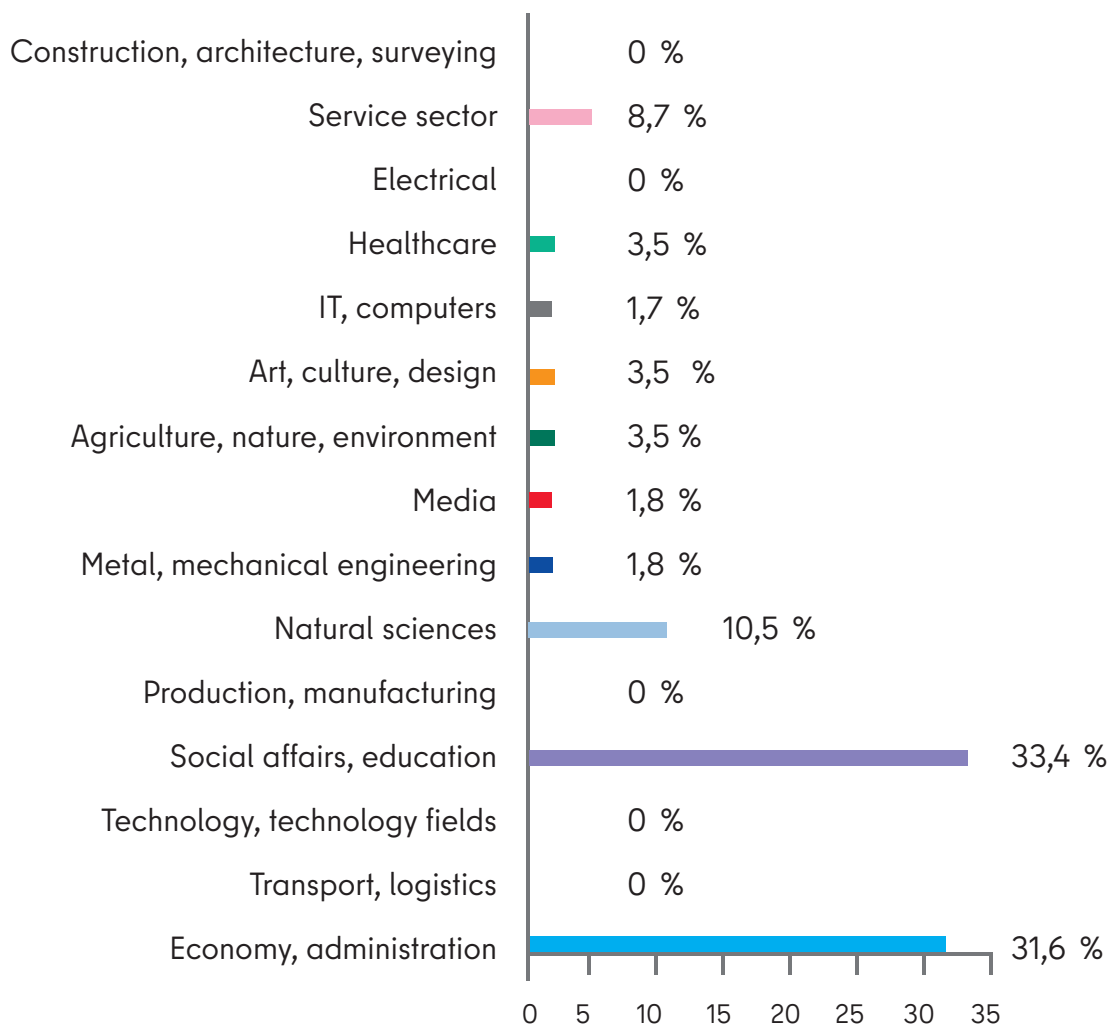
how it works. Modular training and flexibility are also important. She refers to a DIHK study on what employees expect from CET. Most employees hope for a better career and more money following CET. But intrinsic motivation is also crucial.

With regard to small companies, Anke Fredericksen-Alde explains that they are subject to special restrictions due to their

size. Both the companies and the employees have to say what they want. There are some “model companies”, but it is also more difficult in some sectors, she says. It also depends on the amount of time spent on CET and how companies and employees approach the topic. In any case, companies and employees need to pay more attention to the issue in future — there is a need for clarification on both sides.

SURVEY

IN WHICH PROFESSIONAL FIELD DO YOU WORK?



57 people took part in the survey.

CLOSING REMARKS

Micha Klapp

State Secretary for Labour, Women
and Gender Equality, SenASGIVA, Berlin

In her closing remarks, State Secretary Klapp thanks all participants for the intensive exchange on European, federal and state policy approaches to lifelong learning. Everyone in their respective areas of responsibility needs to stay on top of the issue and drive the whole thing forward, as well as develop a good skilled workers strategy. The political challenges could be organised on this basis.

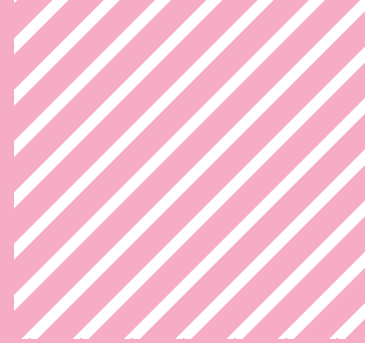
She draws attention to the position paper written by her organisation for this conference, which is available in the download area of the conference website. Everyone is invited to comment on or add to these ideas.

She would like to expressly thank the participants, the speakers, the interpreters, the technical staff, and her institution's Department of Labour and Vocational Training, which organised this conference.

A big thank you is also due to the moderators who presented different perspectives during the conference. It was a great pleasure to be guided through the day by the two of them, she says. Such an event can be considered as CET.



THESES



10 THESES ON THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE „EMPLOYMENT IN TRANSITION — SKILLS FOR THE FUTURE“

- 1. Continuing education and training (CET) make a significant contribution to future-proof employment and to alleviating the shortage of skilled workers.** In times of digital, demographic, and ecological change and the transformation of the labour market, lifelong learning is important for the participation, improvement of opportunities and development of the skilled workforce of adults. This includes strengthening a culture of CET in adulthood („learning to learn“) as a prerequisite for coping with professional and personal challenges and upheavals.
- 2. Continuous vocational and general training and skills development in line with the EU 2030 target (participation of 60 % of all adults per year) ensures employability and contributes to securing skilled labour.** Participation in CET must be increased with the help of modern qualification offers and flexible learning formats. At the same time, we face the challenge that a change in learning culture is taking place in the course of the digital transformation. This must be supported through information, guidance, learning support and motivation to learn, which takes into account the diversity of learners.
- 3. In-company training and job-related skills development play a central role in the transition to a digital and green economy.** In order to be able to implement this, small and medium-sized enterprises in particular need effective financial and organisational support from politics and administration so that they can secure skilled workers through CET.
- 4. Staff in further education must be qualified for the digital and ecological change.** In this context, the use and testing of innovative methods of education planning and implementation are of particular importance. In addition, digital and sustainable competences for professional action are to be developed.
- 5. The empowerment of self-directed learning and the development of digital and transformative competences are essential for further education and the design of learning opportunities in the future.** Strengthening the acquisition of key competences in particular will play a central role in the future, such as digital competence, social competence, innovation competence, health competence, and education for sustainable development.
- 6. Access to vocational and general training must be improved.** In particular, the formally low-skilled, new immigrants, persons with a migration history and part-time workers must receive support according to their circumstances in order to be able to participate in CET. Overall, the participation in further education of groups that have been underrepresented there so far must be increased.
- 7. Competent and low-threshold educational guidance on site and digitally supports, mobilises, and improves further education activities as well as the process of „learning-to-learn“ of adults.** It should be understood as a resource for successful transformation processes. Key factors for successful CET guidance are low-threshold access, voluntariness, neutrality, appropriate information, and the self-activity of those being advised, as well as quality and competent advisors.
- 8. In the future, CET must be oriented in a way that contributes to the success of societal structural change.** To this end, a „skills ecosystem“, a network of companies, economic and social partners, state institutions and other actors — universities, vocational schools, and informal places of learning — designed for synergy effects must be created in order to enable optimal use of existing learning opportunities and better access, also for previously underrepresented groups.
- 9. The German Federal Government’s new further education Act opens up access to CET funding for employees.** It also sets the course for achieving synergy effects between the activities of the Federal Government and the Länder. In addition, the use of (part) time for education, the further training of education staff and the promotion of in-company training processes as well as the development of financing models should be supported.
- 10. For future-proof continuing education, we need Europe.** Exchange must be intensified, and sustainable networking must be promoted and maintained, even after the European Year of Skills. Networks such as the European cities network EURO CITIES can be used for this purpose. However, it would also be desirable for the European Commission to establish and consolidate longer-term opportunities for exchange between European cities on the topics of securing skilled labour and skills development.

IMPRESSIONS OF THE CONFERENCE







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