

EUROPEAN FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES IN MACEDONIA *IMPORTANCE OF ADULT LEARNING*



Economics

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Abstract

European candidate states are building their capacities and working on aque communitair in order to adjust their legislation towards the one of European Union. In the process of adjustments they are also preparing for new European funds that will be available as soon the negotiation processes will start and also when the country will become a full member of European Union. Macedonia is a candidate state and due to the name dispute its still only a candidate for membership for EU but its still haven't open the negotiations with European Union. After the solution of the name dispute, the chances of opening the negotiations are rather positive, despite the poor transparency and low corporate governance. The state and NGO sector should be ready and prepare to work with EU funding in the upcoming years. In the process of today negotiation, under the sub-committees with EU, it have been given a chance to Macedonia to use European Funds in several areas. Those areas are from DG Education and culture, more specifically the programes Creative Europe, Erasmus plus and Europe for citizens. In aging Europe, lifelong learning is a key. This program will help Macedonian society to develop and work towards the strategies of EU, especially strategy for growth Europe 2020 and the new strategies such as Europe 2030 strategy.

Introduction

European funding is important for each candidate country as part of the investment process and as part of learning and transferring of know how. The representatives from institutions, organization, municipalities and companies are in need of information on European funding oppotunities. This is becoming more and more important aspect aslo in the functioning of the state institutions and even development of new units in state institutions that are in charge of European funding.

Development of knowledge on project managements and European projects and programmes is crucial in finding opportunities in supporting business development. One of the key essential prerequisite for the creation of competitive companies and an efficient municipalities and institutions is the know-how in European Funding.

1. Adult Learning in Context of Changing Markets and European Funding

EU is facing a severe economic crisis, more adult learning can help Europe overcome it, meet the need for new skills, and keep its ageing workforce productive. Learning is also essential for social inclusion and active citizenship. These days, people cannot just rely on the skills they acquired at school to last them till the end of their working life. The participation of adults in learning varies significantly between EU countries: from 1.4% to 31.6%, and the overall trend is that numbers are stagnating at country level. The future European labour market will be simultaneously confronted with an ageing population and shrinking cohorts of young people. As a result, adults – and in particular, older workers – will increasingly be called upon to update and

broaden their skills and competences. This increased need for lifelong learning means we should have more flexible modes of delivery, tailored training offers and well-established systems of validation of non-formal and informal learning. The potential of information and communications technology (ICT) can be used to boost adult education and training through distance learning.

Innovation is needed in the European educational sector and especially in the adult education sector, as many adults need new skills and competences. The EC and offer funding of courses for the people who teach the adults – in formal or non-formal set-ups. Training and innovation in ICT for adults are therefore priorities for the European Union. It is important to increase and improve the supply of skilled personnel in ICT also for trainer and educators in Adult education.

Objectives of European funding in adult education are:

- enhancing focus on Soft skills for Adults in the processes of learning, teaching, training at various levels: promoting access to and learning through OER; supporting ICT-based teaching, training, as well as ICT-based assessment practices. Supporting teachers, trainers, and educational staff in acquiring or improving the use of ICT for learning and related digital competences;

- developing adult educators' competences to deal with diversified groups of learners, make use of new technologies for better outreach and teaching outcomes;

- improving and extending the offer of high quality learning opportunities tailored to individual adult learners, including through innovative ways of outreach and delivery;

With a usage of European funding available, we will:

- Develop a new approach to adult education and training which focuses on learning outcomes and learner responsibility and autonomy.

- Encourage the development of effective lifelong guidance systems, as well as integrated systems for the validation of non-formal and informal learning.

- Ensure flexible arrangements adapted to different training needs of adults, including in-company training and workplace-based learning.

- Developing mechanisms for ensuring that educational provision better reflects labour market needs and that it provides possibilities for acquiring qualifications and developing new skills which increase people's capacity to adapt to the new requirements of a changing environment.

- Promoting the acquisition of transversal key competences, such as learning to learn,

- Making better use of ICT in the context of adult learning, as a means of widening access and improving the quality of provision

With usage of European funding, countries like Macedonia on local and national level can:

- Develop the Soft Skills

- Development of content, services, methodologies and practice in the adult distance learning on the ICT-basis;

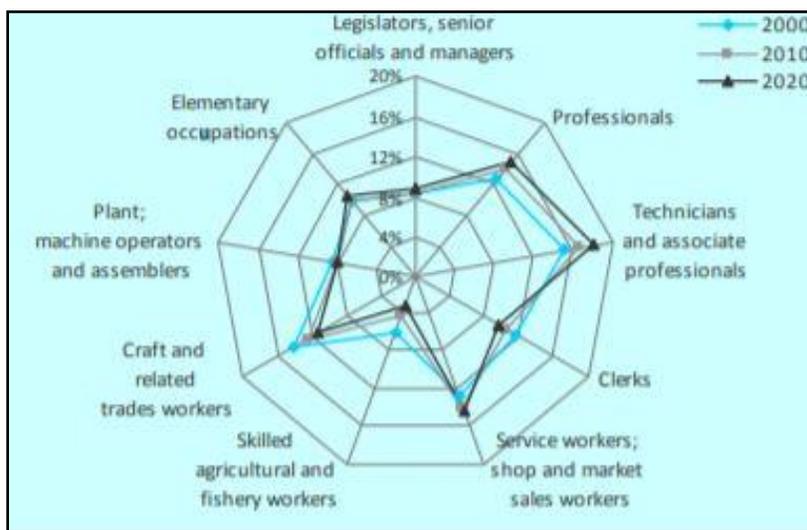
- Create a successful relationship between the municipalities, state institutions and companies;

The country will be able to prepare adults for the process of re-entering the labor market by transferring them relevant skills and competences in various fields that will increase their soft skills. They can improve their skills as well as their opportunities individually, both for personal and professional development.

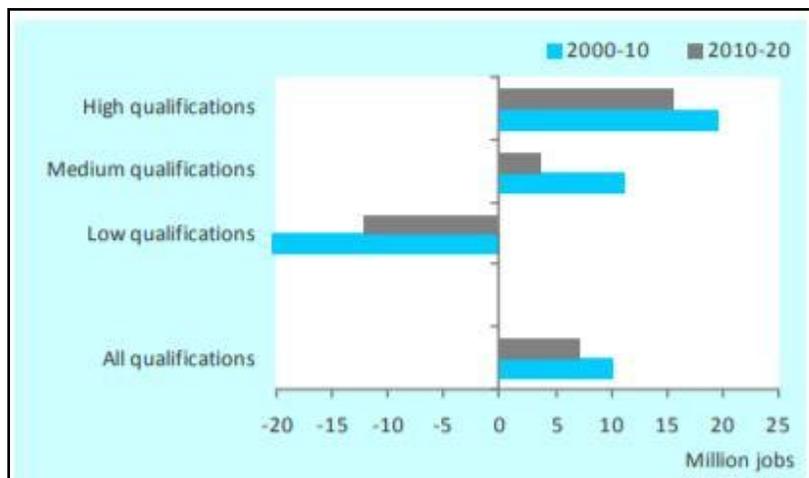
2. New Skills for New Markets

The number of skilled non-manual workers is not expected to increase significantly, but the structure of jobs within this group is expected to change. While demand for occupations such as office clerks is estimated to fall by around a million, demand for occupations in service activities such as sales, security, catering and caring may increase by more than two million.

At the lower end of the skill spectrum, demand for elementary occupations is expected to increase by around two million. But over four million job losses are forecast for skilled manual workers. Many of these are likely to be routine jobs replaced by new technologies. These changes signal a risk of job polarisation, with increased demand at the upper and lower ends of occupations, and decreases or stagnation in the middle.



A higher demand for qualifications The projections suggest that the demand for skills (as measured by formal qualifications) is likely to continue rising. The nature of industrial and technological change is increasing the demand for the highly- and medium-qualified groups, but at the expense of the low-qualified.



In practice, the supply of skills also affects employment patterns. The projections of employment by qualification assume that historical trends will largely continue. This means that demand continues to grow for highly- and medium-qualified people even in lower-level occupations, while the demand for those with low (or no) formal qualifications continues to fall. This also leads to upskilling in many jobs previously occupied by low-qualified people.

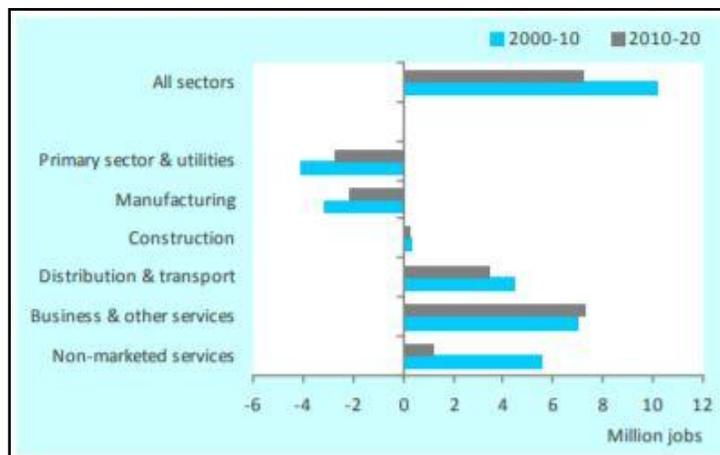
As a result, demand for highly-qualified people is projected to rise by over 16 million, while demand for low-skilled workers is expected to decline by around 12 million. The share of jobs requiring high-level qualifications will rise from 29 % in 2010 to about 35 % in 2020, while the number of jobs employing those with low qualifications will fall from 20 % to 15 %. The share of jobs employing those with medium level qualifications will remain significant, at around 50 %.

A continuing trend towards jobs in services Recessions usually hasten sectoral change. However, the move towards a service economy and away from primary and basic manufacturing activities is projected to be similar to pre-crisis trends.

A further substantial decline in employment in primary industries is forecast, with a loss of around 2.5 million jobs, especially in agriculture. Another two million job losses are expected in manufacturing and production.

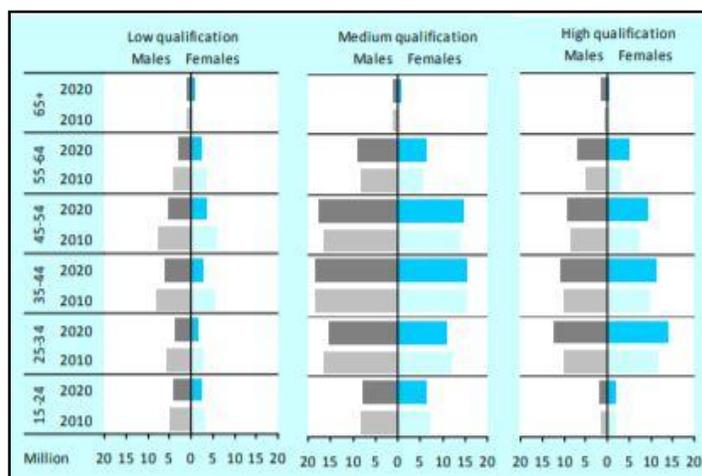
The main areas of employment growth with around seven million jobs are services, especially marketed services. Significant increases are also expected in distribution and transport.

Employment growth in nonmarket services such as health care and education will be offset by reduced labour demand in public administration due to public budget constraints.



Labour supply by qualification level is largely predetermined by demography and educational and training decisions already made. Most people aged 15 and 24 are still acquiring qualifications.

The number of people in the working population aged over 15 with high- and medium-level qualifications is to rise, with around 16 million more people expected to hold a university degree or equivalent. The supply of those with medium-level qualifications, mainly vocational, is expected to increase by much less, around one million – but they will still account for 50 % of the labour force. The low-qualified are projected to fall by around 15 million, as higherqualified young people enter the labour market and many less well qualified older people leave it. On average, women are expected to be better qualified than men in the future, although at medium qualification level the rates of increase are higher for men than women. The fall in the number of people with low-level qualifications is expected to be sharper among women than men.



For those aged 25 and older, the numbers with high-level qualifications will rise sharply, with those aged between 25 and 34 experiencing the largest increase. The number of people

having only a medium-level qualification is projected to decline for those up to 34 years old, but to increase for those aged 35+. This reflects the ageing of the labour force and the fact that younger people are generally better qualified. Those aged 55+ in 2030 will be more highly qualified than the same cohort today. Labour market participation rates among older age groups are expected to increase as the need, ability, or desire to work increases and working lives become longer.

Despite the recession, high- and medium-qualified workers still have more chance of finding better jobs than those with low qualifications. But forecast results also suggest that many people with higher- and medium-level qualifications will work in lower-level jobs. For some, this may be a temporary phenomenon (e.g. graduates taking up jobs in restaurants and bars); the longer it lasts, however, the more frustration it causes to those affected. On the other hand, such mismatches can allow individuals to enrich their job in ways that employers may not have anticipated. Imbalances may also reflect increasing job requirements for many occupations which are not yet captured in traditional classifications.

Results on imbalances should not be interpreted too literally. Trends in supply (towards a more highly educated workforce) and in demand (towards greater use of such people in employment) are hard to predict precisely, and interact in complex ways. In any case, other Cedefop research suggests that formal overqualification is not a problem per se. But under utilisation of skills and competences is certainly a potential problem for individuals, employers and society as a whole.

The results of Cedefop's forecast show that the occupational structure of Europe is moving towards knowledge and skill-intensive jobs. Policy-makers clearly need to ensure the best use of currently available skills. For instance, as women will be more qualified than men, measures should help to use their potential and provide better opportunities to reconcile work and family. We also need to know more about what people really know and are able to do in particular jobs. Greater use of validation of non-formal and informal learning as well as lifelong guidance could support a better match of skills and jobs. Europe needs to make sure its human resources can respond to the economy's needs. Policy must enable people to raise and broaden their skills. Upskilling is not just something that allows people to get a better job: it is also what enables them to shape the jobs of the future, and thus to actively contribute to an innovative economy. Fast-developing nations such as Brazil, Russia, India, China (the so-called BRIC countries) are also aiming to increase their shares of high-level jobs. Europe has no room for complacency.

Until recently, there was no system for making consistent skills projections at European level. Cedefop has put in place a firm foundation for such forecasts which will be updated every two years. Anticipation of changing skill needs lies at the heart of Europe's New Skill for New Jobs agenda. The new Cedefop forecast of changing skill demand and supply up to 2020 updates the forecasts carried out in 2007/08. It applies new data and improved methods to estimate the medium-term impact of the financial crisis of 2008, and the subsequent recession. The forecasts can be further improved in many ways. There is a need to improve data sources, develop new

surveys and to study occupational requirements in more depth. Cedefop will continue to improve the forecasts through research into skill mismatch, sectoral skill needs, in particular the demand for green jobs and by developing and piloting a new European employer survey on skill needs. In order to enforce common employment policies, the EC was in search of innovative governance methods, as it became increasingly difficult to get directives approved in areas which remained under the sovereignty of the member states.

The Europe 2020 strategy (2010-2020)

This 10-year strategy for jobs and smart, sustainable and inclusive growth defined for the first time a number of headline targets, including:

- Labour market: increase the labour market participation of people aged 20 to 64 to 75% by 2020;
- Social inclusion and combating poverty: lift at least 20 million people out of the risk of poverty and exclusion;
- Improving the quality and performance of education and training systems: reduce the proportion of early school leavers to 10% (from 15%), and increase the share of 30- 34-year-olds having completed tertiary or equivalent education to at least 40% (instead of 31%).

All five headline targets must be translated by Member States into national targets, taking into account their relative starting positions and national circumstances.

3. European Strategies and Funding

As the monitoring of the Europe 2020 strategy (including its employment targets) has been integrated in the European Semester of economic policy coordination, the main elements for employment coordination coincide with and complement the European economic governance system. Key elements for the coordination of employment policy at the EU level include the following six elements.

A. Overall objectives and targets set at EU level Overall quantified objectives and targets in the area of employment are set at the European level, under the Europe 2020 framework (see Table 1). These targets go beyond employment and include targets in other areas such as environment and climate change as well.

Table 1. Europe 2020 in a nutshell

Priorities	Five Targets	Seven Flagship Initiatives
<p>Smart: More effective investments in education, research and innovation</p> <p>Sustainable: A decisive move towards a low-carbon economy</p> <p>Inclusive: A strong emphasis on job creation and poverty reduction</p>	<p>1) Employment: 75% of the 20-64 year-olds to be employed.</p> <p>2) R&D: 3% of the EU's GDP to be invested in R&D.</p> <p>3) Climate change and energy sustainability: reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 20%; 20% of energy from renewables; 20% increase in energy efficiency.</p> <p>4) Education: reduce the rates of early school leaving below 10%; at least 40% of 30-34-year-olds completing third level education.</p> <p>5) Fighting poverty and social exclusion: at least 20 million fewer people in or at risk of poverty and social exclusion</p>	<p>Smart growth:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Digital agenda for Europe. 2. Innovation Union. 3. Youth on the Move. <p>Sustainable growth:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Resource efficient Europe. 5. An industrial policy for the globalization era. <p>Inclusive growth:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Agenda for new skills and jobs. 7. European platform against poverty.

Source: European Commission (2017), ec.europa.eu/europe2020/europe-2020-in-a-nutshell/index_en.htm.

These EU targets have been translated into national targets by the Member States. Member States regularly report on the implementation of these targets.

In order to reach this targets Eu have a concreat set of measures in Economical sector in educational sector and other areas.

The main instruments to support the implementation of the employment policy and targets are the European Social Fund (ESF) and the EU Programme for Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI).

The EaSI programme brings together three existing programmes (PROGRESS, EURES33 and Progress Microfinance³⁴) previously managed separately; it is managed directly by the EC. Concerning the implementation of employment policy, its PROGRESS axis is important as it supports the EU and its Member States in the thematic areas of employment (especially addressing youth unemployment), social protection, inclusion and working conditions. It aims to generate and disseminate analytical and comparative knowledge, facilitate mutual learning and information sharing, provide financial support to test innovations in social and labour market policy

The New Skills Agenda for Europe, a policy package issued by the Commission in June 2016 brings together 10 key actions to equip citizens with skills relevant for the labour market (e.g. Council Recommendation of 19 December 2016 on upskilling pathways for adults, the revision of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) adopted by the Council in May 2017, and a Commission proposal for a decision by Parliament and the Council on the revision of the Europass Framework (October 2016).

Conclusion

Investment in skills must be massive and smart, so we need the right incentives to encourage governments, local authorities, individuals, employers, and education and training providers to take action. Without the commitment of all players this ambition will fail. Better incentives and services for individuals Incentives need to be designed to attract people into training, and to help individuals complete their learning for life and for work; they also need to be coupled with initial and ongoing advice to encourage ‘non-learners’ to demand skills development, and to help learners make more informed choices. Individuals need to take over more responsibility for lifelong learning and develop ‘career management’ skills. They need adequate support – including at school – to learn how to do so. The aim is to increase individual choice and make education and training providers more responsive to learners’ needs. Two tools to do this are learning vouchers and learning accounts; in the latter an employee can save and accumulate public and private funding and time off from work in order to undertake periodical training⁽¹¹⁾. Both have been tried as pilot projects in several countries, with promising results. The systematic recognition of prior learning, as well as knowledge and competences acquired in work and life outside the school system, is still the exception in Europe.

Validating this learning experience may help individuals to better understand their own capabilities and encourage further learning, employability and career development. Public institutions, education and training systems and Public Employment Services (PES) should set an example by transforming themselves into modern, flexible and adaptable service providers and establish transparency with respect to their performance in order to help to effectively direct their resources. Public spending on labour market programmes, education and training should not be reduced in times of uncertainty, but rather directed to effective preventive and curative measures. When the number of job seekers greatly exceeds the number of job openings, the two basic functions of Active Labour Market Policies (to match and retrain workers to jobs and to maintain the participation of the unemployed in society) are seriously challenged. The participation of job seekers in successive rounds of programmes which do not lead to a job is as wasteful as long-term unemployment. PES should consistently design their training schemes according to market needs as well as to stimulate entrepreneurship and self-employment. In order to make the most of people's skills, traditional matching processes focusing solely on occupations will no longer be sufficient. A systematic matching of job profiles, breaking down job vacancies to their individual components (both of job specific and generic skill requirements), can serve as the basis for effective and efficient matching. PES should incorporate these techniques into the design of active labour market programmes to increase the employability of members of disadvantaged groups, particularly in the use of individual action plans or employability development plans.

Key actions:

~ Develop and implement cost-efficient approaches to identify and validate prior learning and practical experience, and make this an enforceable element of collective agreements and work contracts. Raise awareness about schemes for recognition and certification and guidance and counseling and assist jobseekers with analysing their own skills better – including key competences. Improve the integration of existing tools, e.g. develop further Europass , by including enhanced self assessments tools, raising awareness and encouraging its broader use and acceptance across multiple sectors and at all levels of education and training to make qualifications, skills and competences visible.

~ Make greater use and better evaluate the impact of learning accounts or learning vouchers, especially for low-skilled workers, based on the principle of 'co-investment' by government, individuals and employers, as appropriate. Use tax relief or lower interest rates on borrowing to provide investment by individuals/employers at preferential rates. Establish co-investment as part of collective agreements and work contracts for people in work, and via counseling/PES for the unemployed.

~ Prioritise guidance and counselling services and motivational support for individuals, improve the quality of these services and ensure that they tackle stereotypes. Publicise in a visible and comparable format on the web the opportunities and offers, as well as the prices and returns, of public and private education and training courses, so that individuals can make informed

choices. Further develop in Public Employment Services profiling systems including internet and skill-based matching tools such as the EU tool 'Match and Map'.

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