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The editorial team welcomes comments,  
feedback and suggestions on BIBBnews.

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### ■ **One focal area of the EU: Learning foreign languages**

#### **European Language Label 2000**

In November 2000 the European Label for Innovative Initiatives in Language Teaching and Learning 2000 was awarded in the German Representation of the European Commission in Berlin. The European Language Label is presented every year to projects which promote the learning of foreign languages in an exemplary manner.

The competition was staged last year by "Education for Europe – National Agency" attached to the Federal Institute for Vocational Training (BIBB) on behalf of the Federal Ministry for Education and Research. The emphasis was on "Occupational learning and language acquisition". A jury consisting of representatives of the Federal Government, federal states, employers, trade unions and the areas, adult training and science, selected a total of nine prize winners from amongst more than 70 entries.

The European Language Label was presented to projects which have embarked on innovative and exemplary paths of combining occupational and foreign language training: for instance, they draw on the new information and communication technologies or they work in international model companies. Two of the prize winners have developed concepts and materials for the transnational qualification of worker representatives or

trainers and teachers in vocational training institutes. A language training scheme specifically tailored to the needs of small and medium-sized companies was also selected. Projects to promote the disadvantaged attracted considerable attention.

The theme of this year's competition is "Fit in several languages in school/university". It is organised by the Ministers of Culture of the federal states.

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### Russian Federation thanks BIBB

On 30 October 2000 the Russian Minister for Education, Mr. W. Filippow, thanked all those concerned for the successful German-Russian cooperation in conjunction with the TRANSFORM Programme. Between 1993 and 1999 joint work was undertaken on the development, testing and review of clerical vocational training courses.

#### TRANSFORM Programme of the Federal Government (1993–1999)

**GOAL:**  
Support for central and eastern European countries in establishing democracy and a market economy

**SUB-GOAL: BIBB**  
System development/modernisation of vocational training for skilled workers

#### Instruments/Activities

Guidance Pilot projects Information Transfer/Dissemination

On the German side the project was conducted by the Federal Institute for Vocational Training (BIBB) in cooperation with vocational schools and companies in North Rhine-Westphalia, Hessen and Hamburg. On the Russian side the cooperation also en-

compassed both central and decentralised institutes and companies in Moscow, Jaroslavl, St. Petersburg and Nishni Nowgorod. New clerical occupations in industry, the craft trades sector, commerce and banking were jointly developed and tested as models. After a review they were taken over into regular programmes and made available to other institutes. At present, training in these occupations is provided by 300 initial vocational training centres in 32 regions of Russia.

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NEWS  
BIBB

## Controlling of in-company continuing training, a Leonardo project

The qualification of employees for companies – irrespective of whether they are active on national or international markets – is a major contributory factor to ensuring their ability to compete. Only companies which constantly invest in the qualification of their workforce will be able to secure their position on the market in the long term.

What strategies do companies adopt in order to organise the necessary qualification activities for their employees in an optimum manner? What role is played in this context by education controlling? These questions were the basis for a written survey conducted simultaneously in three European countries in the spring of 2000: Austria, the Netherlands and Germany. The survey was intended for training coordinators and personnel managers from 800 companies with more than 50 employees. This was part of the project "A European comparison of controlling of in-company continuing training", conducted with the financial support of the European Commission's Leonardo da Vinci programme.

According to that survey, education controlling is a tool for the optimisation of the planning, steering and provision of in-company continuing training. It is oriented towards the individual phases of the overall training process. Education controlling extends from identifying the need for continuing training over specifying the goals of continuing training (design, planning and provision of training) to monitoring its success and ensuring

the transfer of training content to the work environment. Training activities are considered here not only from the pedagogical angle but also examined and assessed on the basis of economic criteria. Questions about the efficiency, efficacy and benefits of continuing training are to the fore.

When evaluating the survey it became clear that more and more coordinators of in-company training are looking for suitable methods for recording and assessing the benefits of the training provided. Measurable criteria are needed to determine the benefits, which provide insight more particularly into the impact of qualification efforts on the company's success. In individual cases the in-company training coordinators base their evaluations of the benefits on very different yardsticks. In the companies involved product and sales-oriented criteria, for instance customer satisfaction and product quality, are to the fore when assessing the benefits of qualification activities. In addition, staff and competence-oriented criteria like the ability to solve problems and flexibility play a major role. Turnover or profit, absenteeism or material consumption are deemed to be less important criteria for assessing the benefits of continuing training schemes (cf. Figure.).

The current importance of education controlling is viewed differently by the companies concerned in the three countries: Around half still consider it to be unimportant for their company, the other half to be important or very important. As far as the future is concerned, almost all companies expect education controlling to be important or very important.

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## Sustainability – the goal of environmentally sound vocational training

For several years the Federal Institute for Vocational Training (BIBB) has been involved in numerous research projects and pilot projects dealing with questions of environmental protection in vocational training. A new publication focuses on the principles and concepts of environmentally sound vocational training and on efforts to measure the impact of activities of this kind. The question is whether and, if so, to what extent current environmental education and guidance equip young people and adults to play a part in shaping their working environment and bringing about change in their companies.

Given the existence of environmental laws and changing consumer habits, environmentally-driven qualifications of skilled workers are essential for every company today. An ecologically-oriented production process, which deals with the consumption of energy and raw materials in an environmentally conscious manner, produces environmentally friendly products and strives to achieve the sustainability of these products, production processes and habits requires more than just knowledge, skills and know-how in technical and ecological environmental protection. What are needed are qualifications which permit a creative approach in the respective area of activity to operation and production-specific environmental issues and problems which safeguard the sustainability of an ecological form of production.

The impact of the methods used at present in environmental education and guidance is, therefore, in urgent need of re-evaluation. Only by means of scientifically sound findings can the ecological challenges facing both producers and consumers be matched with transferable concepts for constructive and sustainable environmental education. However, evaluation in the field of environmental protection is still a highly controversial subject: depending on the angle of the person affected, evaluation will either be seen as an unpopular "instrument of control" or as an "instrument of quality assurance" in the support and assessment of innovations in environmentally-oriented (vocational) education and guidance. The authors of this book are all of the opinion that professional evaluation is a management tool that is essential to the ongoing improvement of project activities in the field of environmentally sound vocational training.

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### Importance of various benefit criteria

Proportion: higher, high importance as a percentage







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## ■ Conference on "The Flexible Person" in Berlin

In Berlin a conference entitled "The Flexible Person" was held in March 2001. One forum at the conference was devoted to "mobility development in initial vocational training - educational policy initiatives and strategies of global companies". It looked more specifically at the transnational training mobility of young people.

In this forum chaired by BIBB, representatives of Bayerische Motoren-Werke, BMW Munich and Deutsche Bahn AG reported on strategies of this kind in their respective companies. The Carl Duisberg Gesellschaft (CDG) and CEDEFOP outlined their experience in the co-ordination and support of transnational EU programmes. The forum discussed this subject using practical examples from in-company transnational training programmes. The focus of the BMW initiatives was the **"Euro Azubi Programm"** (European Apprentice Programme) developed in cooperation with Rover. Every year 15 apprentices take part in the programme. The experiences of the apprentices were largely positive. They praised the benefits to be gained from inter-cultural exposure, personal and career development, the acquisition of foreign language skills, the making of new friendships etc. BMW and the trainers in the company see the international dimension today as a necessary key component.

In the opinion of Deutsche Bahn AG the support preconditions of the Leonardo Programme call for major financial outlay by the companies involved. However, this was balanced by the benefits which the company gained from transnational educational work. International projects support the transfer of personnel and know-how within the company. Furthermore, networks are built up and people establish contacts in different countries. International programmes have positive effects on staff development; participants become increasingly motivated and are more willing to go along with inner company mobility.

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#### ■ Mobility and flexibility during structural change

#### ■ New research projects:

- Prospects in the second half of working life
- International vocational education guidance

### ■ National Skills Conference in South Africa

#### ■ Pilot seminar Germany-Brazil

### ■ BIBB – an international centre of excellence

#### ■ New literature

Like CDG, CEDEFOP also stresses the need for transnational mobility. This is necessary in order to impart (a) international qualifications (e.g. intercultural skills) and (b) more general key qualifications. Efforts under the Leonardo Programme of the European Union to involve small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in transnational training programmes have already borne fruit. Applications from companies and chambers have increased from 17 percent in 1996 to 19 percent in 1999. The European mobility programmes were now very well known and companies were aware of the fact that participation brought with it major benefits not only for the professional but also for the personal development of their workforces.

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## Mobility and flexibility during structural change

### Results from the BIBB/IAB survey 1998/99

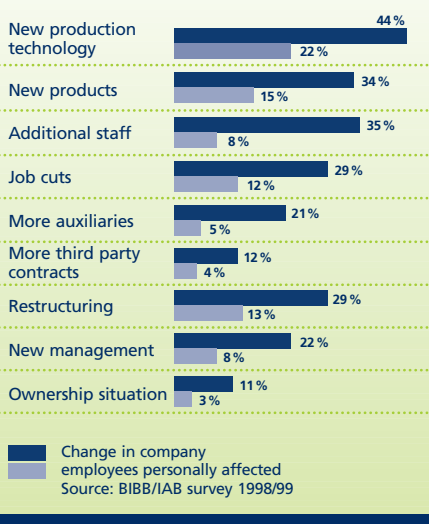
Based on the data from the BIBB/IAB survey 1998/99, a widely based, representative opinion poll involving more than 34,000 gainfully employed persons in Germany about their qualifications, stages in their professional career and their current employment situation, an analysis was made of the dynamics to be found in the world of work, and what scope there was for flexibility and mobility. Against this backdrop, attention focused more closely on the last change in job and the last change in employer.

The alternation of generations, i.e. the people entering working life for the first time on completion of vocational training who replace the people leaving, only constitutes a relatively small potential for change in terms of numbers. A far more relevant factor, over the same period, is the proportion of workplace and company processes of change. This is where the selection processes take place, as is reflected in the structures of the long-term unemployed. They lead to a situation where those with fewer qualifications and the "performance-impaired" are simply left behind. A forced change in employer or occupation is deemed to be particularly problematic because this leads to a loss of occupational identity and motivation and frequently means downward social mobility. The results of the analyses clearly reflect the special, sweeping changes in the New Federal States after the political turnaround.

A large proportion of what are, in some cases, dramatic processes of change in the world of work must be mastered with the existing core workforce. The complaint frequently heard about the lack of skilled workers on the labour market, particularly among the unemployed, is partly due to the fact that companies have failed to invest in the qualifications of their own employees. The companies themselves must make a greater contribution to requalification and retraining. Employees are more than willing to undergo continuing training and to adapt to changing work requirements. This was shown in particular in conjunction with the widespread introduction of information technology. In this context it is far easier to build on an existing qualification base rather than to demand a completely new direction.

Continuing training is, therefore, especially important because the education system and, more particularly, initial training alone cannot supply the experts needed on the labour market, for instance in the media landscape, given the rapidly changing qualification requirements. The policy of recruiting these experts abroad discussed in this context is just one of many options. Industry must also do much more in respect of the initial and continuing training of its skilled labour force.

### Company changes over 2 years and how staff are affected Germany as a whole



### Changes in working conditions over 2 years Germany as a whole



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## BIBB – an international centre of excellence

In 2000 BIBB was once again much in demand as a national and international centre of excellence. In the field of press and public relations alone, 53 information events were staged for 550 national but also, more particularly, for international visitors including high-ranking delegations from all over the world.

The following topics met with particular interest:

- tasks, structure and financing of BIBB, statutory foundations for its work, involvement of trade and industry in the work of BIBB, tasks of the Standing Committee;
- funding of vocational training in Germany;
- elaboration of new training regulations (in general, in the IT sector, in the civil service sector, in office occupations) and
- pilot projects (in general, with a focus on environmental protection, in the IT area, on the "learning company" or "teaching firm");
- approaches to modularisation in vocational training;
- qualification concepts and quality development/monitoring in initial and continuing training; quality standards.

BIBB cooperates closely with European and non-European partner institutes in the field of vocational education, research and practice. There are extensive contacts, in some cases co-operation agreements with ministries and international organisations. International projects attract visitors from all continents to BIBB and in this way ensure the ongoing and global discussion of all questions and problems of vocational education and training.

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## Flagship Projects on innovations in initial and continuing training

Since 1998 the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) has been supporting five flagship projects aimed at using modern media and the possibilities of information and communication technology to develop new strategies for teaching and learning (cf. BIBBnews 1/2000). The strategies are to promote a shift from traditional forms of learning in initial vocational training and post-secondary study towards a stronger focus on self-managed learning.

The Project Adviser on "Innovations in Initial and Continuing Training" – PT IAW – within BIBB is acting on behalf of the BMBF to manage the content-related aspects of implementing these flagship projects on the theme "Use of globally available expertise for initial and continuing training and innovation processes". PT IAW is responsible for administrating the budget allocation from the Federal Government amounting to the sum of approx. 140 million DM (approx. 70 million €).

BIBB is deploying its services to provide support for the five flagship projects as such and their constituent 80 or so sub-projects in their respective priority areas of action and research.

Being a competence centre for vocational training, vocational training research and vocational training promotion, BIBB has the necessary professional and managerial expertise to contribute towards making these five projects successful:

- Lifelong Learning – Continuing Training as a Basic Need
- Media Interface for Content-Based Connection of Scientific Documents, Abstracts and Textbooks
- Service Networks for Training and Continuing Education
- Virtual University of Applied Sciences
- Networked Study in Chemistry

In this issue of BIBBnews we are informing you about project 1.

Projects 2 to 5 will be presented in issue 1/2002.

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### • **Lifelong Learning – Continuing Training as a Basic Need**

Composed of 18 sub-projects, the L3-Consortium is testing, developing and implementing an internet-supported training platform for initial and continuing vocational training. By bringing together the necessary technical, organizational and social infrastructure it opens up possibilities of cooperative forms of learning. The training content is geared to a web-supported didactic concept which is compatible with the international standards currently under discussion.

#### **Lead organization**

SAP AG [Karlsruhe Campus-based Engineering Center (CEC), SAP AG's European research centre (18 constituent sub-projects)]  
Information [www.l-3.de](http://www.l-3.de)

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## Selling in the virtual shop

### Pilot project "JeeNet" for e-Commerce competences and entrepreneurial skills

The Internet's the key: buying in a virtual department store is no longer fantasy! But how is e-Commerce changing the tasks of people who had only been confronted with traditional business requirements up to now? What skills do commercial and service companies need to adapt their distribution channels to the virtual shop? How can these skills be imparted in the vocational training of future business people?

The answers to these questions are to be provided by a pilot project "Junior Enterprise Network (JeeNet) - Competence development in networked junior enterprises using the example of e-Commerce and entrepreneurial skills" launched with Otto Versand in co-operation with other Hamburg companies and vocational schools. The Otto Versand is a global mail order company with a high proportion of e-Commerce. The pilot project is given expert backing by the Federal Institute for Vocational Training (BIBB) and financial support from the Federal Ministry for Education and Research and the Land Hamburg.

The practical and learning environment and, at the same time, the training methods in the pilot project are provided by "CULTUR-e", a junior company set up at the Otto Versand. It gives trainees an opportunity to undertake tasks in a completely autonomous manner. This junior company offers an extensive web service including individual advice and the design and development of Intranet and Internet sites; it is the germ cell of the pilot project.

From here a virtual enterprise network is to be established between Hamburg companies and vocational schools which then also set up virtual junior and school companies. The overall objective of the pilot project is to develop didactic concepts and methods which encourage the acquisition of e-Commerce skills and the ability to act as an independent entrepreneur by means of self-organised learning.

The goals of the pilot project are:

- to develop and test **qualification modules** for the teaching of e-Commerce skills and the ability to act as an independent entrepreneur. These modules are to

be made available to in-company and school training schemes;

- to prepare **manuals**
  - for the setting up of a junior e-Commerce company,
  - for guidance in dealing with virtual client contacts,
  - for the qualification of training staff and teachers as learning advisors;
- to set up a project-accompanying **online centre** in the form of a net-based work and interaction platform, which gives all those interested an opportunity to share in the experiences gained in the project and to develop their own solutions.

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## New research project:

### Further development of distance learning

BIBB has, amongst other things, the statutory task of improving research and promotion of development projects and extending vocational distance learning. It advises distance education institutes on the development and use of their offerings and provides information on vocational distance education.

Distance and open learning have special qualities and advantages like, for instance, free access to training schemes, autonomy of the participants, diverse offering in terms of media and methods, consideration of individual requirements and flexibility of location and timeframe. These are all proven factors which support and promote lifelong, independent learning.

Learning with new media offers similar advantages. It is also a fact that with the growing popularity of the Internet, more and more telelearn offerings are being developed by teleacademies, virtual centres, multimedia institutes etc. Their offerings compete on a new training market which is also having an effect on distance education.

Against this backdrop, a new BIBB research project is observing moves towards a synthesis between traditional, print-based distance education and learning through the new media. The project will examine the ways in

which distance education can be developed and improved by integrating new didactic approaches and tapping new technical opportunities. One of the goals is to develop exemplary learning modules for modern, media-aided distance education schemes.

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## BIBB develops Continuing Training Monitor

BIBB wants to underline the growing importance of continuing training for economic progress and strengthen the continuing training market. This is the goal behind the launch of an information exchange with training providers which is to be entitled the Continuing Training Monitor, in short **wbmonitor**.

The *continuing training* Monitor will be set up along similar lines to BIBB's Reference Company System (RBS) which is oriented above all towards in-company *training*.

Changes for example in qualification requirements, the interested target groups, the available media or new certification systems should be recorded, if possible, almost as they happen and then analysed. This will contribute to greater transparency on the continuing training market.

In regular representative surveys, conducted roughly twice a year, continuing training providers will describe their experience with and give their opinions on topical issues. In this way, they will contribute to rendering developments visible early on and to making the facts accessible to an interested public, facts which can then serve as the foundation for political decision-making processes.

The initial survey, supported by the Federal Ministry for Education and Research, was conducted in September. The first results should be available by the end of the year and will be incorporated into the Federal Government's Vocational Training Report 2002. Evaluation data will be accessible on the BIBB homepage and key results will be passed on directly to the participants under the heading "Tips - Trends - Transparency".

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## Young women in IT-occupations

The apprenticeship offering in the IT sector in Germany is constantly growing; however the proportion of young women in this attractive occupational segment is less dynamic. It is almost steady at 14% on average. What are the causes and how can we change this situation? In order to throw more light on these issues, BIBB asked 1,900 companies to state the possible reasons, in their opinion, for the low level of participation of women in IT occupations as part of a representative survey on the subject "Training of young women in IT occupations". The companies were asked to make suggestions on how to increase the proportion of women.

The answers from around 585 training companies clearly indicate the following:

- The most important task is to improve the vocational orientation and preparation of young women in school and in vocational guidance. Technology-oriented work placements are also thought to be a particularly effective way of awakening interest amongst young women in IT occupations.
- Male IT occupational profiles are seen as barriers for women interested in IT occupations: a change in the image of technically dominated occupational profiles is needed; the status of clerical and service-oriented requirements must be raised.
- The recruitment patterns of executives and the in-company executive structures must be altered: it is important to increase awareness amongst executives and

persuade them that training courses in IT occupations should strive to attract young women.

- Training practice itself seems to raise comparatively few problems in the eyes of the companies. Only 11% thought that female trainers would have a positive effect in the IT sector. 9% were of the opinion that the back-up given to young women during training was good and well suited to solving emerging problems; 8% intended reviewing their company assessment and selection procedures in order to establish whether priority was given - intentionally or unintentionally - to male applicants.
- In some cases companies in east and west Germany adopted different approaches to problems. For 19% of east German companies the back-up given to young women during training was an important way of interesting more young female trainees in IT occupations. Improving assessment and selection procedures was also considered to be more important in the east (13%) than in the west (7%). By contrast, companies in the east felt there was less need to change the IT occupational profiles (east 24%, west 38%). The estimation of the positive effect of technology-oriented work placements (east 65%, west 64%) and of improving contacts and co-operation between schools and vocational guidance (east 57%, west 62%) was almost identical.

Further results:

<http://www.bibb.de>, click on Forum/Aus den Projekten/Referenzbetriebssystem (RBS) Information No. 19

### What is needed in order to attract young women to IT occupations

- Multiple mentions as percentage -

More technology-oriented work placements	64
More contacts to young women in schools and vocational guidance	61
Change in overly male occupational profiles	35
More information/persuasion work for executives	32
More women in executive positions	20
Promotion of equal opportunities at the workplace	20
Equal opportunities as a corporate goal	11
More female trainers	11
Special back-up during training	9
Improved aptitude tests/selection procedures	8

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## Checking the quality of continuing vocational training

Continuing vocational training opens up many paths for participants to shape their own career situation and to develop new perspectives.

But just how do people interested in continuing training find the appropriate course on the comprehensive continuing training market? How can they check whether the quality of the scheme is suited to updating their qualifications, to supplementing them or to giving them a new profile?

BIBB's "Checklist for the Quality of Continuing Vocational Training" is an (updated) guide to the selection of continuing training courses. This checklist gives people in search of continuing training the criteria which will help them to assess the quality of schemes and providers.

The Checklist is primarily intended for people who already know what type of continuing training they are looking for and who need help in choosing the fitting course. Attention is drawn to the aspects which should be examined more closely for each scheme.

The following subjects are touched on:

- What should be considered before choosing a continuing training course?
- What does the continuing training course cost?
- What quality guarantee does the provider offer?
- How is the course organised and run?
- What contents are covered, what methods and teaching materials are used?
- What qualification do participants receive and what importance will it have for their future career?

Other features like a glossary with the key terms of continuing vocational training, addresses of institutions involved in continuing training, references to regional and special information systems on the Internet and a selection of more comprehensive literature all combine to make the Checklist an informative guide for anyone seeking orientation on the continuing training market.

The "Checklist for the Quality of Continuing Vocational Training" (available in German only) can be obtained free of charge from BIBB, either by mail or by e-mail to:

[braun@bibb.de](mailto:braun@bibb.de)

Or see BIBB homepage

<http://www.bibb.de/checkliste.htm>

