

**Country specific thematic analysis of
continuing vocational training on the basis of CVTS2
and modelling of CVT-structures
(CVTS2 revisited)**

Phase 2 / Work package 8

Synthesis report:

**How do providers co-operate with enterprises and
what is important for this co-operation?**

—

**Enterprise-provided continuing vocational training
from the perspective of providers**

By Bernd Käpplinger, Gudrun Schönfeld, Friederike Behringer, Dick Moraal

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0. Preface

This paper has been elaborated in the context of the Leonardo-II project “Country specific thematic analysis of continuing vocational training on the basis of CVTS2 and modelling of CVT-structures (CVTS2 revisited)”. In this partnership, we are working together with six partners, and our synthesis is based on the work of all our partners (see in detail *methodology and data*). The central goal of the paper is to sketch differences between the provider markets in the seven states on the base of quantitative and qualitative data. Furthermore we want to give an overview about quality standards, the innovation capacity of the providers and about the different ways of interaction between providers and enterprises. All data is based on interviews with providers and questionnaires to which providers responded. A “provider” or “supplier” (we use both words synonym) of training courses is the person or organisation, which delivers the training. Such persons or organisations could be:

- Schools, colleges, universities and other higher education institutions
- Public training institutions (financed or guided by the government; e.g. adult education centres)
- Private training companies
- Private companies which main activity is not training (equipment providers; Parent/associate companies)
- Employer’s associations, chambers of commerce, sector bodies
- Trade unions
- Other training providers

This report reflects the perspectives of these providers concerning enterprise-provided continuing vocational training (CVT). An additional synthesis by our partners in work package 9 and 10 reflects the perspectives of managers/persons responsible for CVT within the enterprises, although not the same themes are tackled by these reports.

Writing a synthesis of seven national reports on qualitative interviews and seven data files based on national questionnaires is not an easy task to fulfil. Differences in the national contexts have to be kept in mind, because they are important when interpreting the results. Especially enterprise-provided training in Denmark seems to be rather different in many respects to the situation in the other six countries observed in our study. When looking at the results of the interviews and the questionnaires, very often it can be noticed that the Danish case is exceptional. Differences between branches and trainings contents also exist within and between countries. For example, some partners reported in their national reports about big differences between interviewing somebody from a language training centre or a management training agency or an ICT-provider. The contexts of these different training topics are often difficult to compare with other topics. Providing in-depth analysis of the development of the whole field of enterprise-based training is extremely difficult on the basis of limited data.

But neither the country studies nor this synthesis were intended in such a way. They try to “sketch differences between the provider markets in the seven states on the base of quantitative and qualitative data” and want to give an “overview about quality standards of the providers, their innovation capacity and the different ways of interaction between providers and enterprises” (project working plan, p. 17). Our Danish partner is correct in saying: „Describing the market for private providers on the basis of interviewing a few of them is similar to describing a room having only looked through the keyhole” (see Danish national report, p. 15). Nonetheless, the field of enterprise-based training is so far a field of research with not very many ‘keyholes’ and thus each information acquired is important and useful. Our goal is thus not to give a comprehensive and exhaustive description of the different ‘rooms’ (national situations), but to give an overview about the big variety in enterprise-based training within and between countries. We want to make visible some important characteristics.

1. Methodology and data

This synthesis report is based on 70 qualitative interviews with training providers and 253 questionnaires filled-in by training providers in Austria, the Czech Republic, Denmark, France Germany, Italy and Lithuania. All project partners of CVTS2rev made 10 qualitative interviews, collected then approximately 30 questionnaires and reported about the results of their research in national reports (see national reports and the summary tables in the annex). Interviews and questionnaires were based on a guideline and outline questionnaire in English (see guideline and outline questionnaire in the Annex), which was mainly produced by BIBB with special support by 3s and BETA and comments by the other partners. All partners translated the guideline and outline questionnaires from English into their national languages. After that they conducted the interviews and sent the questionnaires out to the providers.

The results of the qualitative interviews are often in line with the results of the questionnaires, but sometimes the results are diverging. Generally, this report tries to merge the results of both methods by comparing their respective results. The interviews give more contextualised in-depth information, while the questionnaires provide quantitative although not representative information. The results of the interviews had impact on the construction of the questionnaire (translating hypothesis into questions, collecting items, etc.). Although the quantitative data of the questionnaires is not representative for the national situations, the data highlights important developments and characteristics of enterprise-based training in seven member states of the European Union.

1.1 Qualitative interviews with training providers

We made use of information provided by CVTS2 for constructing national samples of different types of training providers. CVTS2 results (question C5, paid working time spent on CVT according type of provider) give information about the distribution of types of providers with which enterprises co-operate. We took this as a guide for selecting the following types of training providers for making qualitative interviews:

	Public schools and colleges	Universities	Specialised training institutions	Private training organisations	Equipment providers	Parent/associate companies	Unions	Chambers of commerce, sector bodies, employers' organisations	Other training provider	Total
AT	0	1	0	6	2	0	0	1	0	10
CZ	0	0	2	4	2	1	0	0	1	10
DE	0	0	1	4	2	1	0	2	0	10
DK	3	0	2	3	0	0	1	1	0	10
FR	1	0	0	6	1	1	0	1	0	10
IT	0	0	3	4	1	1	0	0	1	10
LT	1	3	0	5	0	0	0	1	0	10
Total	5	4	8	31	8	4	1	6	2	70

Table 1: Number of interviews in each country

Every project partner selected 10 training providers for interviews. The interview partners were found by using internet information, handbooks with addresses or personal contacts. The providers were asked by mail or phone if they were willing to make an interview about the collaboration between training providers and enterprises in the field of continuing vocational training (CVT). They were informed about the project CVTS2rev (e.g. the link to the homepage was given), its general goals and the goals of this working package. It was ensured that

all personal data would be kept anonymous. Date and place of the interviews were individually arranged with the providers after this pre-information.

Interviews were mostly made in the premises of the providers and only sometimes made by phone. They were taped and short summaries of two to five pages were made about each interview. All data was made anonymous, because it is a sensitive issue for many enterprises and we guaranteed our interview partners anonymity. All interview partners were considered as experts in the field of CVT and therefore the interviews were considered as expert interviews. The central goal was to explore the explicit and implicit knowledge of these experts in the field of CVT. Quotes from the interviewees were translated from the national languages into English when writing the national reports.

1.2 CVTS2rev survey of providers

After making the interviews the second step was to send out the questionnaires to providers. Every project partner tried to acquire at least 30 filled-in questionnaires by training providers. The interview partners used internet information, personal contacts or handbooks with addresses in order to find the providers. The providers were asked by mail or conventional post if they were offering enterprise-based training in 2005 and if they were willing to fill-in the attached questionnaire. They were also informed about the project CVTS2rev (e.g. the link to the homepage was given), its general goals and the goals of this working package. It was ensured that all personal data would be kept anonymous. The acquiring of 30 filled-in questionnaires was rather difficult in most countries. A lot of questionnaires had to be sent in order to acquire the number needed. The providers who answered characterised their institution as following:

	Public training institutions	Colleges, Universities	Private training organisations	Unions	Chambers of commerce, sector bodies, employers' organisations	Other training provider	No answer	Total
AT	0	0	21	0	1	1	3	26
CZ	2	1	58	0	2	9	0	72
DK	16	3	6	3	3	0	0	31
FR	1	1	21	0	2	5	0	30
DE	3	2	19	2	2	6	0	34
IT	na ¹	na	na	na	na	na	30	30
LT	5	0	24	0	1	0	0	30
Total	27	7	149	5	11	21	33	253

Table 2: Number of questionnaires in each country

The typology used in the questionnaire was condensed in order to reduce the response burden. Thus the categories used here are a little bit diverging from the typology used for the interviews. Nonetheless, the differences are rather little and of no major importance for the interpretation and comparing of the results of the interviews and the questionnaires.

Our Czech partners had rather little problems in collecting the questionnaires. They received much more questionnaires (72) than needed (30), while the other partners needed many steps (sending out questionnaires, writing reminders, collecting additional addresses, sending out again questionnaires, etc.) in order to get at least the required minimum number of 30 interviews. We will work with the unweighted country mean in order to avoid a size bias caused by the different numbers of interviews in the countries. The total figures are also not weighted according the different population sizes of the countries involved. The Italian providers did

¹ na = no answer

not answer to the typology question. Thus we have no information about the types of providers there. The comparatively very high number of public training institutions in the Danish situation mirrors the high importance of enterprise-provided training provided by public training institutions in Denmark. A situation that is very different from the current setting in all other countries in our sample. Overall, the figures reflect that the private training organisations are in most countries the predominating type of training provider in the field of enterprise-provided training.

The typical provider in our sample had 1 to 20 full-time employees and a similar number of part-time employed and freelancers, approximately 500 to 999 participants per year, less than 50 courses, a turnover of 1 Mio. to 5 Mio. Euro and co-operated with 10 to 49 enterprises from 4 and more branches which have 50 to 499 employees (see tables in part E of the annex 3).

2. Results

Results will be presented in form of questions and answers. A summary of Q&A can be found at the end of the report. These results have been extracted while jointly analysing interviews and questionnaires. During the presentation we will highlight if these results are reflecting the situation of all countries or if there are clearly diverging results. Normally, first the results of the interviews and then the information of the questionnaires are presented. In the presentation of the results we will follow the main headlines of our working package:

- Relations between CVT providers and enterprises
- Quality standards of the training providers
- Innovation capacity of the training providers

In general, the reader has to be very careful in interpreting the proportion of answers of training providers of our CVTS survey as a description of the general features of the training market itself. Training providers are of rather different size and of different importance for the whole training market. Large institutions, representing a significant or even dominating share of the offers within the market, may be outnumbered by the large number of small providers. Hence, when analysing on the level of institutions, small providers may hold the majority - when analysing on the level of training offers, their share is of minor importance.

2.1 Relations between CVT providers and enterprises

2.1.1 Are tailor-made or open seminars more important?

Many experts from different countries stressed the need “to develop and propose training offers which meet as precisely as possible the training requirements of their customer companies” (French interview report, p. 6). Some experts expect for their providers an even increasing importance of tailor-made courses in the future: “I think the way we are exploring, making tailor-made offers for enterprises will be the future way” (German interview report, p. 12). But this should not mean from the point of view of many experts that a strict division between open seminars¹ and tailor-made seminars² would be really useful. Open seminars are considered as an important basic information and starting point, which often leaves room for modification according the special needs of costumers (see Czech interview report, p. 9). Overall, most providers see a certain need to address (more) exactly the training needs of enterprises. Many providers seem to be already used to that, others are now adapting and some still see no need to analyse the training needs of their costumers (e.g. Lithuanian public CVT provider, Lithuanian interview report, p. 17). In the survey, providers indicated that tailor-made semi-

¹ Open seminars are courses that are visited by participants of different origins/enterprises. The courses are often published in a programme or placed in a database, which can be accessed publicly.

² Tailor-made seminars are non-standardized seminars which are arranged according to the specific needs of an individual enterprise or a group of enterprises.

nars are more often offered than open seminars in the field of enterprise-based training in most countries with some variations between the countries:

Question: Did you realize tailor-made seminars for enterprises in 2005?

	AT	CZ	DK	FR	DE	IT	LT	Total
Yes	96	92	90	100	88	63	100	90
No	4	8	10	0	9	37	0	10
No answer	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: CVTS2rev survey of providers (%)

Question: Did you realize open seminars in 2005?

	AT	CZ	DK	FR	DE	IT	LT	Total
Yes	54	92	84	53	88	70	93	76
No	46	8	16	47	12	30	7	24
No answer	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Source: CVTS2rev survey of providers (%)

Austrian and French providers are very much engaged in offering tailor-made seminars and less active in offering open seminars (e.g. 96% of the providers in Austria are offering tailor-made and ‘only’ 54% open seminars). In Denmark and Lithuania the figures for tailor-made courses are only slightly higher than the figures for open seminars, while in the Czech Republic and in Germany the figures for tailor-made and open seminars are equally high. Only Italy constitutes an exception in this respect with figures of 70% for open seminars and 63% for tailor-made seminars. It is thus the only country with higher figures for open seminars. The open question to be explored further by other analysis is, why the Austrian and French training market are so clearly dominated by tailor-made courses and the Italian market is so different to all others.

However, the figures for open seminars are not at all low and thus it has to be noticed that open seminars are an important element of enterprise-provided training. The majority of providers in all countries (from 53% in France to 93% in Lithuania) indicates that they are offering open seminars. As argued above, the share of providers offering open seminars may not be a valid indicator of the share of open seminars amongst training offers. For example, in Austria in 2003/2004 two main institutions offered 24300 open seminars with 291000 participants. The market for open seminars is highly controlled by these two large institutions, which are counted as two of 26 Austrian training providers in our survey. The importance of open seminars in the whole training market is not reflected in the share of providers offering open seminars. Open seminars are only of rather minor importance for the small providers constituting the majority of the training providers surveyed.

When looking at the turnover connected to both types of courses, no clear dominance of tailor-made courses may be detected:

Question: Please indicate which percentage of your total turnover came from tailor-made seminars?

	AT	CZ	DK	FR	DE	IT	LT	Total
Less than 10%	23	18	42	30	44	23	17	28
11-30%	23	18	23	27	15	30	63	28
31-50%	4	21	7	3	18	7	13	10
More than 50%	46	35	16	40	12	3	7	23
Not applicable	4	8	10	0	9	37	0	10
No answer	0	0	3	0	3	0	0	1
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: CVTS2rev survey of providers (%)

Question: Please indicate which percentage of your total turnover came from open seminars?

	AT	CZ	DK	FR	DE	IT	LT	Total
Less than 10%	19	26	36	13	21	30	37	26
11-30%	12	25	16	23	21	27	33	22
31-50%	12	17	16	10	9	10	23	14
More than 50%	12	24	13	7	35	3	7	14
Not applicable	46	8	16	43	12	30	0	22
No answer	0	0	3	3	3	0	0	1
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: CVTS2rev survey of providers (%)

There is no general trend in the sample in such way that training providers are earning much more money with tailor-made courses than with open seminars. Only some providers seem to be financially focused on tailor-made courses. Overall, the total figures for tailor-made seminars are certainly higher than the figures for open seminars, but the difference is not large enough to justify the conclusion that tailor-made seminars are much more important for providers' turnover. We reiterate that the analysis in this report is on the level of providers, not on the level of training offers. If the distribution of the forms of training offers (open vs. tailor-made) is unequal between providers of different sizes (as illustrated above with the Austrian example), the conclusion based on the analysis of providers may not be extended to the analysis of the training market.

Summary: Tailor-made and open seminars are rather equally important

Tailor-made and open seminars are rather equally represented when looking at the total figures of all seven countries. Tailor-made courses can be found more frequently, but they are not dominating. The majority of Austrian and French training providers most clearly is focused on tailor-made seminars, while the majority of Italian suppliers are more inclined to offering open seminars and the majority of German suppliers gets more turnover out of open seminars. The providers in the Czech Republic, Denmark, France and Lithuania have a slightly bigger preference for tailor-made seminars. Nonetheless, it becomes clear that tailor-made and open seminars are two elements of enterprise-provided training. Both are rather equally needed in the field. They satisfy different training needs of enterprises (e.g. rather expensive tailor-made seminars might be financially and logistically difficult to arrange for SME, while big enterprises might have a preference for tailor-made seminars, see also Danish report, p. 13).

2.1.2 Is counselling important while providing enterprise-based training?

Many providers stressed that counselling and guidance is important when co-operating with enterprises. For the partner countries, the research teams have highlighted this fact as follows:

- “If training needs and needs for organisational development are closely interlinked, the trainers/consultants need consulting skills and should be able "to read" the organization (...) In order to place non-specific client concerns in specific terms and notice which service the client actually needs, consulting is already important in the preparation phase of the project.” (Austrian interview report, p. 17)
- “Two thirds of the private providers identify the demand for CVT by continually having dialog with their largest customers” (Danish interview report, p.16)

Providers described the situation with their own words as follows:

- “Undoubtedly, a small advisory aid, particularly to steer the entrepreneur towards the knowledge of the local training offer and the various opportunities put into effect also with public financing, is useful and desirable (...)” (provider in the Italian interview report, p. 5)
- “The need for consultancy will increase.” (provider in the German interview report, p. 8)

Counselling consists of many elements. It can mean the regular contact between enterprises and providers concerning the training needs of the enterprises and possible suitable trainings offered by the provider. It can mean the proposal of offers by providers to the enterprises, because of their impression of the training needs of the enterprises. In the end, it can mean talking about the very practical arrangement of a training offer. Many providers are even giving the enterprises a lot of advices, how they can apply to and handle public financing schemes:

Question: Do you inform enterprises on existing public co-funding schemes for training?

	AT	CZ	DK	FR	DE	IT	LT	Total
Often	31	18	58	27	15	73	23	35
Occasionally	35	32	16	60	21	20	70	36
No	27	47	26	13	65	7	7	27
No answer	8	3	0	0	0	0	0	3
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: CVTS2rev survey of providers (%)

Of course, information can be only given if such public co-funding schemes are existing in these countries on European, national, regional or local level. This could explain the high figures especially in Denmark and Italy and partly also in France, the Czech Republic and Lithuania. For example, in Italy “many structures that operate within continuous and vocational training (...) carry out the greatest part of their own training activity addressed to firms using national and community public funds: Law no. 236; Law no. 53 (personal training); Inter-professional Funds for Continuous Formation; European Social Fund” (Italian interview report, pp. 7-8). CVT funds seem to play an important role in these countries, while in Austria and Germany public funds seem to exist more rarely or seem to have only a minor role in some less developed regions of these countries (e.g. like the ESF). Information about co-funding schemes is also given by the interviews:

- “Our work with SME is successful, because we tell them, that we will do all of the application stuff. We will arrange the papers, we explain it to you, we talk with the public agencies and you just sent in the applications officially.” (provider in the German interview report, p. 9)

- “The providers also offer help with administrative burdens.” (Danish interview report, p.14)
- „In addition to training provision in itself, the training organizations tend to integrate administrative facilities into their service, (...) including dealing with its financial arrangement as it was the case with the implementation of the project "DIF" (Droit Individuel à la Formation: individual right to training) and other projects.” (French interview report, p. 8)

The quote from Germany originates from a supplier in Berlin, where a special funding scheme for training within SME exists on regional level. Overall, providers are important mediators when trying to stimulate enterprise-based training by offering public co-funding, which leads to more training (58% of the providers have that opinion), to better access to training for special target groups like older employees, women or migrants (53%) and to more training especially in SME (53%), but a simultaneous reduction of enterprises’ investment in training is expected by every second provider (only exception is here Lithuania, where provider do not see that danger). That casts some doubts on the assumption that public financing schemes could generally stimulate more training in enterprises. From the point of view of suppliers enterprises seem just to reduce by substituting their own investment by public funding.

Offering training is often “only” the final part of the actions of providers, which offer a lot and diverse forms of guidance and counselling. This leads to the conclusion that: “The border between training services and organizational development and consulting is described as very fluid“ (Austrian interview report, p. 16). But the enterprise seem partly not really aware of the importance of counseling: "The distinction between CVT and consulting usually plays no role for the customers themselves“ (idem, p. 17) and a free-lancer reports that “it is difficult for me as a free-lancer to get paid for consultancy. Seminars are paid. Preparation is normally paid. Consultancy needs a lot of time, but you don’t get paid for that. You have to incorporate it in other costs.” (German interview report, p. 9) Suppliers are thus often considered as providers of training, while the accompanying guidance and consulting is considered by the enterprises as a natural by-product of providing courses. This lack of awareness might result in a lack of initiatives to optimize and stabilize this consulting in a more structured and continuous way.

The quantitative data underlines as well as the interviews the importance of counselling and other services from the point of view of providers, while the direct financial turnover out of these services is much less important:

Question: Did you realize any form of counselling³ for enterprises in 2005?

	AT	CZ	DK	FR	DE	IT	LT	Total
Yes	73	69	84	67	62	53	93	72
No	27	29	16	33	38	47	7	28
No answer	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: CVTS2rev survey of providers (%)

³ Counselling comprises different forms of individual and group-oriented support by a coach or advisor for the solution of problems or decision-making in relation to the workplace.

Question: Did you deliver other services in the field of management and organisation and training⁴ in 2005?

	AT	CZ	DK	FR	DE	IT	LT	Total
Separate field	23	22	52	10	12	50	3	25
By-product	42	42	32	47	41	47	37	41
No	35	36	16	43	47	3	60	34
No answer	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: CVTS2rev survey of providers (%)

The providers offer almost as frequently counselling (total: 72%) as they offer open seminars (total: 76%), especially Danish (84%) and Lithuanian (93%) providers offer counselling frequently, while German and Italian providers are much less engaged here (62% and 53%).

Other services⁵ (e.g. assessing the training needs, developing training plans, developing concepts to measure the training outcome) are not very often used in Lithuania (60% do not offer such services) and Germany (47%), while in all other countries most providers offer these service as a separate field or as a by-product. Italian (97% offer these services) and Danish providers (84%) are much more active in offering other services than any other nationality. In particular, there are differences for other services as a separate field of business. The Danish case might be explainable by the corporate administration of the training supply (see Danish interview report, pp. 5-6), which has formally implemented predictions on the future needs for qualifications in which providers are involved. There is no explanation at hand for the Italian figures.

Unfortunately, the providers seem to make much less turnover with counselling and other services than with open or tailor-made seminars. In our survey 31% of the providers indicated that they make no turnover with counselling. 42% of all providers make less than 10%, 19% make between 11 and 30% and only 8% make more than 30% of their turnover with counselling. Counselling is frequently offered despite its little direct contribution to the turnover of providers. The financial effects of offering counselling and other service seem to be rather a natural by-product when offering open seminars or tailor-made courses and not a separate field of business for most suppliers.

Summary: Giving counselling and advice is very often a regular by-product of providers when offering training to enterprises

Counselling and other services could be described as rather hidden activities of providers or as by-products when offering courses to enterprises. They are not very often a special cost position, but often invisibly incorporated within the training fees. There are some hints that the importance of counselling and other services will be of increasing importance in future. For example, French providers report about an increase of 'spontaneous requests' asking for 'offers adapted to their punctual needs' which lead to an increased need for counselling and other services (French interview report, p. 8). Such specific enterprise requests can only be met with counselling and other services given by providers. Overall, tailor-made seminars, open seminars, counselling and other services constitute one big toolbox, which providers offer to enterprises. The boundaries between these different services are often not very strict. Especially Danish suppliers are very active in offering counselling and other services.

⁴ For example assessing the training needs, developing training plans, developing concepts to measure the training outcome.

⁵ It is not totally unlikely that some providers had some problems in allocating correctly their answers to counselling and other services. It is likely that some mixed up the categories when considering that both categories quite close (e.g. developing training plans without giving counselling is difficult to imagine).

2.1.3 Co-operation between enterprises and providers: Formal or informal relations?

The providers mentioned the following means of having contacts with enterprises:

Question: Which means are mostly used for contacting enterprises?

	AT	CZ	DK	FR	DE	IT	LT	Total
	% R	% R	% R	% R	% R	% R	% R	% R
Training catalogues/programmes	39 (3)	38 (4)	90 (1)	43 (1)	65 (1)	47 (2)	40 (4)	52 (1)
Contacts with former participants	65 (2)	49 (3)	26 (4)	40 (2)	59 (2)	50 (1)	53 (3)	49 (2)
Recommendations	85 (1)	54 (2)	13 (6)	27 (5)	50 (3)	43 (3)	63 (1)	48 (3)
Contacts during congresses	39 (3)	15 (6)	42 (2)	17 (7)	21 (7)	40 (5)	60 (2)	33 (4)
Search engines	19 (5)	83 (1)	13 (6)	20 (6)	32 (4)	43 (3)	13 (7)	32 (5)
Advertisement	15 (6)	21 (5)	29 (3)	37 (4)	24 (6)	13 (8)	23 (6)	23 (6)
Belonging to network	15 (6)	3 (8)	26 (4)	17 (7)	21 (7)	37 (6)	33 (5)	22 (7)
Databases on CVT	8 (8)	7 (7)	3 (8)	40 (2)	32 (4)	33 (7)	3 (8)	18 (8)
No answer	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0

Source: CVTS2rev survey of providers (% and ranking position, multiple answers possible; ranking position 1 highlighted)

The formal instrument ‘Training catalogues or programmes’ ranks top with 52% on average. Three items (contacts with former participants, recommendations, contacts during congresses), which are characterised by a rather high degree of informality, are following on the positions two to four. The top ranking of catalogues is very strongly influenced by its strong position in Denmark with its corporatist AMU-system (see Danish interview report, pp 5-6), while in countries like Austria, Czech Republic, Italy and Lithuania catalogues are much less important. Overall, informal means seem to be much more important than formal means. Formal networks are frequently used only in Italy (37%), Lithuania (33%) and Denmark (26%). For most countries, ‘modern’ information sources like search engines or databases are having a rather secondary importance in general. Search engines like *google* or *yahoo!* are very important in the Czech Republic (83%)⁶ and to a certain degree in Italy (43%). Databases in France (40%), Italy (33%) and Germany (32%) are used frequently, but are almost nonexistent in most other countries. Overall, when looking at the ranking positions of the different measures for contacting enterprises (figures in brackets in the table above) it becomes clearly visible that the differences between the different countries are really big (see also summary table on page 21). The ways of establishing contacts between enterprises and providers are very differently shaped in different countries. Thus the figures averaging across countries should be handled with care. The means not (frequently) used in some countries are perhaps an indication of room for improvement. For example, the establishment of networks could be improved in Austria, Czech Republic, France and Germany, while it is likely that databases on CVT are missing or not well-known in Austria, Czech Republic, Denmark, and Lithuania. An alternative explanation is that databases are existing in these countries, but do not fulfil sufficiently the expectations of providers (especially small providers) and enterprises in these countries mentioned.

In an attempt to cluster countries, France, Germany and Italy are in one cluster because of rather similar results. They have a preference for catalogues or contacts with former participants, and recommendations and databases are also important. A second cluster of countries pools Austria and Lithuania with high ranks of recommendations, followed by contacts with former participants and contacts during congresses. Catalogues are less important in these two countries. The Czech Republic is rather unique, because of its very high importance of search

⁶ The option “own website” was added to “search engines” in the Czech questionnaire by our partners. Thus, in this respect the Czech data are not totally comparable with the data from the other countries.

engines and of websites of the providers followed by recommendations, while contacts during congresses, catalogues and belonging to a network have the lowest values of all countries. Denmark is also rather unique, because of its very high importance of catalogues, while contacts with former participants and recommendations receive only low percentages. The single position of Denmark is not astonishing and in line with other results. At first sight it might be astonishing that the former communist countries Czech Republic and Lithuania are rather different, but the CVTS2 results already indicated big differences between these two countries. However, Austria and Germany also had rather similar CVTS2 results, but perform very differently regarding the ways used by providers to establish contacts with enterprises.

The tendency towards rather informal und personalised relationships between enterprises and providers in most countries are supported by the results of the interviews:

- “Almost all of the providers stress the importance of having personal contacts with personnel officers” and “Long-term partnerships between an enterprise and a provider are becoming a trend.” (Czech interview report, pp. 9 and 12)
- “All organisations are adopting an approach based on keeping regular contacts with the enterprises in order to identify the training market needs and to maintain their already established relations.” (French interview report, p. 9)
- “All providers stressed that it is very important to have long-term contacts to enterprises and persons in charge in the enterprises.” (German interview report, p. 5)

The clear majority of providers in all countries reports that continuous and well-established contacts between enterprises and providers are ‘very important’ or ‘important’ in the field of enterprise-based training:

Question: What are your organisation’s advantages in relation to your competitors in the training market (answer option: continuous and well-established personal contacts)?

	AT	CZ	DK	FR	DE	IT	LT	Total
Very important	46	38	58	67	44	47	50	50
Important	42	49	38	27	44	43	43	41
Not important	4	6	3	3	0	10	7	5
No answer	8	8	0	3	12	0	0	4
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: CVTS2rev survey of providers (%)

The majority of suppliers in all countries share the opinion that having close relations to enterprises is important or even very important. Our Austrian colleagues summarized this in the following way: “As in a classic brokering service, important for the business success is to get in touch with customers, to be aware of their needs and to provide satisfactory offers” (Austrian interview report, p. 17). It is mostly a mutual exchange in which providers contact enterprises only a little bit more often than enterprises contact providers:

Question: How is your first contact to an enterprise typically established?

	AT	CZ	DK	FR	DE	IT	LT	Total
We contact enterprises	50	42	45	50	50	57	70	52
Enterprises contact us	46	54	52	37	50	40	30	44
Both (data collected only in France)				13				2
No answer	4	4	3	0	0	3	0	2
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: CVTS2rev survey of providers (%)

Only in Lithuania, Italy and to a certain degree in France providers are much more active than enterprises. Overall, the contacts are rather mutual, although many providers have to be active in order “to make their market”. Normally many attempts have to be made by providers and a lot of time has to be invested in order to win just one enterprise as a new customer. This was stressed in many interviews with providers.

Summary: The relationships between enterprises and providers are mostly rather informal

Most providers are using informal ways of establishing contacts with enterprises more frequently than formal means. They have to be very active in establishing contacts with enterprises. Denmark with its strong corporatist CVT system seems to promote and to rely a little bit more on formal channels of co-operation than the other countries. Although each formal system also needs informal contacts in order to function, the analysis shows that the extent of informal ways in establishing contacts between enterprises and providers widely differs between countries. It remains a question for further research if the rather informal search for information about CVT constitutes a deficit for the functioning of the training markets in some national systems, because higher transaction costs and insecurities of enterprises are likely when a low level of transparency exists.

2.1.4 Is there increasing or decreasing competition in the CVT market?

Many of the interview partners stressed that there is an increased competition within the CVT market, although the interpretations and explanations of the situation vary between countries and types of providers:

- “The enterprises have not changed their behaviour, but increasing competition on the supply side leads to higher efforts in acquiring new orders and larger proportions of included additional services. A fairly high proportion of respondents believe, that some providers offer services at a price that does not cover their real expenses.” (Austrian interview report, p. 11)
- “There grows enormous competition on the market. I think enterprises are aware of it and put pressure on course prices. Mostly at the expense of quality.” “(provider in the Czech interview report, p. 12)
- “Nowadays, the competition between training providers is becoming very strong. And *“the companies are increasingly looking less at quality and more at the price”*. The demand for training is clearly becoming *“a purchasing act for companies... The training market has developed towards an increasing profitability requirement by the enterprises.”* (provider in the French interview report, p. 9)
- “There was indicated, that the private enterprises become more and more interested in the quality of the training and the quality becomes their priority in the selection of the provider. Therefore the providers of the continuing vocational training move towards the competition on the quality and not on the price level.” (Lithuanian interview report, p. 9)
- “The public providers are primarily driven by demand and operate as actors on a quasi-market. However they do not compete on price as these are fixed at least for the standard courses. The primary objective of the public providers is to secure the highest possible number of course participants to ensure further grants from the state. The public providers thus compete on slightly different parameters than the private providers.” (Danish interview report, p. 14)

The Austrian report sees no change in the behaviour of enterprises, but rather an increased supply, which makes it easier for the enterprises to put pressure on the prices. Other interpretations are focused on the increased cost awareness of enterprises, which would consider training as a good like any other good (see French quote). However, Lithuanian enterprises seem to be increasingly interested in quality of training, and competition between providers is

rather channelled through quality aspects than through price level. The Danish situation with its public ‘quasi-market’ around the AMU-system is different to the situation in all the other countries involved. Summing up, competition seems to be channelled through different targets (either quality or price) in different countries. Nonetheless, almost all agree that there is accelerated increase of competition. In many countries (e.g. Germany) the recent cuts of public spending in other training areas like training for the unemployed reduce not only the number and most notably the duration of courses in that segment, but also impact on the whole training market. Providers indicated in the interviews that they have to re-orientate themselves in order to survive as an institution. Enterprise-based training receives increased attention, while vocational training financed by the labour office receives less attention.

Most providers (83%) expect increasing importance of enterprise-provided training for their organisation. The forecast is equally high for most of the countries (LT: 93%, CZ: 92%, FR: 90%, AT: 88%, DE: 88%, DK: 87%). Only Italy is the exemption from the rule, with a majority of providers (63%) expecting a decline of the importance of this form of training for their own organisation.

We have asked the suppliers about their organisational advantages in relation to the other competitors in the training market. The following diagram gives information about the self-image of providers in relation to other providers:

Question: What are your organisation’s advantages in relation to your competitors in the training market?



Source: CVTS2rev survey of providers (%)

‘Quality’ clearly is the item mentioned most often as being important. 87% of all providers in the countries covered by our study consider quality as being very important, another 11% as important. 93% of both Czech and Lithuanian providers consider quality as being very important, while the figures for Austrian providers (81%) are the lowest of all countries. ‘Development of tailor-made seminars’, ‘image of our organisation’, ‘expected benefit in the workplace’ and ‘flexibility and quickness of the provision’ are following rather jointly with some

distance to 'quality'. The importance of tailor-made seminars is again confirmed as being very important with 60% of all agreements. Exceptions are the Czech and Danish providers who consider tailor-made seminars as much less important. Another interesting finding is that Italian and especially French providers do not see their strength by providing CVT with 'benefits in the workplace'. Only 13 per cent of the French providers (30% in Italy) consider this as being very important, while the figures in almost all other countries are close to 80%. Perhaps Italy and France are governed by a strong school-based or even academic understanding of learning, which seeks not for direct benefits in the workplace, even in the case of enterprise-provided training.

It is also astonishing that only 23% of all providers consider 'price' as very important, with some differences between countries: 47% in Italy, 27% in Germany, 24% in the Czech Republic, 23% in France, 20% in Lithuania, 16% in Denmark and 4% in Austria. 'Price', together with 'belonging to networks' (very important: 21%), are ranked lowest before 'location of our organisation'. The high importance of prices in Italy might be considered as further support of CVTS2 data, indicating that enterprises' costs of CVT in Italy are too high in European comparison: Cost per hour of training in Italy are highest in Europe (47 PPS), with all other countries well below (AT: 24, CZ: 15, DE: 33, DK: 29, FR: 18, LT: 9 - in PPS). Some French and German experts reported in the interviews on price dumping, because of increased competition (see German interview report, p. 8 and French interview report, p. 9). This tendency was at least not confirmed by the results of our CVTS2rev survey. Despite the frequently heard opinion that networks are increasingly important, only in Italy (43%) and Denmark (42%) networks are very high ranked.

Summary: The increasing competition seems to be focused on quality and on tailor-made seminars by institutions with a good image

Almost of one voice suppliers agree that there is increasing competition in the field of enterprise-provided training. The reasons given for this, however, differ. It is not clear if the reasons for increasing competition can be found in shrinking and restructured public training markets, increasing numbers of providers or in the increasing cost awareness of enterprises. Nonetheless, except the Italian providers, the majority of providers in the countries involved in our research intends to increase their engagement in this field of training. Most European providers rank highest the provision of good quality courses, offering tailor-made courses and having a good organisational image. These are the advantages that the providers consider as being important for succeeding within this increased competition.

2.1.5 Is the duration of training decreasing or increasing?

Some partners inform in their interview reports about a trend towards shorter courses:

- "In year 1993, when we were starting, and in following 5 years there were courses shorter than 3 days an exception. Nowadays we appreciate as success when the course is longer than 2 days. The pressure on effectiveness is enormous and we really make big effort to receive the little part of time, which customers are willing to give us." (provider in the Czech interview report, pp 11-12)
- "What we used to do in three days, it should now be done into two...we got into a rather strange situation" (provider in the French interview report, p. 9)
- "Private providers typically deliver shorter courses and conferences. These usually have duration of two or three days. A lot of providers are also selling modular course programmes which totally amount to two weeks." (Danish interview report, pp. 15-16)

While the Danish research team characterises short courses of two or three days as typical for private providers, the French and Czech providers see a general trend towards shorter courses. Some providers in Germany reported a trend of offering enterprise-financed courses in the leisure time of employees, although the majority of courses still seems to take place within

paid working-time. Generally, increasing cost awareness of enterprises seems to result in a certain pressure to minimize the duration of training, except when the duration of training is fixed by any regulation or other standards.

Summary: Time structures seem partly to change towards shorter courses, which are sometimes offered within leisure time of employees but not mostly.

There is no strong general trend observable for all countries. Even within countries no uniform picture is given. Nonetheless, there is some indication that the duration of many courses is shorter now, which seems partly to be connected to an increase of modularised courses.

2.1.6 Do enterprises provide CVT as a short-term reaction or as a long-term strategy?

We asked all providers about their experience whether the provision of training by the enterprises is a rather short-term reaction or the result of a long-term strategy:

Question: Can the training provided by the enterprises you cooperate with be considered as short-term reaction or long-term strategy:

	AT	CZ	DK	FR	DE	IT	LT	Total
Short-term reaction	43	33	42	43	65	57	83	52
Long-term strategy	50	66	55	54	35	43	17	46
No answer	8	1	3	3	0	0	0	2
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: CVTS2rev survey of providers (%)

It is quite difficult to explain these results without further research. It is also not unlikely that enterprises make use of long-term strategies and short-term reactions at the same time, e.g. for different types of training. Nonetheless, this question gives at least an impression about general tendencies in the different countries.

There is a majority for short-term reaction in total, but the results are separating the countries into two groups. While Austria, the Czech Republic, Denmark and France indicate a majority for long-term strategy, Germany, Italy and Lithuania report about a majority for short-term reaction. From the point of view of providers, especially Lithuanian enterprises (83%) seem to be strongly focused on a short-term reaction, while the enterprises in the Czech Republic (33%) constitute the other extreme. Countries differ widely regarding time structures and planning processes. The difference between France and Denmark on the one side and Germany on the other side seems to be explainable, because of the rather formal CVT systems in France and Denmark with national training funds and a rather voluntaristic further training market in Germany. Nonetheless, one might have expected even higher figures of long-term strategy for Denmark and France. The Czech results are supported by the results of the interviews with enterprises, in which the Czech enterprises clearly indicated preferring stable long-term co-operations with just a few well-known providers. Again, the Czech Republic and Lithuania differ from one another, as do Germany and Austria, contradicting the frequent assumption of substantial similarity because of their geo-political positions.

Summary: The provision of training oscillates in the different countries between short-term reactions and long-term strategies

The form of providing CVT seems to be rather dichotomic when looking at enterprises in different countries. From the point of view of suppliers, German, Italian and especially Lithuanian enterprises seem to prefer short-term reactions, while Austrian, French, Danish and especially Czech enterprise seem to prefer long-term strategies in planning CVT. However, the results need further research and context information in order to explain them more in detail.

2.1.7 Do providers certify enterprise-based training?

Most providers issue certificates for their participants:

Question: Do you offer certificates to employees of enterprises?

	AT	CZ	DK	FR	DE	IT	LT	Total
Certificates about Participation	73	69	90	80	91	73	93	81
Certificates based on examinations	50	65	81	27	56	23	87	55
Preparation for external examinations	27	24	48	23	38	13	27	28

Source: CVTS2rev survey of providers (% , multiple answers possible)

Providers in Lithuania (93%), Germany (91%) and Denmark (90%) are very engaged in certifying the learning of their participants. Austria (73%) and the Czech Republic (69%) are much less inclined here. The percentage of providers who offer at least 50% of their participants a participation certificate ranges from 42% in the Czech Republic to 73% in Lithuania (AT: 46%, DK: 52%, IT: 60%, FR: 67%, DE: 71%). Thus most participants in almost all countries receive at least a participation certificate when taking part in the courses of the suppliers.

Examinations are part of the training programmes of providers mostly in Lithuania (87%), Denmark (81%) and the Czech Republic (65%), while Italian (23%) and French (27%) providers do not very often make examinations. An explanation might be that such examinations are less important in France and Italy, because the certificates of the IVT system are much more important than the certificates of the CVT system. The percentage of providers who offer at least 50% of their participants a certificate based on examination is only in the Czech Republic above 25% and lower than 15% in all other countries. Certificates based on examinations are thus rather rarely to be found within the field of CVT for enterprises. This should not lead to the assumption that certificates based on examinations are generally not important. Certification does not make sense for all training courses. Furthermore, a low share of courses with certificates on the whole programme of training providers and a low number of certificate holders is no valid indication of the importance of these certificates.

External examinations indicating providers' collaboration with other institutions (state agencies, equipment providers like Microsoft) in questions related to certification are most often used in Denmark (48%) and Germany (38%). The numbers of participants who receive such certificates are even lower than the figures for internal examinations of the providers.

Summary: Providers do very often offer participation certificates, but make only rarely examinations or prepare participants for external examinations

Almost all providers offer participation certificates and between 40% and 70% of the participants receive such certificates, which make participation certificates a frequently to find element of the CVT systems. A proof if the training really resulted in learning is not very often furnished. The majority of providers makes use of examinations (external or internal examinations), but the share of participants earning such certificates is not very high. This, again, indicates that in many countries and areas enterprise-based training has a rather informal character. As a matter of course enterprises are not very interested in certification, as this could foster mobility of their employees on the general labour market (e.g. enterprises could loose their training investments due to the mobility of employees after receiving training). Nonetheless, this certain lack of certification could be a problem both for the individual employees and for

the mobility and flexibility of the whole labour force. Overall, enterprise-provided further training seems not to promote a strong rise of formal qualifications of employees, but is rather focused on enterprise-specific work-based competencies.

2.1.8 Summary of the relations between CVT providers and enterprises

When looking at the summary table in this chapter it becomes visible that the differences between the training systems in different countries are significant.

The comparatively more systemized Danish relations between enterprises and providers seem to lead to a system in which all kinds of offers are frequently and intensively provided. The good results of Danish enterprises displayed by CVTS2-data (e.g. Danish radar charts of WP2) seem to be mirrored by a rather comprehensive provision of CVT by the Danish providers.

The Italian CVT training relations are also very different than any other training system. Italian providers offer much less seminars and less counselling activities, but they are more occupied with offering other services like need analysis for the enterprises. Perhaps this indicates that the level of professionalism in relation to CVT is rather low in Italian enterprises and Italian providers have to assist the enterprises a lot (e.g. in applying for different funding schemes). This could reduce the providers' ability to provide seminars and to offer counselling. In general, the Italian structures are characterised by a high level of informality (e.g. establishment of contacts by former participants, short-term provision of training and low level of providing certificates).

Austrian providers seem to be oriented towards informal structures as well. They have a strong focus on tailor-made seminars, which they establish on the basis of personal and direct contacts with enterprises. Austrian enterprises seem to have mostly a long-term strategy in planning training, but they are not very much interested in certificates or other formal elements of training. The CVTS2 results of German and Austrian enterprises are rather similar in many respects and the German and Austrian training providers have also rather similar views regarding the results of our CVTS2rev survey. There are of course important differences, but mostly they are comparatively small. Open seminars and thus training catalogues are a little bit more important in Germany, while Austrian providers are more oriented towards tailor-made offers and make thus more use of recommendations and contacts during congresses. Benefits in the workplace and flexible provision are even more important for German providers. Formal certificates are more important in Germany.

Czech providers are in some respects more similar to the German and Austrian providers than for example to the Lithuanian providers. They make use of open and tailor-made seminars rather equally. They establish contacts with enterprises very often by using search engines like *google* or *Yahoo!*, and the websites of the providers are important for enterprises to find providers. This is very different to all other countries. Like in Germany, the benefit in the workplace is ranked very high, which is very different from the French situation. Certificates are more often issued than in Austria, but less often than in Germany.

French providers are rather focused on tailor-made seminars. They often communicate with enterprises by using rather informal means. Flexible and quick provision is important, but the benefits in the workplace are of astonishingly low importance, like in Italy. Enterprises have a long-term strategy (perhaps because of the public funding system for CVT), although some French providers are reporting about increasingly shorter time spans of enterprises when planning their training. Only a minority of enterprises perceives a need for CVT certificates.

Lithuanian providers are also using rather informal means. Enterprises seem to have a short-term provision strategy. Nonetheless benefits in the workplace, the quality of training and certificates are of central importance. Especially when looking at the means of contacting enterprises Austrian and Lithuanian suppliers show similar approaches, while the similarities between the Czech Republic and Lithuania are rather small.

Summary table of main elements of the relations between CVT providers and enterprises

	AT	CZ	DK	FR	DE	IT	LT	Total
Offers								
Offering tailor-made seminars	+++	+++	+++	+++	+++	++	+++	+++
Offering open seminars	++	+++	+++	++	+++	++	+++	+++
Counselling	++	++	+++	++	++	++	+++	++
Other services	++	++	+++	++	++	+++	+	++
Establishing contacts								
Training catalogues	+	+	+++	+	++	+	+	++
Contacts with former participants	++	+	+	+	++	++	++	+
Recommendations	+++	++		+	++	+	++	+
Contacts during congresses	+		+			+	++	+
Search engines		+++			+	+		+
Competitive advantages								
Quality	+++	+++	+++	+++	+++	+++	+++	+++
Developing of tailor-made seminars	++	+	+	+++	++	++	++	++
Image of the provider	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++
Benefit in the workplace	++	+++	++		+++	+	+++	++
Flexible and quick provision	+	++	+	+++	++	+	++	++
Training strategy of enterprises								
Short-term reaction	+	+	+	+	++	++	+++	++
Long-term strategy	++	++	++	++	+	+		+
Certificates								
Certificates about participation	++	++	+++	+++	+++	++	+++	+++
Certificates based on examinations	+	++	+++	+	++		+++	++
Certificates for external examinations			+		+		+	+

Legend:

- +++ = values of more than 75%
- ++ = values of 51% to 75%
- + = values of 26% to 50%
- _ = values of 25% and less

2.2 Quality standards of the training providers

2.2.1 Are providers often quality-certified and are these certificates important for the enterprises?

Only in some countries the majority of providers is quality-certified:

Question: Is your organisation quality-certified?

	AT	CZ	DK	FR	DE	IT	LT	Total
Yes	69	42	42	37	97	70	43	57
No	15	56	55	63	3	30	57	40
No answer	15	3	3	0	0	0	0	3
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: CVTS2rev survey of providers (%)

Clearly, the rate of certification is highest in Germany, where almost every provider is certified. The majority of providers is also in Italy (70%) and Austria (69%) certified, while the shares in the other countries are well below 50% (Lithuania 43%, Czech Republic and Denmark 42%, France 37%). Thus the total figures are strongly influenced by the German rates, although the situations are very different in the other countries.

Different quality management systems can be differentiated. They can be primarily focused on external surveys (e.g. ISO 9000ff), internal surveys (EFQM) or a mixture of both (LQW). ISO 9001f is the system most frequently used by the suppliers in the seven countries:

Question: If you answered yes, what types of quality management do you use?

	AT	CZ	DK	FR	DE	IT	LT	Total
ISO 9001f	12	24	19	17	38	40	7	22
Self evaluation without external survey	62	1	3	20	53	10	0	21
Self evaluation with external survey	8	7	10	13	24	10	0	10
Sector-specific quality management	4	0	0	7	6	0	27	6
EFQM	12	1	10	0	3	10	0	5
LQW	0	0	0	0	12	0	0	2
Other	12	13	3	10	18	3	10	10

Source: CVTS2rev survey of providers (% of all providers asked, multiple answers possible)

On average in the countries involved in this study evaluation without external survey (21%) is much more often used than evaluation with external survey (10%), which is understandable because of the costs of external surveys. The finding holds true for Austria, France and Germany, where evaluation forms without external surveys are more often than surveys with external surveys. However, in Denmark and the Czech Republic evaluation with external survey is more often used than evaluation without external survey. Both categories can be considered as primary categories which cover the other categories, because ISO 9001f uses primarily external surveys, while EFQM uses primarily internal surveys. ISO 9001f is very popular in Italy and Germany, while less often used in Lithuania and Austria. Overall, EFQM is not very often used and has some importance in Austria, Denmark and Italy only. LQW is a German

management system which is used so far only in Germany and some parts of Austria. It covers 12% of the German training organisations.

The following elements are used for ensuring the quality of the training of the providers. It is not astonishing that receiving regular feedbacks by the participants is most frequently mentioned, because it is a rather easy and quick way for assessing the quality of training:

Question: Please indicate, what elements of a quality management you use in your organisation?

	AT	CZ	DK	FR	DE	IT	LT	Total
Regular procedures for having a feedback by the participants	81	86	94	80	100	90	100	90
Training for our full-term employees	69	79	81	67	94	77	100	81
Results of evaluations are systematically analysed and used for the following courses	65	65	90	77	94	37	93	74
Written concepts for the educational programmes/courses	69	71	65	70	85	70	70	71
Need assessment for our offers	77	40	74	70	77	73	87	71
Guidance and counselling for potential participants	65	64	97	43	82	40	100	70
Written documents about the organisational understanding of quality	65	61	58	37	71	70	60	60
Written requirement profiles for the selection of employees	50	43	61	63	65	33	77	56
Special person in charge for quality	35	21	48	40	68	77	90	54
Training for our free-lancers	62	78	23	30	41	23	93	50
Use of quality circles	39	64	45	33	29	17	47	39

Source: CVTS2rev survey of providers (% , multiple answers possible)

The rather high figures (ranging from 50% to 90%) indicate that providers use a lot of instruments in order to ensure quality, although this does not necessarily mean that they are officially quality-certified. The Lithuanian results (special person in charge for quality, training for free-lancers, written requirement profiles, training for employees, counselling for participants) are in many respects different to most other countries. It is not astonishing that overall full-term employees receive more often training (81% of providers do that) than free-lancers (50%). Quality circles seem to be too demanding for the majority of providers.

It was very interesting to ask the providers if the enterprises are interested in the quality management systems, which are used by the providers. The results raise big questions if the quality certificates are really necessary in the field of enterprise-based training:

Question: From your experience, do enterprises ask for a quality management certificate of your organisation?

	AT	CZ	DK	FR	DE	IT	LT	Total
Yes, often	8	10	3	3	15	17	0	8
Yes, rarely	23	29	36	33	44	33	10	30
No	58	58	58	60	41	50	90	59
No answer	12	3	3	3	0	0	0	3
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: CVTS2rev survey of providers (%)

The majority of providers in most countries reports that enterprises are not very interested in the certificates. Only 15% of the providers in Germany and 17% of the providers in Italy say that they have been frequently asked about their quality management certificate by enterprises, while in all other countries the figures are mostly well below 10%. Overall, 59% of the providers report about no such questions and only 30% report about rare questions in that direction. Public engagement especially in Germany and perhaps also in Italy seems to have stimulated the certification process, which is of no great interest to enterprises. They rather decide on other terms about the quality of the provider as indicated by the interviews:

- “Providers are informed about ISO possibilities, some of them have it at their disposal, nevertheless the majority of them finds priorities somewhere else and agree on an opinion that clients do not feel it as important.” (Czech interview report, p. 16)
- “According to most of the investigated training providers, quality assurance management and certification is not generally considered as determinant factor for the choice made by the enterprises concerning them. However, the quality assurance management and certification become important when the training organisations have to deal with invitations to tender. They are important for some large groups and industrialists.” (French interview report, p. 12)
- “The general trend in the interviewees was that most training providers are already quality-certified, but mostly they stress that the certification is not important for the enterprises.” (German interview report, p. 10)
- “The majority of the providers do not seek any general quality certification. Generally, it is assumed that systematic, high-quality work and continuous process improvement are necessary. These, however, would not be supported by certifications of the quality management. Especially smaller providers also point to the disproportionately high costs for the certification process. Moreover, several providers think, that the certification of the quality management would be neglected completely by the enterprise customers in their decision processes.” (Austrian interview report, p. 31)

There is a lot of information provided by the suppliers that most enterprises are not interested a lot in these certificates. Only in the case of official tenders of big size enterprises quality-certificates are often required. The qualification and experience of the trainers, the feedback of the participants or the enterprises’ own evaluations of seminars are of much more interest to the enterprises.

Summary: Enterprises are mostly not very interested in quality management systems, but are focused on other criteria

The interest of enterprises in quality management systems is rather low from the point of view of the providers. The demands of enterprises seem to be differently shaped despite the big efforts of national and European state agencies to implement and to promote quality management systems. Only in Germany and Italy there is some significant interest on these systems, while the enterprises of other countries are much less interested and give no indication of missing any public engagement to promote quality certificates. It seems to be the case that

instruments and systems have been constructed which are not really needed in this part of the training market. Public policy has promoted a supply of quality certificates which does not originate in enterprise demands. Some providers in Germany reported that they would not have been certified themselves if public policy and especially public tenders had not asked for such kind of certificates. Thus public did not look exactly at the demands of private customers or it did misinterpret the demand by assuming that quality certificates are the required element for fulfilling the demands for good quality training. Speaking from providers' experience enterprises are much more interested in the qualifications and professional experience of the trainers than looking for any formal certification of the provider. Further public engagement in promoting such kind of certificates does not seem to be very relevant for enterprise-based training. The demand is lower than supply in all countries involved (see table below).

Summary of quality standards of the training providers

	AT	CZ	DK	FR	DE	IT	LT	Total
Quality management systems								
Systems introduced by Providers (supply)	++	+	+	+	+++	++	+	++
Interest of enterprises on the systems (demand)	+	+	+	+	++	+		+

Legend:

+++ = values of more than 75%

++ = values of 51% to 75%

+ = values of 26% to 50%

_ = values of 25% and less

2.3 Innovation capacity of the training providers

2.3.1 What can be an innovation in this field of training?

Innovation is certainly a "buzz word" that comes easily up in any discussion about the economic development of a company, a country or the European Union. This frequent usage explains why this word is understood often very differently by different persons. We did not pre-define what innovation exactly is, but we allowed the interview partners by our open concept of "innovation in CVT" to clarify what they mean by innovation in training. The responses were very diverse: "The profile of the last innovative offer is so diverse by sole providers that any generalization becomes impossible" (Czech interview report, p. 19). Some providers stressed that offering training to enterprises makes permanent innovation necessary:

- "Innovations are mainly seen in the regrouping of existing contents and methods to accomplish in a new way the client's goals." (Austrian interview report, p. 23)
- "Some of the providers included the continual development of courses as a form of innovation while others limited the use of the term "innovation" to account for revolutionary new forms of shaping the CVT-supply." (Danish interview report, p 18)
- "Concerning innovation in training supply, most of the investigated training organisations underline that that innovation is permanently imbedded in the process of continuous development and adaptation of the training offers to meet at any moment the demands of their customers." (French interview report, p 16)

In this understanding innovation is a natural element of working with enterprises, which continuously have changing training needs to which providers must find the suitable (innovative) training offer. This must not necessarily mean to invent things continuously new, but rather to "regroup" existing contents and methods in new ways. Other providers stressed that innovation can tackle very different issues and levels of collaboration with enterprises:

- "On the micro-didactic level different ideas and experience exist. Some providers expect a move towards flexible tailor-made offers. The topic of conflict management is of increasing importance. Training and consultancy are increasingly intermingle to a joint offer. On the macro-didactic level is partly a need for public regulations which are used by the superiors in the enterprises expressed. For example Accounts for learning time could help to ease the pro-cyclical actions of German enterprises. It is expected that there will be mergers of providers. Co-operations and networks in the regions are more and more of crucial importance." (German interview report, p. 13)
- "There can be discerned the following innovations in the field of continuing vocational training provision: the innovations in the training contents and methods, development of the new training tools, innovations in the cooperation with the enterprises and social partners. (Lithuanian interview report, p. 17)
- "For what pertains to innovation, one has to highlight that the Funds⁷ are the Institutions which in Italy currently represent the most advanced innovation frontier, which directly or indirectly, have the financial power and the know-how to accomplish the so longed-for national system's renewal." (Italian interview report, p. 14)

Innovations are ranging from the practical arrangement of a course, special topics, new methods/tools, new time structures, new forms of organisation and networking, new financial resources or public regulations.

⁷ "In Italy many structures that operate within continuous and vocational training can be connected, in a more or less evident way, to the most representative social partners (employer and union organizations). Such structures carry out the greatest part of their own training activity addressed to firms using national and community public funds: Law no. 236; Law no. 53 (personal training); Inter-professional Funds for Continuous Formation; European Social Fund. The corporations operate on the whole national territory, they have a central office and some decentralized offices at regional and provincial level." (Italian interview report, pp 6-7)

Summary: It is inherent to the daily-practice of enterprise-based training that continuously a wide range of innovations are made

Overall, it is very important for the field of enterprise-based training to produce continuously innovations on different levels. The continuously changing training needs of enterprises stimulate such a big need for innovations. Innovations are naturally embedded in the work of training providers. It can mean to invent totally new training offers, but it is more often a new arrangement of known elements according to the changing need of enterprises.

2.3.2 What are the most important innovations right now?

The diverse results of the interviews lead to the proposal of different innovative items in the questionnaire:

Question: What are the most important questions concerning innovations in the field of company training for you?

	AT	CZ	DK	FR	DE	IT	LT	Total
	% R	% R	% R	% R	% R	% R	% R	% R
To secure knowledge transfer to workplace	62 (2)	36 (7)	58 (1)	37 (7)	65 (1)	60 (2)	80 (2)	57 (1)
To offer tailor-made offers	50 (3)	43 (3)	48 (2)	90 (1)	56 (2)	37 (6)	37 (7)	52 (2)
To assess the needs for training	27 (7)	58 (1)	29 (5)	63 (3)	50 (3)	43 (4)	50 (4)	46 (3)
To organise training in a more flexible way	23 (9)	46 (2)	39 (3)	73 (2)	21 (10)	67 (1)	43 (6)	45 (4)
To measure the outcome of training	65 (1)	40 (4)	10 (12)	43 (5)	50 (3)	53 (3)	7 (12)	38 (5)
To implement blended learning*	-	26 (9)	19 (7)	57 (4)	32 (8)	20 (10)	93 (1)	35 (6)
To implement new methods in the training	23 (9)	39 (5)	29 (5)	27 (10)	44 (4)	13 (13)	50 (4)	32 (7)
To integrate new technological developments in training	12 (11)	22 (10)	16 (8)	37 (7)	35 (7)	30 (7)	57 (3)	30 (8)
To reduce costs	42 (5)	29 (8)	13 (11)	30 (9)	32 (8)	40 (5)	20 (9)	29 (9)
To offer more counselling around training	31 (6)	22 (10)	10 (12)	43 (5)	41 (6)	20 (10)	27 (8)	28 (10)
To customize to changing work organisations	46 (4)	17 (12)	32 (4)	23 (12)	44 (4)	23 (9)	7 (12)	27 (11)
To integrate new research results	27 (7)	39 (5)	16 (8)	27 (10)	15 (11)	20 (10)	10 (11)	22 (12)
To adapt new legislative requirement	0 (12)	18 (11)	16 (8)	20 (13)	9 (12)	30 (7)	20 (9)	16 (13)

Source:CVTS2rev survey of providers (% , multiple answers possible, ranking position)

* Not asked in Austria

Securing knowledge transfer to the workplace is the field of innovation mentioned most often by the providers. Only the Czech and French providers do not attach high priority to innovations in this transfer area. Tailor-made courses are of great interest in France (90%) and to a certain degree in all other countries than Italy and Lithuania. Lithuanian providers are very much interested in blended learning (93%) and new technological developments (57%). These popular elements, which are often connected with innovation, are of much less importance in all other countries. France is the only other country where providers report a high interest in

implementing blended learning (57%). Assessing the needs for training is considered as being important by most countries, in particular in France and the Czech Republic. Measuring the outcome of training is high on the innovation agenda of Austrian providers (65%), while only 7% of the Lithuanian providers name this among the most important questions regarding innovation. Rather rarely the integration of new research results (22% in total, highest in the Czech Republic with 39%) and the adaptation of new legislative requirements (16% in total, highest in Italy with 30%) are mentioned.

Again, the results are rather heterogeneous, which shows that the innovations needed from the point of view of providers are rather different in the countries.

Summary: The most important innovations are depending very much on the national situation, but securing the knowledge transfer to the workplace, offering tailor-made seminars and assessing training needs are most frequently mentioned by the providers

Overall, the responses vary a lot between the countries which indicates that there is yet no such thing as a European CVT market, but rather diverse fields of training according to the nationally shaped demands of enterprises for training. Technological innovations and especially blended learning are of major interest only for Lithuanian and French suppliers, while most suppliers from other countries do not expect important innovations in these areas.

2.3.3 What are barriers for innovations?

Tight financial resources of enterprises and state interventions are mentioned as handicaps for innovations in CVT in Denmark, France and Lithuania:

- “All the interviewed providers indicated, that the most important limitation for the innovations in training is the shortage of the financial resources.” (Lithuanian interview report, p. 15)
- “There are constraints to their innovative capacity in this domain such as: the budgetary constraints amplified by the reduced public funding (for both training and enterprises), the relatively high costs of tailor-made forms of training, the omnipresence of social legislation connected with regulating investment in training.” (French interview report, p. 16)
- “The institutionalised framework conditions limit the individual public provider’s capability of being content-innovative. If a broad demand for new content in the CVT-course is identified, lots of formal procedures must be undertaken in order to secure that the new courses are publicly supported. This limits the public provision’s capability to support branches and enterprises with a fast moving and ongoing change in demand for qualifications and CVT. However the public providers have a degree of freedom and flexibility through their revenue funded course activity.” (Danish interview report, p. 18)

Finances are of course an important factor for innovations. Providers in tight financial situations seem not to be willing to take major risks by putting forward innovations with an uncertain outcome in terms of future turnover. But some innovations might be necessary to survive in a market with increasing competition. This constitutes a certain dilemma for the providers. A similar dilemma is constituted by the public regulation which on the one side guarantees some degree of freedom and flexibility for being potentially innovative, while on the other side the formal procedures connected to public regulation limit the space for being innovative.

Overall, the innovation capacity of suppliers is highly influenced by external factors like public regulations, the financing of CVT and the dedication and interests of enterprises:

- “Although an innovative project can be planned at the drawing board, the implementation then fails because of inadequate support on the part of persons for operation.” (Austrian interview report, p. 26)

Summary: Beside a lack of support of innovations by enterprises tight financial resources and complicated public regulations can be major obstacles for making innovations

Innovation in CVT is a very complex issue. There are certain dilemmas. For example, tight public regulations can minimize the free space for innovations, although at the same time public regulation and especially public funding can offer financial resources for being innovative. Thus it is very difficult to say in a simple way, what is acting a major obstacle or promoter for innovations. It is very important that providers have the support and the dedication of at least some enterprises for implementing innovations despite the risks involved when implementing an innovation.

Summary table: Innovation capacity of the training providers

	AT	CZ	DK	FR	DE	IT	LT	Total
Main fields for innovations								
Knowledge transfer to the workplace	++	+	++	+	++	++	+++	++
Offering tailor-made seminars	+	+	+		++	+	+	++
Assessing the training needs	+	++	+	++	+	+	+	+
Organising training in a more flexible way		+	+	++		++	+	+
Measuring the outcomes of training	++	+		+	+	++		+
Barriers for innovations								
Too tight financial resources	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na
Too tight public regulation	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na
Support of enterprises	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na

Legend:

+++ = values of more than 75%

++ = values of 51% to 75%

+ = values of 26% to 50%

_ = values of 25% and less

na: No qualitative data available

3. Final conclusions

Although it is very difficult to find a balance between qualitative and quantitative data from seven countries, the work is worthwhile. To the best of our knowledge there is no study similar to ours on the views and the structure of providers of enterprise-based training in Europe. Implementing a survey on provider level like the CVT surveys on enterprise level would be very informative and valuable. A comparison of enterprise data, provider data and individual data would be very interesting and supportive of future research in the field of CVT. The combination of such different data sets would strengthen the analysis and deliver important information for interpreting and explaining the results. This would make the picture of enterprise-based training much clearer and less based on provisional assumptions and vague explanations. Our surveys give a small, but informative impression about the value of such a survey.

The overall similarities between all countries involved in our project are rather small - differences prevail. So far, there is no such thing like a unified European CVT provider market visible, but rather heterogeneous relations between enterprises and providers in the seven countries involved in our study. This result confirms the results of the CVTS2-data in the respect of huge differences between the countries, supported by providers' view on the provision of enterprise-based CVT. In particular Denmark and Italy seem to have special positions in many respects. The country groups based on the results of CVTS2-data (clusters of countries distinguished according to their performance on key indicators of CVTS, see WP2 of phase 1⁸) are only partly mirrored the results of this synthesis report. Groups of changing consistency can be found when looking at different topics, but do not overarch different topics.

Overall, it became clear that a variety of informal and formal means and combinations of different measures are very important in the field of enterprise-based CVT. Attempts to systematize and structure the training market by public initiatives seem to lead to some success in terms of transparency and reasonable prices when looking at the Danish CVT system. On the other hand, public engagement in implementing quality assurance systems is a rather negative example, because the engagement seems not to meet the real interest of enterprises. For example, enterprises are more interested in the qualification and professional experience of trainers than in the existence of any quality certificate. Most suppliers also expect an increased competition within this very dynamic field of training, in which innovations are rather a daily-practice than an extraordinary event.

It will be very interesting to look at the results of WP 9 and 10 of our project. Especially the comparison between the results of the expert interviews with the enterprises and the results displayed by our synthesis report should be very interesting and instructive for further conclusions. Perhaps, the results of WP 9 and 10 will also shed more light on the results of this synthesis report and enhance an improved and revised interpretation of the results of WP 8.

⁸ Friederike Behringer, Bernd Käpplinger, Dick Moraal, Gudrun Schönfeld: Striking Differences in Continuing Training in Enterprises across Europe: Comprehensive Overview of Key Results of CVTS 2. Bonn 2005. URL: http://www.bibb.de/dokumente/pdf/a23_wlk_foko6_CVTS2rev_overview-key-results_2005.pdf [accessed 30 October 2006]

4. Summary of questions and answers (Q & A)

Q: Are tailor-made or open seminars more important?

A: Tailor-made and open seminars are rather equally important

Q: Is counselling important while providing enterprise-based training?

A: Giving counselling and advice is very often a regular by-product of providers when offering training to enterprises

Q: Co-operation between enterprises and providers: Formal or informal relations?

A: Summary: The relationships between enterprises and providers are mostly rather informal

Q: Is there increasing or decreasing competition in the CVT market?

A: The increasing competition seems to be focused on quality and on tailor-made seminars by institutions with a good image

Q: Is the duration of training decreasing or increasing?

A: Time structures seem partly to change towards shorter courses which are sometimes offered within leisure time of employees but not mostly.

Q: Do enterprises provide CVT as a short-term reaction or as a long-term strategy?

A: The provision of training oscillates in the different countries between short-term reactions and long-term strategies

Q: Do providers certify enterprise-based training?

A: Providers do very often offer participation certificates, but make only rarely examinations or prepare participants for external examinations

Q: Are providers often quality-certified and are these certificates important for the enterprises?

A: Enterprises are mostly not very interested in quality management systems, but are focused on other criteria

Q: What can be an innovation in this field of training?

A: It is inherent to the daily-practice of enterprise-based training that continuously a wide range of innovations are made

Q: What are the most important innovations right now?

A: The most important innovations are depending very much on the national situation, but securing the knowledge transfer to the workplace, offering tailor-made seminars and assessing training needs are most frequently mentioned by the providers

Q: What are barriers for innovations?

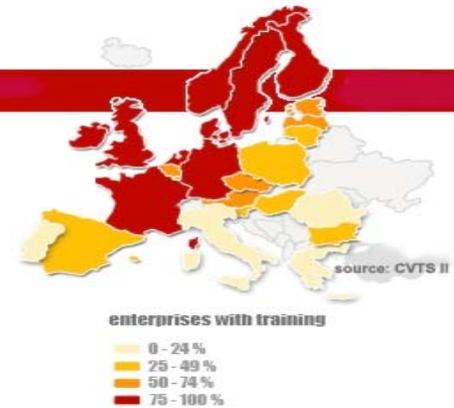
A: Beside a lack of support of innovations by enterprises tight financial resources and complicated public regulations can be major obstacles for making innovations

Annex 1: National interview reports of Austria, the Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy and Lithuania

National interview report of Austria

C V T S REVISITED

**Continuing Vocational Training in Europe
Benchmarks and Best Practice**



Country specific thematic analysis of continuing vocational training on the basis of CVTS2 and modelling of CVT-structures

CVTS2 revisited

Phase 2/Work package 8 – Part 1

Offering Training for Enterprises – Austrian Providers' Views

June 2006

Günter Hefler

with the collaboration of Erk Schilder and Sigrid Nindl

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1 The market for company training in Austria

1.1 Historical background and framework of training provisions for companies⁹

In a sharp contrast to primary and professional education, the Austrian state has historically not intervened in general adult education. The classical liberal ideology of social activities free of any state influence has remained very important in shaping adult education policy. In nearly all other fields of educational, economic and social policy, models of state intervention has been very important, at least for certain time periods, since the era of classical liberalism in Austria in the 1860s and 1870s.

According to traditional distinctions of the German-speaking world's "liberal" political theory, adult education belongs to society's social sphere, not the state sphere. In Austria, since the liberal reforms of 1867, the state –as far as adults are concerned – guarantees the freedom to teach anything to anyone. Any group with particular interests – friendly societies, churches, ethnic solidarity organisations, political parties, labour unions and so on – are allowed to organise learning activities. As with all other civil rights, adult education is granted only as a right within the general legal system. Traditionally, conflicting interpretations have arisen in political contexts, when accusations of threatening public security or of violating morality confront the liberal rights.

From a classical liberal perspective, absence of state intervention also means absence of public funding. Adult education has been seen as an activity financed by individuals and private organisations. Only on a local level, historically considered as an area of citizen self-organisation, public institutions may take a role in supporting adult education initiatives. Therefore, municipalities have supported adult education as part of the general policy encouraging all kinds of cultural activities from theatres to summer festivals.

This view of adult education as a non-state activity has been very important throughout Austrian history. After World War II, anti-interventionist views were reinforced by the experiences under National Socialism when all adult education institutions were forced to integrate themselves into the Nazi-government (so called "Gleichschaltung").

In 1975, when the only existing law¹⁰ on general adult education was enacted, its main function was to provide a legal base for the central government's regular financial support for general adult education. Autonomy of the traditional adult education sector was secured by designating an umbrella organisation, Austrian Conference of Adult Education Institutions (KEBÖ), to allocate public funds among individual institutions. In 1975, adult education funding was part of the increasing state support for cultural activities in general and political education in particular (e.g. by initiating, in 1972, funding for educational institutions of the political parties)¹¹.

Given this historical background, non-governmental organisations are of central importance in the field of general and professional further education. Here, a spectrum of non-profit institutions exists, including historical friendly societies to support general adult education (e.g. Volkshochschulen), the social partner organisations (e.g. BFI, WIFI), and as well as churches. In the past two decades, many for-profit and non-profit training providers have been established. The more traditional non-profit training providers are organized in regional and national umbrella organisations. Nine different national umbrella organisations are unified in the Austrian Conference of Adult Education Institutions

⁹ Parts of this section are presented also in Markowitsch, Jörg; Benda-Kahri, Silvia and Hefler, Günter (2006): National Report Austria. Sub-projet 1. Project LLL 2010 within the 6th framework.

¹⁰ Erwachsenenbildungs-Förderungsgesetz (Law for Promotion Measures in Adult Education) (enacted 14.04.1975). In 2004, 11.8 million Euro has been distributed according to this law. For comparison: Political education of the parties has been co-funded by 8.5 million Euro in the same year.

¹¹

(KEBÖ). Their members have a total of 4,500 full-time employees and around 85,000 part-time employees and volunteers¹².

In regards to the development of training for various enterprises, in the early 1960s, a new era began with the establishment of regional network of training providers of the Austrian Social Partners – the Berufsförderungsinstitut (BFI) of the Chamber of Labour and the Austrian Trade Union Association and the Wirtschaftsförderungsinstitut (WIFI) of the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber. These two, rather large, specialized training institutions have grown to provide together nearly a third of all vocational training hours in Austria (BFI: 14 percent; WIFI: 17 percent)¹³. Approximately 19 percent of all external course hours of Austrian enterprises with more than 10 employees are provided by the WIFI (Source: CVTS II). Especially for smaller and medium enterprises, the WIFI and, in particular, its open training program is the main training provider.

In the late 1960s and 1970s, management training – including all forms of social skills training and group dynamic training – started to develop as its own field of activity. A constantly increasing number of providers offer management trainings of all kinds, first mainly to profit organisation, later also to non-profit organisations and the public administration. Various institutions – especially the ÖAGG¹⁴, the ÖGGO¹⁵ and the Hernstein Management Institute, founded in 1966 and owned by the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber --- have played a dominant role in train-the-trainer offers. These institutions are still key nodes in professional networks of trainers in the field of company training. According to experts' opinion, the number of training providers in the sector still seems to be increasing. Until now, provision of management training is not regulated. There are no compulsory standards shaping access to the management training profession. Different forms of quality assessment and accreditation been developed only recently. Universities have played a marginal role in the development of training offers for enterprises and in “train-the-trainer” programs – only with the founding of the training institute, ÖGGO, did a university (Universität Klagenfurt) play an important part.

Many providers of company training only have a small core staff; training offers are mainly provided in cooperation with freelance trainers. Trainers often work for more than one training provider. It is very common for a trainer to own a small institute and also work as a freelancer for other training providers. Normally, contracts regulate the relationship between the freelancer and the contracting institutions. (For example, the freelancer receives only a share of the training fee; if the customer places further orders, premiums must be paid to the provider with the initial contract with the customer.) In a narrow sense, each freelance trainer can be seen as a training provider with particular customers. Little is known about the pool of professional trainers primarily engaged in company training. It is important, however, to consider that the number of providers – functioning as a point of sale – does not say much about the number of professionals working in the company training field.

The co-existence of the two levels – providers as legal organisations, freelance providers working for different organisations – is a reason why the training market for enterprises is seen as highly complex and lacking transparency. The lack of transparency is counterbalanced partly by a dense network of relationships between professionals in the field that personally connect individual trainers and human resource development (HRD) managers. Many HRD managers become freelance trainers in the course of their professional career, some freelance trainers also go back to enterprises and take over positions in HRD departments.

¹² Statistik Austria (2005): Österreichische Kulturstatistik. Wien

¹³ Source: Statistik Austria (2005) : Erhebung zum Lebenslangen Lernen 2003. Wien.

¹⁴ Österreichischer Arbeitskreis für Gruppentherapie und Gruppendynamik (Austrian Association for Group Psychotherapy and Group Dynamics) (cf. www.oeagg.at)

¹⁵ Österreichische Gesellschaft für Gruppendynamik und Organisationsberatung (Austrian Society for Group Dynamics and Organizational Dynamics) (cf. www.oggo.at).

Besides general management training (including all forms of social skills training), many specialized providers have entered the market. There are specialized providers in rather traditional fields such as language training, sales training or project management. An important group are providers of training in the field of IT including special fields such as Auto-CAD trainings and similar computer-based tools. Another increasing group of providers offer special forms of social skills training (e.g. outdoor training, creativity training).

The increased public investment in labour market policy has created a unique field of training providers and professional trainers that work mainly with training offers for unemployed.

In Austria, labour market policy has been very important since World War II. From the 1970s until the middle of the 1980s, labour market policy was mainly understood within the framework of Austro-Keynesianism: fighting against unemployment primarily through antic-cyclical enlargement of public investments. In the 1970s, institutions for professional training were founded to overcome imbalances between available qualifications of the workforce and those skills needed by employers. Originally, primarily long-term retraining programs had been offered for employed and unemployed in declining professions (e.g. mining and so on). To implement these programs, legal foundation were enacted (e.g. Arbeitsmarktförderungsgesetz 1968). In the 1980s, programs were established to support long-term unemployed. With the membership in the EU, the Austro-Keynesian paradigm lost its influence. Active labour market policies, focusing on the employability and activation of the unemployed, have become step-by-step the major force within employment policy. Further training of the unemployed is crucial therefore. Austria is now completely in line with European Labour Market Policy¹⁶. As a consequence, the number of people in training activities has increased from 12,000 (yearly average of participants at a given moment) in 1990 to 49,000 in 2005. As many as 155,000 people were included in training measures in 2005 (around 5 percent of the working population). Public spending on training for unemployed is around a fifth of the total spending on further training in Austria and 25 times as much as public spending on general adult education. Because of these high number of participants, training for unemployed has become a major point of reference for life long learning in public discourse and is associated mainly with negative attributes such as forced participation in training courses and useless training offers.

Within labour market policy, only a small percentage of the budget is foreseen for individually chosen training measures found on the open seminar market (in 2004: 34 million Euro or 15 percent of the budget for vocational training). Most funds are spent for training offers exclusively designed for the unemployed. Training providers must succeed in highly competitive tendering procedures and, in the past few years, have faced a strong pressure to reduce prices. Beside the BFI and WIFI, a number of for-profit and non-profit training providers are specialized in providing training courses for the unemployed. There is only a small intersection between training providers working for companies and training providers working on trainings of the unemployed.

1.2 Training providers in Austria and volume and structure of the CVT Market

Training providers are not counted in any specialized official statistic. No centralized database exists. The public employment service has started developing a provider database. On a voluntary basis, training providers can supply company information. Providers may be interested in registering in the database, if they offer trainings - at least partly - toward individuals.

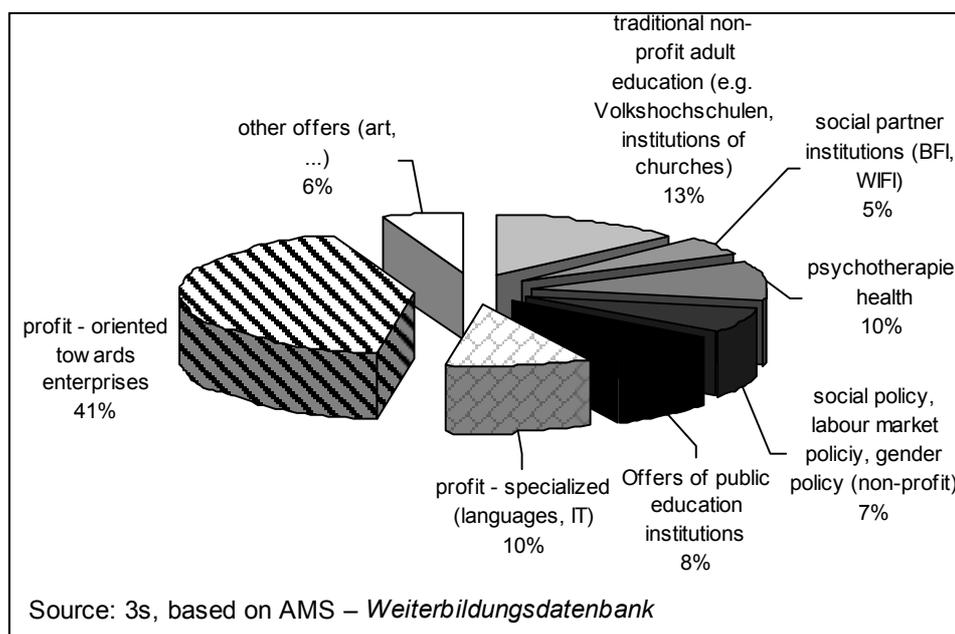
Using this database as a starting point, 3s research laboratory has established a research data set¹⁷ on Austrian training providers. Interpretation of this data can give a rough overview on the number of training providers.

¹⁶ cf. www.eu-employment-observatory.net

¹⁷ Data collected from www.weiterbildungsdatenbank.at and from on-line research. The data set was used to select providers for the written survey, which is also part of the work package 8 of the project CVTS revisited.

In total, information on more than 2,100 training providers has been collected. The actual number should be quite a bit higher, especially because many training providers in the non-profit (e.g. universities with training offers¹⁸) and the for-profit sector are not yet covered. Not included are freelance trainers who have not founded their own company. For some types of training providers – especially training offers made by manufacturers – only a rather small number of entries have been collected. The actual number of legal entities (or regional branches of legal entities) should be much higher than the number of entries and should be clearly above 4,000 providers.

Figure 1: Institutions of Adult Education and Further Training in Austria



The adult education and training providers are labelled with nine main categories; of course, some are mainly oriented toward specific enterprises as customers. Around 50 percent of all providers are likely to provide most of their training to businesses. Local branches of the social partner institutions – especially branches of WIFI from Austrian Federal Economic Chamber – are also oriented towards businesses as customers (even when, as frequently happens, enterprises only pay for an individual employee’s courses.).

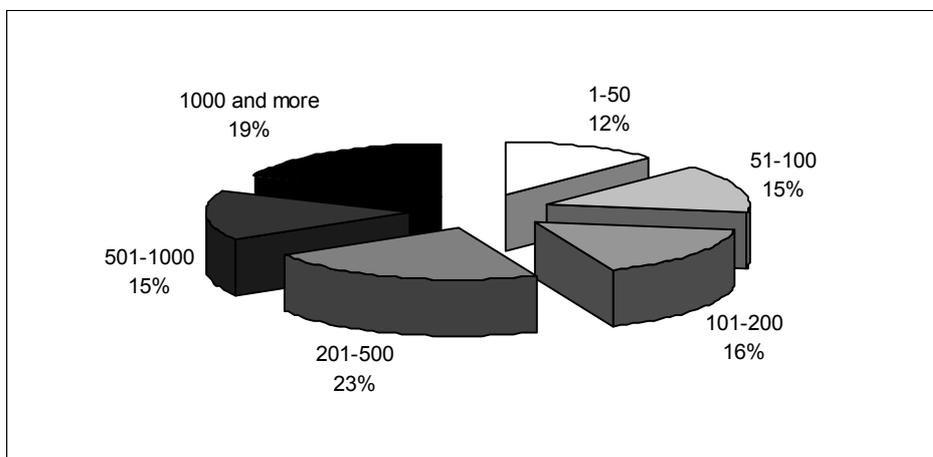
A significant number of providers surveyed probably do not regularly supply training to enterprises. There are the quite large group of traditional institutions of non-profit adult education. The training offers in the field of health and psychotherapy and related subjects is quickly evolving. A relatively high number of non-profit organisations active with social issues, labour market policies and gender policies, also offer training courses financed primarily with public funds. The number of offers by pub-

¹⁸ Until now, there is no clear definition of the statistical unit “training provider”. In the database, all regional branches of training suppliers are counted. In regards to universities, all training offers with their own organisational structure are counted separately.

lic education institutions (e.g. university departments or Universities of Applied Sciences) is also relatively high and may be underestimated by the current database.¹⁹

A high percentage (43 percent) of providers oriented mainly towards enterprises have only a few trainings with not more than 200 participants a year. A little more than a third has 200 to 1000 participants a year. Only around a fifth of the providers have more than 1000 participants. Nearly all training providers of this group are small enterprises with a small number of fixed employees; 77 percent have no more than 5 employees. Trainings are, in the majority of cases, organised through freelance trainers. Also, two-thirds of training providers with more than 1000 participants do not have more than five stable employees. Institutions with a high number of employees are not found in this field but among the institutions of the social partners and the traditional providers of adult education.

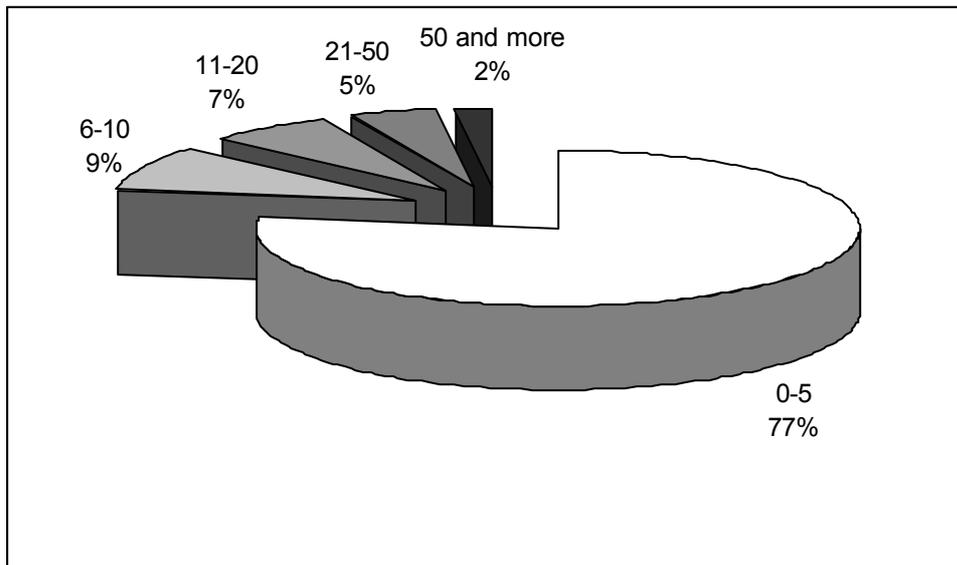
Figure 2: Providers of enterprise training – number of participants



Source: 3s, based on AMS – Weiterbildungsdatenbank

¹⁹ In the case of study programs once again, the question of statistical units is crucial. If all offers by one university are counted as one – and not offer-by-offer – the number of units is of course only a small percentage of the value reported.

Figure 3: Providers of enterprise training – number of employees (not including free-lancers)



Source: 3s, based on AMS – Weiterbildungsdatenbank

In Austria, expenditures on training can be only roughly estimated. The typical source for information on basic business figures on the branch level – a survey of the training suppliers by the statistical office – is missing. Therefore, for estimates of the volume of the training markets, it is necessary to make use of different surveys on spending of households, enterprises and the public employment service.

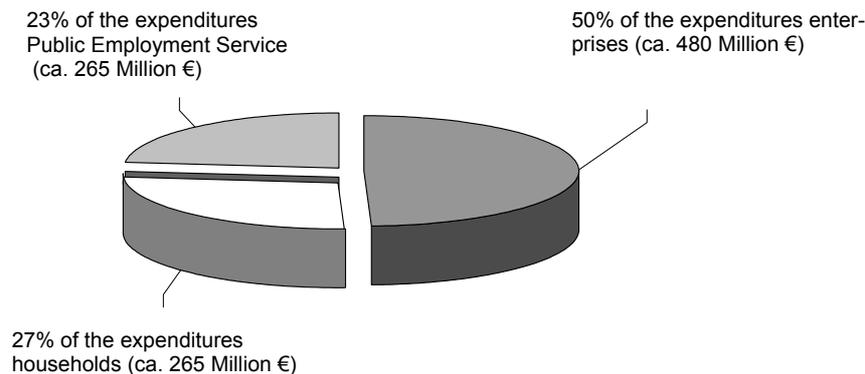
For 2004, Hefler & Markowitsch (2006)²⁰ has estimated the training market size as 970 million Euro. As far as possible, only payments for participation fees and trainers' remuneration are included. The goal was to estimate the volume of money available on the training market and not the total expenditure for training activities.

Approximately 50 percent of all expenditures on the training market comes from private enterprises. A rough quarter of the expenditures come from the public employment service²¹ and another quarter from private households.

²⁰ Details of the estimation process are presented in this article.

²¹ Only expenditures for CVT training are included, not the rather important expenditures for training offers concerning job search and professional self-orientation.

Figure 4 Estimated volume of Austrian Training Market (CVT) and sources of payments



Sources: Hefler & Markowitsch 2006

1.3 Recent trends in the market for continuing vocational training

As previously described, there is a rather limited availability of precise information on structures of Austria's market for continuing vocational training. The same is true for information on recent trends of the CVT market and its segments. The following section reviews arguments often discussed by professionals in the field or stressed in surveys on training providers and professionals. For the segments of Public Employment Service training and the individually-financed CVT, only some statements are presented. A more detailed picture is given for the market of training offers for private enterprises.

The training market for offers for unemployed is influenced by the following developments. The total amount spent is still increasing. For 2006, due to high unemployment figures and due to general elections expected in the autumn, budgets for training of the unemployed increased by around 60 percent in comparison to 2003 (a total of – including training measures and active job search measures – 355 million Euro is expected to be spent for the 185,000 participants). The market is still dominated by training offers that focus on general activation and intensification of job search activities. Public criticism has led to an integration of training elements (e.g. a number of hours of information technology/IT training) in the active labour search programs, but still a large part of training offers focus on job-seeking skills – programmes that provide vocational qualification or CVT haven't been enlarged by the same proportion as those that merely encourage more active job searches. In general, spending per participant has been decreasing during the past few years. This is an effect of shorter average duration of training measures but also an effect of falling prices for training offers. All training offers are subject to a call for tender. Despite a broad range of training activities that make quality aspects more important, the price remains the most important factor. Many well established institutions has lost major parts or all of their orders coming from the Public Employment Service, because they cannot compete with newly founded for-profit enterprises. "Newcomers" in the field of training for unemployed are seen partly as innovators in the field, but often high-risk endeavours, looking for maximum profit in a very short time, then disappearing rather quickly from the market. The price war between training suppliers of labour market oriented programs has caused a sharp decrease in wages for trainers. Even the introduction of higher qualification requirements (e.g. university degree, certified training qualifications, minimum years of professional experience) seems to fail to stop continuing reductions of average fees per hour of training. Many trainers suffer low incomes, unstable careers and involuntary non-standard employment (especially forms of false self-employment; i.e. formally working as a self-employed, freelancer; in reality, working as a dependent employee but without normally granted social rights, starting with employer-paid further education, paid holidays, sick leave or severance pays or guaranteed termination-notice period).

There are hints that vocational training activities financed privately have increased during the past years. The most reliable source on private spending is the survey on private consumption that uses day-to-day spending records. In regards to training directly linked to the occupation, an increase of 29 percent is reported from 1999/2000 to 2004/2005. But the data has to be used with care due to different concepts: more training activities which are recorded as free-time activities in previous surveys are now classified among general or occupational training activities. Spending on training activities that include traditional free-time activities have sharply decreased within the past years. Higher spending for training in direct connection to an actual or future occupation may be partly a result of increased public co-financing of CVT in the past years, primarily introduced by the Austrian Länder (provinces). Higher education institutions and non-profit organisations have increased course offers with a fairly high workload that lead to certified degrees.

Table 1: Spending for training of private households in Austria (1999/2000 and 2004/2005)

	1999/2000 (in million €)	2004/2005 (in million €)	change in five years
CVT (directly linked to occupation)	€ 94.1	€ 121.4	+29 percent
other training activities (but not leisure courses)	€ 30.7	€ 86.2	+181 percent
Leisure courses (e.g. sports, music lessons)	€ 329.6	€ 119.8	-64 percent
total spending recorded	€ 454.4	€ 327.5	-28 percent

Sources: Statistic Austria 2001 and 2006; own calculations

In the field of company training, at the moment, no information is available as to whether total spending for training of Austrian companies has increased or decreased during the past seven years. Not only the general trends are unknown, but also changes in the proportion of spending for internal training resources (internal training staff, training infrastructure) and spending for orders placed on the external training market. The same is true for the proportion between the traditional training courses and other activities in the field of HRD, including an increased use of counselling and coaching. Publication of CVTS III data in 2007 will provide, for the first time, insight on these issues.

In the absence of other sources, a survey of company training providers²² can give some orientation. Early in 2005, a large majority (77 percent) of company training providers in Austria, believed there would be an increased demand for service in company training for 2005 and 2006. This optimistic view seems to be remarkable not only in comparison to the much more pessimistic view of training providers in Germany (Graf 2004) but also in comparison to the developments in 2004. Only a small majority (52 percent) has stated a positive development of the market for company training in 2004, only 39 percent has reported increased revenue for 2004. More important seems the impression shared by 77 percent of the respondents, that companies had cut their training budgets in 2003 and 2004.

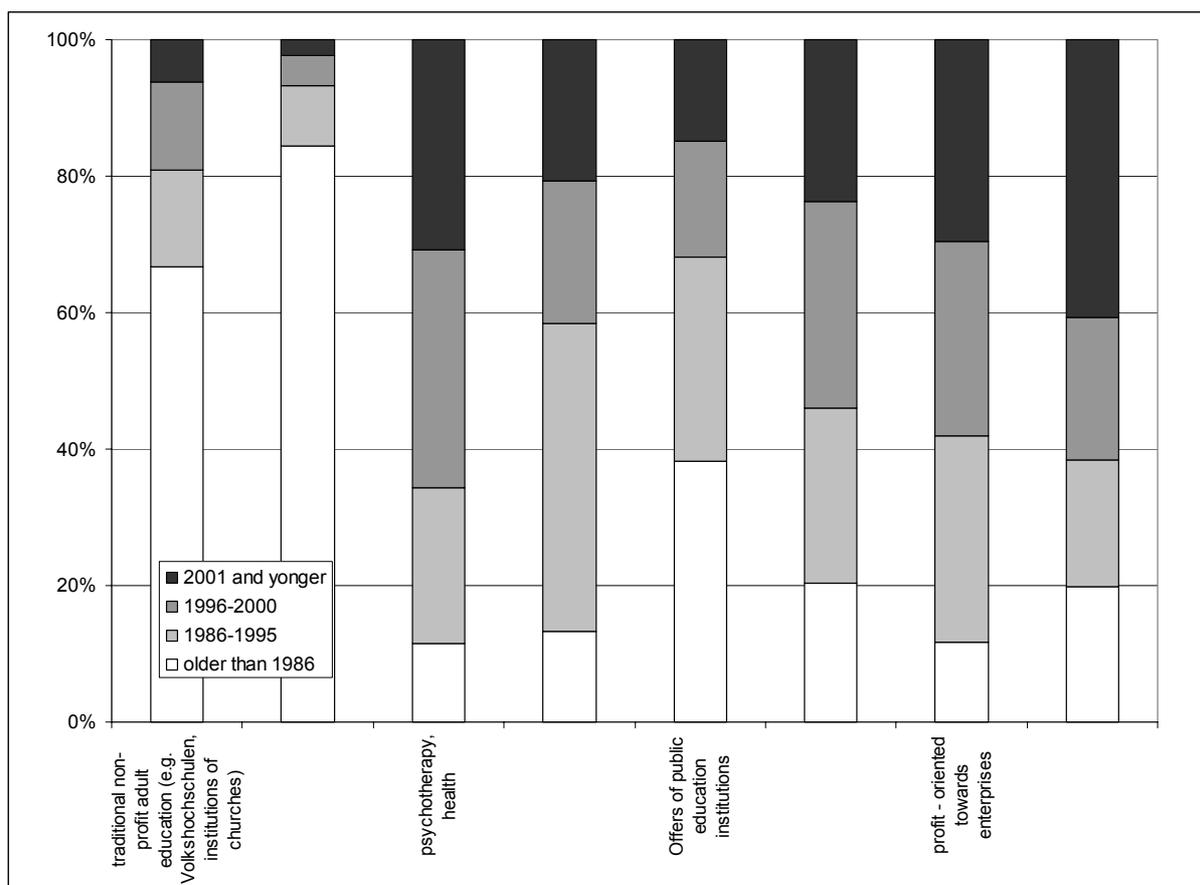
Professionals in the field still have the impression that the number of training providers and of individuals offering services in the field of training, counselling and coaching is sharply increasing. The situation in the market for company-related training services is often described as mainly

²² Markowitsch, Hefler (2005)

influenced by supply-side developments. The enterprises have not changed their behaviour, but increasing competition on the supply side leads to higher efforts in acquiring new orders and larger proportions of included additional services. A fairly high proportion of respondents believe, that some suppliers offer services at a price that does not cover their real expenses.

It is not known how many enterprises in the field of company training have been founded in the past five years and how many providers have disappeared during the same time. Figure 5 shows that more than a half of all providers for enterprise training started in the last decade, a quarter within the last 5 years. Large insolvencies are fairly infrequent on the training market: the low number of fixed employees makes training providers very flexible. Unsuccessful training providers often reduce their activity to nearly zero, while all their trainers - mostly self-employed - work elsewhere.

Figure 5 Founding years of adult education providers



Sources: Source: 3s, based on AMS – Weiterbildungsdatenbank

2 Austrian Providers' Views - Introduction

For this project, 12 providers of training for enterprises located in the Vienna area were interviewed, 11 interviews were face-to-face, and one was on the phone. One interview had to be excluded from the analysis because it lacked relevance. Also, the phone interview was not included in the final analysis.

Table 2 Share of training hours for different types of training providers (CVTS II) compared with the distribution of the interviews

	Public Schools	Universities	Specialized training facilities	Profit-oriented training providers	Manufacturer	Parent companies	Worker's organizations	Employer organizations	Other Providers
Proportion CVTS II	1 %	3 %	4 %	37 %	14 %	11 %	2 %	1 %	8 %
Interviews		Public 1		Profit 1 Profit 2 Profit 3 Profit 4 Profit 5 Profit 6	Manufacturer 1 Manufacturer 2	-	-	Social partner 1	-

The number of institution chosen for interviews in each group corresponds largely with the importance of a group according to CVTS II data. Since one leading training provider linked to the employer organisation covered approximately 19 percent of the external vocational training hours, a higher number of profit-oriented providers were interviewed. A closer description of the providers can be found in the appendix. For interviews of profit-oriented providers, both large and small providers (measured by the training volume) and also individual trainers were selected. Also a broad variety of providers was covered. They chosen institution are different in regard their live time, their level of specialisation and the importance of consulting offers within their product portfolio.

The following points are discussed in the four sections:

- general representation of the business strategies of training providers (section 2);
- typical examples of customer relations to the enterprises (section 3);
- assessment of the innovation topic in the offer and examples of innovative training offers (section 4); and
- quality assurance and certification (section 5).

Each section closes with a short summary, section 6 sum up the main conclusions.

3 Business models of the vocational training providers

3.1 Basic strategies for market entry and market expansion

All providers had a strategy of building up and relying on a specialized profile. The providers who have newly established themselves on the CVT-market within the last five years especially sought specific competitive advantages. In brief, four business strategies could be identified (More than one strategy could be used by a single supplier):

- Specialize the training products (Manufacturer 1, Manufacturer 2, Profit 2, Profit 5, Profit 6);
- Work as a network enterprise and broker institution (Profit 1, For-profit 4);
- Spin-off from parent institution; use of prestige and resources (Public 1, Management and employees 1); and
- Provide outsourced HRD function (Business-process-outsourcing) (Profit 3)

In the following section, the four strategies are briefly described.

Specialize the training products

Most frequently there is a concentration on a special training offer, e.g. sales or management training, or on a special consulting offer. For training providers attached to manufacturers, the specific products are naturally a point of reference for the training offers, but programs are much more general and to a high degree independent from the products actually offered by the mother companies (e.g. any kind of training in the field of automation, not only for their own products; any form of process management, not only the implementation of a single software). Therefore, training offers of manufacturers are not generally identical with product-specific training in a narrow sense.

Work as a network enterprise and broker institution

Some providers rely on well-established customer networks, which has been built up over a long time period. By investing in the maintenance of their customer relations, they themselves act as network nodes of high centrality and match specific needs of their customers with specialized training experts in their networks. A main requirement is not in-house availability of expertise, but access via a network to a vast pool of trainers. The main focus lies on their ability to offer customers what they need and to create a relationship of mutual trust.

Provider *Profit 1* focuses on consulting competence and the ability to organise staff development projects for enterprises concerned with social and management competences. The offer is covered by internal trainers or brokered to external suppliers on the basis of proposals. Provider *Profit 4* sees himself as a "brokerage-house for training services" and is organized as a friendly society. Customers can become members and through working groups influence the institution's program planning. The training offers range broadly in content and are also regionally scattered throughout Austria.

Spin-off from parent institutions: use of prestige/resources

Two providers can be classified as "spin-offs" or special departments of large educational institutions and can take advantage of both the prestige and the resources of their mother institutions (pool of trainers and experts, selection of concepts for open seminars and so on). In both cases, the offer of training services is very broad. At *Social Partner 1*, all training offers of the parent institution can be ordered by outside enterprises including an adaptation to the particular needs of their own situation. The reputation and public visibility of their mother institutions are other main assets of the two providers.

Provide outsourced HRD function (Business-process-outsourcing)

One provider has specialized – besides traditional provision of company training – in offering all functions normally done by internal HRD departments. This type of training provider is often the result of business-process-outsourcing activities of large enterprises, when internal training departments become first independent enterprises and start to work not only for their previous mother company but also for a broader range of enterprises.

3.2 Ratio of open seminars to internal training/company projects

Eight of the ten providers offer seminars open to the general public, but only three of them as a main activity. These three providers focus on open seminars for different reasons. For *Profit 4*, it is in line with its main function as a broker and reseller of training offers, for *Manufacturer 2* and *Public 1* their high-priced MBA-offers play the main role. Table 1 shows the estimated share of open seminars in the total revenue of the providers.

Table 3: Overview training open to the public

	Open seminars (yes/no)	Number of open seminars (at time of interview)	Share of the open seminars in the total revenue
<i>Manufacturer 1</i>	Yes	< 50	about 10 %
<i>Manufacturer 2</i>	Yes	< 50	High
<i>Profit 1</i>	Yes	50-100	about 25 %
<i>Profit 2</i>	Yes	50-100	Less then 10 %
<i>Profit 3</i>	No	-	-
<i>Profit 4</i>	Yes	< 500	about 90 %
<i>Profit 5</i>	No	-	-
<i>Profit 6</i>	Yes	< 50	about 10 % (but strong extension of activity planed)
<i>Public 1</i>	Yes	< 50	Small
<i>Social Partner 1</i>	Yes	(not applicable)	(not applicable)

According to the experts interviewed, even in open programs a high percentage of participants have employers that pay their fees. The proportion between individuals dispatched by their employers and the “Selbstzahler” (participants who cover their fees privately) differ widely for different suppliers and also for different offers from a particular supplier.

Although revenues from open seminars may contribute little to a provider’s total revenue, two other functions of open seminars were mentioned. Firstly, open seminars provide the option to claim expertise and competencies in certain training areas. Business clients could become interested when reading the catalogue. Open seminars are placed as examples of what kind of training could be adapted to the internal needs of an enterprise.

"Thus I have the impression – and I was told also by many people – that there is often the idea to offer an open seminar to gain a marketing advantage, regardless whether the seminar takes place or not. [...] even if there are no interested customers, you have nevertheless 50 people, who notice the seminar, people, who say: 'Hey, you make something' in the field x", even if the seminar didn't take place one single time. [...]" (Provider *Profit 5*)

Open seminars also offer business customers the possibility of testing the quality and efficiency of the trainers by sending individual employees, whose experience and judgement become a basis for further co-operation in internal training projects. Individual participants also provide important network contacts in a long-term perspective. If they are satisfied, they may recommend a provider to an actual or future employer in the case of a training need. Open seminars thus also support the long-term development of customer networks.

The majority of the providers interviewed (see table 1) had predominantly training projects for businesses. Revenue does not primarily come from individual seminars, but from projects, which may include, along with a high number of training-days, also consulting and additional services (e.g. assessment of training needs, transfer support, certification, measurement of the outcomes). The sizes of typical projects differ widely, however, but, generally, covers more than one single seminar. Large projects, on the scale of 100 training days, also occur. Often successful participation in a bidding procedure is necessary for acquiring so large project.

3.3 Service spectrum and own definitions of services

Besides the support of typical tasks of staff development (e.g. assessment of training needs or evaluation of training outcomes), providers also go beyond training offers in a narrow sense and provide consulting and organizational development. The trainings are only a tool within the broader context of developing the client's enterprise. Providers that specialized primarily in organisational consulting see their actual service in achieving significant changes in both organisational structure and individual employee's competencies.

The border between training services and organizational development and consulting is described as very fluid. To separate training from organizational development, experts use the criteria of whether the employees gain competencies individually – independent from their working context - or as members of an organization or team. The more the development and improvement of organisational processes is the focus of a client's project, the more it is considered as consulting service and not as a training offer in the narrow sense.

"[The difference between training and consulting] is still that it is said that we don't have a qualification problem, or only marginal, but that apart from general objectives - e.g. we want to improve our communication culture - a concrete problem exists, e.g. we have such a smouldering conflict that we are not united any longer, we have such different views that we are completely paralysed. (Provider *Profit 5*)

Also, rather common trainings gain a consulting aspect as soon as the specific application of the competencies become a topic of the training offer:

"If 10 people learn Excel, that is not enough, there has to be something else changed within the enterprise [so that a process can be achieved differently]: policies, standards, common agreements have to be developed. Then a project becomes mostly a consultancy project, 100 percent custom-made and focussed on the enterprise needs. That would be also the main criteria for me: where does the need for further training come from?" (Provider *Profit 1*)

If training needs and needs for organisational development are closely interlinked, the trainers/consultants need consulting skills and should be able "to read" the organization. When training employees from one single company, the social relations between participants at their workplace (including formal and informal hierarchies) frequently become a topic, even when the training measure has a clear focus on professional – not social – skills.

In order to place non-specific client concerns in specific terms and notice which service the client actually needs, consulting is already important in the preparation phase of the project. The client's goals and the options for the implementation can be clarified and translated into a specific training or development project. The distinction between CVT and consulting usually plays no role for the customers themselves.

"[it shows] already that people always ask for, what they know and the normal customer doesn't mind about the difference between [...] consulting and coaching and supervision and training, they know the name of something and then they call it like that. Once I was invited by somebody, who has already participated in one of my group dynamic seminars, [...] and she said, they absolutely wanted to make a group dynamic seminar too. We met then for making a contract and the interesting point was to hear what has remained [in the memory of the person]: 'group dynamics, that is something 'cool', those, who have informal power, will be un-

covered and unmasked and get rapped on the knuckles” - and that’s exactly what we need.’ And it was a very difficult process of contracting to find out and make clear, that, naturally, they don’t need a group-dynamic training, where you learn under self-awareness how group processes run etc., but they need a team supervision instead, a team consultation, where you reflect about your informal influence structures and how to advance them and how to share power - whereby the purchase of a group-dynamic seminar was naturally also the micro-politically quite obvious attempt, to exercise power in an informal way.” (Provider *Profit 5*)

A larger part of CVT providers with clearly defined training packages see their task primarily in the development of the skills of the individual participants and not on the level of organisational development. When groups of employees of a particular company are trained, the relationship between the trainers, the employees and the management of the company that ordered the training become an important matter. For example, Provider *Profit 6* noted that to avoid any abuse of feedback given to the company, only statements concerning a whole training group are passed on.

3.4 Stock of customers and customer relations

The construction and the care of customer relations play a central role for the providers interviewed. As in a classic brokering service, important for the business success is to get in touch with customers, to be aware of their needs and to provide satisfactory offers.

The providers showed different extents of branch-specific customer structures. This was primarily when the main offers (e.g. automation technology, project management) have an above-average demand by certain industries.

Small and medium enterprises with less than 100 employees usually are only a small market for internal training projects. Since small companies rarely carry out large development projects, they are not considered as prospective long-time clients by most training providers.

"Practically, our corporate academies are only oriented towards large-scale enterprises. Also, speaking of prices, these offers reach a level, normally only affordable by rather large companies. And the second point is that [...] these trainings are closely adapted to the needs of a certain group of participants, and a small enterprise does not have many employees at all, who could need exactly this kind of offer. Those enterprises do not have the critical mass, so they rather fall back to standard seminars." (Provider *Manufacturer 2*)

The majority of the providers can build on a long-term core of clients. Their aim is to build up long-term customer relations and regularly provide different services to this group. Strategic expansion seeks to gain access to new customers and expand the customer network.

Besides working to gradually build up customer networks, those providers who can rely on the prestige of the “parent institution” (*Manufacturer 1, Manufacturer 2, Public 1, Social Partner 1*) can expect requests from potential new customers, who seek certain training offers. These requests need to be converted into concrete projects during the first contacts.

An unusual form of customer relationship management is used by Provider *Profit 4*. The company, organized as a friendly society, recruits enterprises to join as members for a small fee. These members are assigned to a faculty at a branch level and supported by a key account manager. Moreover, the provider receives information about needs and developments of the enterprises through the tool of customer loyalty. Provider *Profit 6* has established a franchise sales system. Independently operating franchises build customer relations and sell the parent company’s training products.

Besides the enterprise’s HRD-managers, often other contacts are sought such as general management or functional departments (e.g. sales, IT). The latter can sometimes decide independently on budgets for training and selection of training providers.

3.5 Employees of the providers and network relations

Most of the interviewed providers (with the exception of *Profit 2* and *Profit 6*) work with a relatively small pool of permanent employees responsible for management and administration. Training and consulting services are primarily provided by freelancing trainers and consultants. Freelance trainers work normally for different providers, only a small number of providers have exclusive contracts with their freelance trainers (e.g. at *Profit 2* and *Profit 6*). The training providers' business success depends on choosing trainers and consultants, careful relationships to the trainers, and the ability to match qualified trainers and consultants with customer projects.

"We are five people in the 'personnel development' team, next to me there are two further colleagues, who work locally at the customer's place, and two women in the back office, who are responsible for operational transactions. [...] We have access to [name of the institution]'s pool of trainers, no idea, how big it is, that are momentarily two to three thousand trainers, but in the division we naturally don't work with three thousands trainers more closely together, but perhaps [...] with 100 or so [...]. Of course we also have a coach data base in which we also have to search, this are the instruments, which we use." (Provider *Social 1*)

The consulting and training offer or the efficiency of the providers is thus extremely dependant on the available permanent or temporarily employed "individual trainers/consultants". A providers' access to a pool of experts who can provide certain services and who can be asked to participate in training projects is crucial for success. A key skill of enterprise training providers is choosing the right trainers who have professional experiences that provide specific know-how and insights that enable them to uncover an enterprise's special strengths and weaknesses.

Providers with very standardized training programs (*Manufacturer 1*, *Profit 2*, *Profit 6*) need to build up a stock of trainers who, through an internal training process, will consistently deliver high-quality trainings. If the demand for training products increases, new trainers must become familiar with the specific products. Especially *Manufacturer 1* and *Profit 6* stress the need of a professional background in the training area (working as an engineer for automation, experiences in sales) to become a trainer. Having this background is seen as crucial so that training know-how can be transmitted during the training process. To become a trainer involves a complete change of professional roles and of the field of work. Both providers observe that from their experience it is nearly impossible to become a high-quality trainer while working in the original profession. *Profit 2*, however, looks especially for part-time trainers, believing that their position within their professional fields can provide insight on up-to-date practice. Here again, it takes time to find people well established in their professional fields and also capable of meeting high quality standards as trainers.

4 Project structures of CVT-offers for enterprises

All providers were asked to describe an ongoing CVT-project that is typical for their business strategy. The emphasis and degree of detail of the project description was left to the interviewed experts. Their examples can be organized on a continuum that spans from projects strongly marked by organizational development to projects strongly oriented to providing standardized training. The results are summarized in the following section.

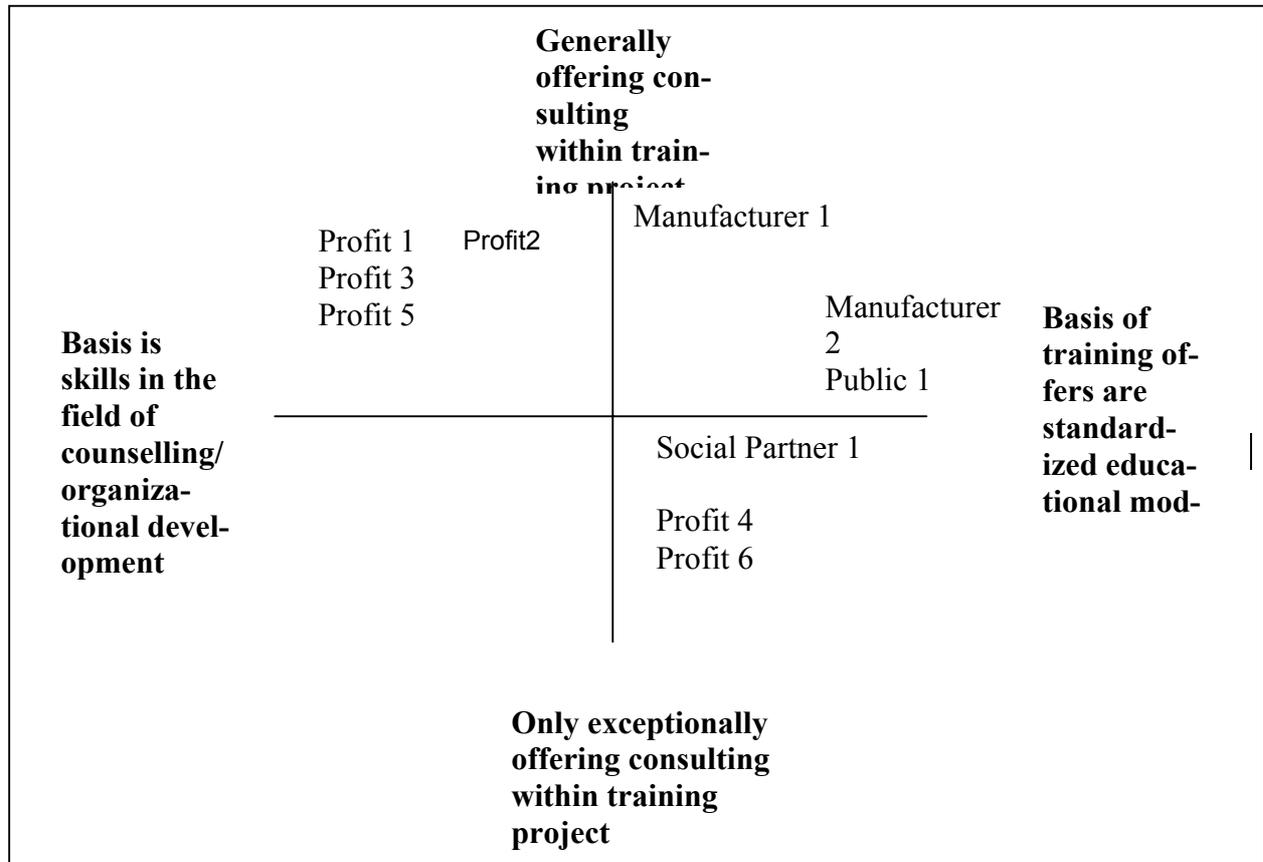
For all CVT-providers surveyed, enterprises represent a central target group. Individuals, who cover the participation fees themselves, were important only for those providers who offer high-priced certified courses or MBA programs.

Enterprise-specific adaptation of offers for internal training can be regarded as standard for all providers. Suppliers, however, differ greatly on the question of the degree of customizing training offers and the typical starting point for offering training to top enterprises. The offers, therefore, are better described by using the two dimensions in Table 3.

The horizontal axis demonstrates the range of the typical starting point for customer projects. Assigned to the left side are providers which focus on their ability to achieve organisational development by using the tool of training offers. On the right side are providers who start projects with previously developed training modules offered in open seminars and also with modules refined according to customer needs.

Moreover, all providers offer consulting services that immediately relate to the HRD. The enterprises are assisted in translating their needs into suitable training projects and can also make use of offers to assess training requirements, to support knowledge transfer and to measure outcomes. However, in the typical projects, these consulting services which immediately concern the CVT activity, play a very different role. Therefore, on the vertical axis, providers are arranged as to whether consulting services in typical projects are rather exceptional (bottom) or fairly common (top).

Figure 6: Scheme of typical training projects



Using this scheme the providers may be divided into three groups:

starting point organisational development/specific consulting service high: For the first group of providers (*Profit 1, Profit 2, Profit 3, Profit 5*) organizational development services represent the typical starting point. The competitive advantage is seen primarily in the creating complex projects designed to achieve a customer's goal. If training services are offered, existing designs are also relied upon - these do not form the differentiating criterion, however. All typical customer projects contain, in the narrower sense, extensive consulting services to the CVT. As a rule, requirements planning and transfer safeguarding of CVT are a part of the overall development structure. An exception would be Provider Profit 2 when, on the one hand, it clearly starts at organizational development projects (further development of project management); but, on the other hand, relies on training based upon previously developed modules.

starting point CVT modules/specific consulting service typical: The second group of providers builds upon pre-developed modules, which are also offered in the open program. The competitive advantage is seen primarily as the quality of these modules in a specialized area. The adaptation of the offers to the particular needs of the single enterprise and the embedding into consulting services is a normal part of a typical project.

starting point further education modules/specific consulting service atypical: Two providers emphasized the enterprise-specific availability of offers from their open trainings. They sought competitive advantage in their broad range of high quality, but fixed, training offers.

The scheme and the assignment can fulfil only a heuristic function - very little information is available for particular placement on the vertical axis.

5 Suppliers' views on innovation in training for enterprises

All interview partners were asked to describe, from their point of view, which innovations in the area of CVT-offers for enterprises has been developed recently and, if possible, to provide an example.

The concept "innovation in CVT" allowed the interview partners to clarify what innovation actually means in training and problems connected to change. The experts stressed the following issues.

The adaptation of offers to the needs of individual customers is not understood as an innovation but as a fundamental structure in the provision of training for companies. There is a broad range of contents and methods in the field of CVT, which evolves and differentiates only slowly (e.g. by the new conception of role plays or the improvement of consulting designs). However, the "creative customisation" of given instruments and the permanent improvement in training designs and teaching materials are not understood as an innovation but as a natural component of developing quality. Creativity is considered an essential component of the training and consulting work.

A special danger is seen to confuse innovation with training marketing needs that regularly leads to renaming of existing contents and techniques. A frequent example is the popular trend of the "enterprise constellation" which gives a new name to commonplace methods of the psychodrama and systemic family therapy in the enterprise context. Consultants used comparable methods for a long time before the new name was popularised. The danger would generally exist of "old wine in new bottles"-offers (Provider *Profit 4*) and the resulting loss of confidence of business customers.

"We can't invent the wheel again. The question is always: What are innovations? And it is a question, which innovations are there, but aren't necessarily going to become a new sales trend. For example, a trend of recent years – knowledge management, which in my opinion is somewhat very important, is something that we didn't often train and that we aren't going to train often in the future. This is because there are two responsible persons for that in an enterprise, but that is not a training market. Therefore it is difficult to say, that is a new topic. But only because it is a new topic, it still is no new trend in our offers. And, therefore, innovation is a very difficult topic [...] There is already tremendously much on the market and I have the impression that it is very difficult to find something new these days which also makes sense and which is not only promoted because it is new." (Provider *Social 1*)

"The longing for something new does exist. All want something 'new'. [...] Education is wide-spread marketing- orientated. The employees page through the education program 2006 and say: 'However, 2005 was better.' [...] They page through and check, where 'new' is stated and they have a look at it." (Provider *Profit 1*)

One expert emphasizes the difficulty that the actual innovation lies in the reinforcement of the "output orientation" of training that would make CVT more exhausting for all involved and that would not lead to increased demand.

"Thus, if I had to shoot from the hip, I would say, no [innovative offers do not lead automatically to more demand], thus I do not believe that one has greater success with [output-oriented offers]. Because it is a market, an offer-triggered market, and innovation = output-oriented = not pleasant, it is not good to present. It is challenging for all those involved, even if you want to have an effect. And that's why I believe that if you can't present it well, you can't sell it well." (Provider *Profit 1*)

Innovations are mainly seen in the regrouping of existing contents and methods to accomplish in a new way the client's goals. The majority of the interview partners reported on this perspective on interviews through explicit examples.

"Do you sometimes drink coffee? Do you take sugar? What are the chemical components of sugar? I had to learn them by heart. Carbon, hydrogen and oxygen. Can you now tell me, which element makes the sugar sweet? Yes, only the combination constitutes it, but only the correct combination, in the correct differentiation. Thus innovation results already from the correct differentiation in the combination. Perhaps it already happens that somebody once invents something generically new, but in my opinion that is of completely subordinated importance "(Provider *Profit 3*)

Innovations in CVT are new ways to use existing techniques of staff development and organizational consulting to resolve comprehensive problems. Also, innovations are to redistribute resources and to use more outcome-oriented processes while breaking dogmas and well-used practices - e.g. to establish in-house education programs similar to that of public providers.

An essential part of innovation is condensing and reformulating the client's problem statement. The innovative aspect can simply lie in the efficiency of how resources are used. Provider *Manufacturer 1* underlines in his example that neither contents nor the execution of the training measure is itself innovative, but the innovation was found in the responsive implementation of the training project within the company's context.

"Then, this philosophy of totally productive maintenance (TPM) - here not in training form, also not in play form but to work at the machine. [...] and starting from that a product is developed, i.e. the product of a retooling workshop, where you orient the bases of the machine to the customer and everything which belongs to TPM: cleaning the machine, recognizing the weak points and so on, and then going to retool the machine *together with* the employees. However, it would be completely contra-productive, if the trainer identifies potentials to speed up the process that is not allowed in the situation, otherwise you would have to close down the shop! This workshop about retooling time shows clearly that if the employees are intensively concerned with the functions of the machine, with the waste criterions of the machine, improvements automatically emerge. And this 30 percent reduction in preparation time has [already] arisen in a second wave and that was not the case with one, but with five machines." (Provider *Manufacturer 1*)

New training offers that concern content or methods play a subordinate role and arise partly as a by-product in the context of a client's projects. Initially developed for just one customer, the offer subsequently becomes recognized as significant for a broader audience.

"At the moment, we develop a lot when offering corporate academies. First an enterprise asks for something, then we make it available for this particular enterprise, and recognize in the same process whether it is something, which others also need, then we place it on a broader platform. It often starts with a single development [...] [The seminar about the] Sarbanes & Oxley Act. That is a good example. The Sarbanes & Oxley Act is a regulation, which comes from the USA. There are two senators, one is called Sarbanes, the other Oxley. They proposed a law in the USA, which strongly defines the posting of corporate results, of internal trading, accounting, [...] And the European enterprises have practically to adopt it too, simply due to the internationality and cross-links of the trade relations. [...] That was as an example, where an increasing number of customers came up to us with this problem, who do not know how to do it and who do not know where to get [the knowledge] from. And we developed this seminar on the basis of a concrete inquiry. There, we said to ourselves that would be an actual topic, we investigated, where are people, who already handle that, where are internal advisers, who offer this, where are people, who wrote books about it, etc. And afterwards we embedded it directly into the MBA." (Provider *Manufacturer 2*)

Provider *Profit 2* takes a special position on innovation for different reasons. The process of innovation, on the one hand, is permanently institutionalised. A specific service department that shall be run as a profit centre in the future accepts orders to develop innovations for the other areas and pursues the implementation. Suggestions to the innovation department arise in the employee meetings that take place twice every year and in the regular management meetings. An innovation budget is fixed annually. About 70 percent is budgeted in advance for specified tasks, the rest is held ready for short-term developments. On the other hand, the main subject of the innovation is less new training contents or adaptations of existing seminar designs, but particularly new developments and adaptations of project management software and their ranges of application.

Innovations frequently arise in cooperation with the customers for whom specific further developments based on cost-sharing models are carried out. The customer does not have to cover the whole development expenses, the provider reuses the development in other customer-projects.

"A concrete example of an innovation project, which was developed in co-operation with customers, has been accomplished for an automobile company. The customer wanted the implementation of project management audits. The problem in this case was that existing technical solutions aren't satisfying, because they produce too much data which became easily biased (e.g. because the project managers consciously make estimations that allow them to easily achieve their goals), and thus do not lead to objective decisions. Therefore, a simple tool was developed which was essentially based on parallel confrontation of various perspectives (client/project manager/project worker) and so showed the different perspectives – a quantified statement does emerge, but from the constellation of the statements, conclusions can be made on how successfully obligations were met (e.g. clear communication of project contents)." (Provider *Profit 2*)

Provider *Profit 3* describes a project which showed that innovation lies in the translation effort, to get from an unspecific client's desire to a project through which goals can be achieved. What has started as a CVT-project has become redefined as a staff development model with the goal to improve motivation and lower quality fluctuation.

"The enterprise wants to become service champion, i.e. it has to distinguish itself in its the market segment [...] With the approach that we have a look at the overall system, that we have a look at the customer satisfaction etc., one recognizes that they have no problem with the quality, that they already do well. Within the percent range they can more or less increase customer satisfaction for perhaps two, three percent, but this means the same customer satisfaction to me. I personally do not believe that they would have more customers, if they had 82.3 or 82.4 customer satisfaction. [...] In any case we realized that this can't be the point and won't function in such a way. In fact, it is the usual problem that it is a large service department with large fluctuation, which is based simply on the fact that it is a modern Taylorism – if they have to deliver service in a kind of package, that this leads to large fluctuation and that the motivation naturally diminishes with the time [...] We have developed [...] a combination of different things, which lead now into a program, which will last altogether eight months. It is actually a combination, i.e. they compete in teams against each another, in order to make the quality services measurable, and then the whole is linked with incentives, and incentives will be applied in such a way that one can motivate the employee over months to stay - I pay your rent for the next six months, that is one incentive for example. If you leave next month, then I do not pay your rent; I pay the insurance of your car for the next six months etc. (Provider *Profit 3*)

Provider *Profit 4* introduces the new development of a marketing academy as an example of a product innovation. The process of the integration of the client's concerns and feedback into the design of the new product is not valued as an innovation but as a standard procedure, state-of-the-art marketing. In doing so, product development is always carried out under the explicit consideration of the customer perspective and the customer benefit. When developing offers of open training, a special role is granted to advisory committees with representatives of enterprises. Thus, the proposed training has been subject to a critical check by potential clients.

"For example the marketing academy is now two years old. We did not co-operate very intensively with universities, because until some years ago they were still relatively far away from practice. Now they look for the contact with us, because they need practice; also they have to earn their money partially on the market. And then we developed together the marketing academy with professor [x] and his marketing crew, tested it with some of our customers, and then offered it. And naturally, whether it is a one-day seminar or a training course for four weeks, there has to be KVP [continuous improvement process] after each passage. We analyse, what was well, what was bad, according to content, to methodology, to the speakers. [...] Marketing is not new, we have many seminars about marketing. But we have said before two years ago– keyword certifying – we make a small, short training course, that is coordinated exactly with the needs of our target group [...] That is our marketing, that is product design in its broadest sense." (Provider *Profit 4*)

Interview partner *Profit 5* suggested that CVT should be spoken about as the “design of vocational training and development projects” and starting from that, that innovation would mainly lie in project structures not yet used for aims not yet pursued. New concepts – which go beyond the creative customisation and new adaptation - arise due to the special constellations in individual projects or seminars.

"There we take, nevertheless, the evaluation seminar, because we already were there. There I can remember, what was for me a very beautiful development. I referred to a few theories, a few case studies, and then I noticed as a group, that they are actually very familiar with evaluation. Thus, they were an interesting team of experts, less pure personnel developers, but also much with scientific background and experience. Then, we looked rather spontaneously at the topic evaluation on the basis of the [concrete] seminar, to use the here and now, i.e. to think about it really. O.k. what do I have to do to decide? What have I got out of the seminar, personally for me, my organization, and can put into operation [for seminar evaluations]?" (Provider *Profit 5*).

Provider *Profit 6* defines innovation as product-related. Basically, innovation is about working out additional, more specialized training offers to supplement basic modules. These modules are continuously further developed - and are also standardized - and either make more detailed processing of single elements of the sales process possible (e.g. the actual moment of sales closure) or devote itself to special fields in sales (e.g. selling at fairs, sale of luxury items). Methodically, the supplier builds all trainings on a specific form of intensive video training that is copyrighted.

Provider *Public 1* uses his network and the prestige of the institution primarily to win prominent international presenters and to offer these exclusively on the Austrian training market. The provider's trainers and consultants also attend the events. Along with attracting public attention for the institution (e.g. by press reports), the series of events can be used for knowledge transfer and for the further education of one's own trainers.

Provider *Social Partner 1* did not specify an example of an innovative customer project, but stressed the unit-specific decision to combine all offers which are aimed at enterprises in a specific department. Within the Austrian-wide institution, this approach is implemented only at the location that participated in this study.

"And here, in such a way, our offer of custom-made seminars has itself developed up to the entire personnel development [...] [the unit] went its own way, as before two years ago the enterprise development department was created. In the enterprise development department, all teams, which have the firm as a target group, were united. Thus, to enterprise development, belong internal training, management consultation, the education consultation and team e-learning. We are now all united and with this unity we also renamed ourselves, from enterprise-internal trainings to the personnel development team in the context of the enterprise development department."(Provider *Social 1*)

Innovations in CVT are seen by the providers primarily in how the development request of the enterprise customer is realized in a vocational training and staff development project. Not that the individual elements (e.g. seminar contents) are new, but the development of a new problem solution by the new combination of existing service components. The "invention" starts out, in the view of the providers, absolutely from themselves - they develop new design and ranges of application, provide the know-how and integrate new knowledge offers in their work. However, when it comes to an innovation, enterprises must "buy" the invention and successfully implement it within their enterprise.

"The innovation derives predominantly from the offer, from the supply side and not from the demand side,...with us, it is at least like that. And innovative or innovation, is innovation if it is realized, i.e. if someone takes over, buys or gets presented the product, and uses it." (Provider *Profit 4*).

Enterprises are less seen as partners who contribute services to the projects, but as partners who need to be convinced to accept a new project structure. Besides the principle readiness for this, which presupposes a mutual trust between provider and enterprise customer, CVT-providers

must convince enterprises of the necessity and applicability of the "training architecture" (Provider *Profit 5*) which does not consist only of training days but also surveys on training demand, measures to support transfer, training controlling and initiatives to organisation of learning. Training and HRD innovations that involve such a broad new understanding requires highly committed employee participants---including at the executive level.

"The question for me is whether the training form has to be regarded as conservative in itself – it does not matter whether the contents are now elementary, old-baked, or completely impressive new - I experience already that the contents of innovations, new trends, new fashion words – where one often has no idea what is meant with – [...] that 'under copyright' all possible new things are placed on the market but that the offers are very conservative however, because they remain plain training - sometimes there are three days, sometimes one day, however. The advantage from trainings is, that everybody has some idea what is meant with – 12 people sitting two days together and learning something. Under any education design or action learning concepts ... that is difficult to sell anyhow as product – or perhaps it is also only a marketing question. For me the question is: 'Can one innovate at all in further educational training by introducing new contents?' (Provider *Profit 5*)

Innovation consists, on the one hand, of merging vocational training and staff development (individual centred) and, on the other hand, of organizational development and organizational learning. Therefore, new workplace designs are, as a rule, complex and require a seldom-achieved commitment. Although an innovative project can be planned at the drawing board, the implementation then fails because of inadequate support on the part of persons for operation. Double-messages sent out deliberately or unconsciously can make a successful implementation of the education and development projects impossible.

"A difficulty is that the innovative structures, innovative learning designs, are demanding for the organization. That is nice on the paper - if e.g. the high-level personnel should also learn somewhat in addition - however [it] normally does not work. That does not fit into the logic, that does not fit into the appointment calendar, that is something I have to do apart from my normal activities [...] We have made a high-level personnel development with a large bank. Internationally, English language, with the daughter units together, on request of the executive committee, cross-linking and steering up exchange between units ,also recommended by us, in order to have a dialogue with all leadership levels. And then it happens, that the executive committee apologizes for not being able to come to the kick-off meeting. That is naturally a death blow [for such a project], and the executive committee wanted that project. Formally they said, we want that to take place - and I even do believe that – however, the executive committee then has to have a role in the game. It has an effect, if it they are not there. When the goal is to improve the recognition of the high potential program and then the executive committee does not come [...] That throws the project back, one could have done what ever you want during the training measure, they learn well, but the message is "leadership is a hobby", important only as an alibi [...] That has then very much to do with what is called good practice, it is not possible to develop a good learning culture there. If the coach says, 'contact is important', it means nothing if it is not lived in the institution [...] quite the opposite is the case: It comes to an inversion: it is important to make yourself scarce, anybody powerful enough simply not to come has status. And naturally, the next leadership level also cultivates this habit." (Provider *Profit 1*)

6 Internal Quality Assurance of CVT-providers

All CVT-providers were questioned about the forms in which they assure the quality of their offerings. In particular, questions were raised on how they select trainers, which development plans they have for trainers regularly employed, and which certificates they have for quality management in general.

The question of how new trainers are included in the trainer pool represents an important task due to the central importance external trainers/consultants play for the providers. Finding suitable trainers/consultants for different tasks and customer groups is one of the central challenges of the providers interviewed.

"A substantial point is naturally the quality of our trainers. That is also what I have said before, that the relationship with our trainers is very important for us. That we also get to know these people. We know: What are they doing? How do they act? The trainers are in place and represent our institution [name of the institution]. Therefore it is naturally very important that we have a bond of trust to our trainers. And that they are [name of the Institution]-minded. That is thus a completely important criterion (...). (Provider *Social 1*)

Most of the providers use a multi-step selection process. After the first contact (e.g. recommendations, application on the trainer's own initiative), a first meeting is agreed upon and a sample of work – e.g. a seminar in front of the provider's trainers – is given. If the performance meets the provider's requirements, the co-operative relationship and gradual integration into the trainer pool will be started.

"[...] We have hundreds, thousands perhaps: trainers and specialists and speakers, thus not only trainers in the narrow sense, who work partially already since many years for us - and each seminar is a quality check - it does not only give an evaluation paper, but also a discussion with our responsible person - and where training performance does not correspond to our claims of quality, the people are exchanged - there we have to search for alternatives on the market!" (Provider *Profit 4*).

"Trainers apply, we have conversations with them, we pay attention naturally to such classical things such as training programs for coaches, training in methods and didactics. Then, how much experiences do the applicants have? Which forms of references? Then naturally also the level of human relationship. That is up to a certain degree a decision from the belly. How does this person affect me? Then also sample training, internal workshops for us to any topics that we experience on how they are working. And then, naturally, experiences, which we gained with these trainers." (Provider *Social 1*)

Providers who have developed very distinctive, enterprise-specific training cultures (e.g. *Profit 2* in the area of project management, *Profit 6* in sales training, *Manufacturer 1* at technical trainings) must introduce, moreover, new trainers into the corporate culture and to familiarize them with the handling of the already developed basic training designs.

A special challenge is trainer selection for those areas where trainers must have a high degree of a practical professional experience. Suppliers search constantly for persons who already have professional experience and specialized competence together with teaching skills and training experience. These trainers are extremely seldom available "on the market" and are, as a rule, available only for limited time as long as they do not give up their "source profession" and change to the training field completely.

"[We search] at our customers, thus if we see in a seminar, someone who distinguishes himself by special knowledge or by impressive rhetoric skills or by special – I do not know – co-operative behaviour, it is still possible that we ask the one or other, whether they are interested in leading a seminar with us and whether we should consider this or other matters." (Provider *Profit 4*)

Moreover, as an alternative, it is tempting for persons with the sought-after experience and background to be trained as trainer and to develop further their didactic and training competence.

"A large potential are the employees of the own house [manufacturer]. I see my major task also in the constant observation of the employees. Whoever is distinguished by the technique range and also toward methodology and didactics [...] A part of the trainers from their own house, a further part from the seminar participants themselves." (Provider *Manufacturer 1*)

The possibility of performing the training and consulting activity as a second job is assessed differently according to the training and teaching skills of an individual. While some providers emphasize that trainers are sought who will remain longer in their main profession, two providers (*Manufacturer 1, Profit 6*) explain, that the qualification demands in their area does not allow the trainers to be active in a second job, thus persons must be actually won over for a change of their professional field from the technician/seller to the full-time trainer.

For the – mostly external – trainers, no further education plans are put together. However, it is assumed by the majority that it is part of the trainer/consultant profile to independently continue one's education. Several providers have planned forms of alternately further education in the training team. Working within trainer teams also is expected to have a positive effect on trainers' competencies.

Table 4: Developmental measures for trainers/general quality assurance measures

	Instruments cited
Manufacturer 1	Trainer matrix, internal workshops about a topic with/without external trainers, survey of participants
Manufacturer 2	Exchange in a university network, survey of participants
Profit 1	Accompanying structure of the training measures, survey of participants
Profit 2	Internal workshops, survey of participants
Profit 3	No statements
Profit 4	Conversations with responsible supervisors/with trainers, survey of participants, regular meetings for improving quality (KFP)
Profit 5	Exchange in a trainer-network, annual exchange with other trainers, survey of participants
Profit 6	Supervised training every two years by the developer of every training module; further education obligations; feedback by the co-trainer after every training (training is always led in tandem with head/co-trainer); survey of participants; interview of the executives of the trained participants
Public 1	Internal exchange events, survey of participants
Social partner 1	Test training, internal workshops with the trainers, survey of participants

Education providers are confronted with the question of certifications at two levels:

Firstly, providers or a part of their trainers need to be certified when they intend to prepare participants for certifications of various types. Secondly, suppliers can choose to undergo a certification processes as an institution, applying a general quality assurance system (e.g. ISO 9001) or a field of education specific instrument.

Three providers are authorized to certify participants or to prepare for certifications in different fields, two in connection with MBA programs, one provider in connection with an organization providing certificates for project management skills. The certification process was considered worthwhile, because the participant demands for training offers that provide certificates leads to an increased recognition of certificate increases. Being able to provide access to certificates for participants lead to more demand for the certified supplier.

"Certifying is important for participants – there is increasing demand for certifying the competences of the training participants. [The supplier] therefore is a member of three international certification programs for project management. In order to be able to offer preparatory courses for certifying, [the supplier] has to fulfil quality criteria, in particular concerning the qualification of the involved trainers and the documentation and learning material provided. In order to be allowed to prepare for the most demanding certificate (certificate of the American Project

Management Institute), conversions of the documents and certifying of our internal trainers were necessary." (Provider *Profit 2*).

Table 5: Overview of certifications of the quality management and for some education offers

	Quality standards of processes	Right to provide access to certificates for participants
Manufacturer 1	ISO 9001 (total company)	
Manufacturer 2	No certificates	Parent company is certified; Quality assessment by the partner university of the MBA-Program
Profit 1	No certificates	No certificates
Profit 2	No certificates	Three rights to preparations of certifications in project management
Profit 3	No certificates	No certificates
Profit 4	(Initial certificate ISO 9001 – not prolonged)	No detail given
Profit 5	No certificates	No certificates
Profit 6	No certificates	No certificates
Public 1	No certificates	Quality management systems for MBA-programs
Social partner 1	ISO 9001 (total company)	Education and examination rights

Suppliers' perceptions of the general quality management certificates are rather different. Two training providers in the study have an ISO 9001 certification. In one case, not only the organizational unit which offer training for enterprises but the entire training institution is certified according to ISO 9001 – the organizational unit follows only the guidelines, which were worked out for the entire organization. In the other case, the parent company, a manufacturer in the area of the automation, is ISO 9001 certified – here also, the question does not apply for the training provider independently. However, the training area has found a productive method of using the specifications of the ISO 9001 for the needs of the organization and quality assurance.

"We introduced some innovations in the course of ISO 9001; for example, a coach matrix. It is thereby recognizable for us, with the 40 trainers and 100 contents, who controls which contents in which depth today." (Provider *Manufacturer 1*)

One provider has reported that although they had been asked by internationally operating enterprises to go through an ISO 9001 process in the early 1990s, they had not renewed the certificate due to an unsatisfactory cost-benefit ratio.

"Thus, it gave this run on certifying, I believe this was at the beginning of the 90s. And we also did this then. Not because we wanted that absolutely, but after the collapse of communism, very many English and American companies came to us and their first question was: "Are you certified?" [...] And, already the language barrier was difficult for them, we do not know them, we do not understand them, thus on something we must support ourselves - thus certifying. We did it then and said to ourselves, it is not so bad, if we make a check over the entire enterprise. We have given up on that however after some years, because it was much too bureaucratic. The soup was more expensive than the meat." (Provider *Profit 4*)

The majority of the providers do not seek any general quality certification. Generally, it is assumed that systematic, high-quality work and continuous process improvement are necessary. These, however, would not be supported by certifications of the quality management. Especially smaller providers also point to the disproportionately high costs for the certification process. Moreover, several suppliers think, that the certification of the quality management would be ne-

glected completely by the enterprise customers in their decision processes. Their service quality would rather be shown in direct contact or by examples of their work.

"No, [we were not asked for certificates]. [...] That should have to be looked at, but I do not believe that I get an order because I am certified. The other ones do not want to be certified by me and it also does not matter whether the Boston Consulting Group is certified. Thus, no one ever asked 'are you EQM certified?'. (Provider profit 3)

Independent of this, however, quality management was mentioned as an important task for which a number of instruments have already been developed (see table 4). Individual providers more and more want to continue to work on these internal concepts.

7 Summary and conclusions

In Austria, comparatively little is known about providers of training. At the moment, no comprehensive, regularly up-dated data base on providers of adult education and company training exists. The available data mainly covers traditional non-profit providers, which have organized themselves in an umbrella organisation and are partially publicly funded. Little information on the emerging number of profit-oriented providers has been systematically collected.

Based on existing sources – especially the database of the Public Employment Service in Austria – Austria has more than 4,000 training providers, not including freelance trainers who do not run a formal enterprise. More than 1,500 providers are expected to be directed mainly to enterprises as their clients.

Until now, for Austria, no systematisation has been developed for the different types of training providers specialized for enterprises. Research falls here clearly behind the differentiated perception of reflective practitioners. Actually, the market for company training has a broad range of products that meet the very different needs of companies.

Providers of training for enterprises are, in general, small – often micro – enterprises with a few employees. Training is provided mainly in collaboration with freelance trainers that frequently work for more than one training institution. Given the very broad spectrum of training and training-related services, most of the providers are specialized in certain fields. Only a very small number of rather traditional non-profit providers offer a broad range of training and counselling services for all types of enterprises. In general, development of the company training market may affect different subsections of the market rather differently. Customer relations are important. Single providers depend directly on the economic loyalty of their customer network and to a remarkable extent are independent from general development on the market.

Little is known on suppliers' disappearance from the market. Existing sources show a high proportion of newly founded providers for enterprise training – around a quarter of the providers appeared between 2001-2005. The dynamic growth of new providers – as measured in legal entities – is based on the increasing number of persons working in different forms of training. Training providers are often initiated by groups of former freelance trainers who previously worked for different providers.

The volume of the training market for further vocational training was estimated for 2004 at 980 million Euro, from which 480 million Euro was spent by enterprises. It is unknown, if enterprises' spending on the training market is increasing or not – CVTS III will answer this question.

Experts interviewed work for rather different training providers, representing a broad selection of different business models in the field, including profit as well as non-profit institutions, comparatively large providers with up to 6,000 participants a year to small business units with their own self-employed trainers.

Three providers have been established within the last five years, another three within the last decade. At least four of these six providers has grown very fast in the past years and are well established. So, despite a more pessimistic view of the training market by most training providers

that participated in this survey, new providers applying an effective business strategy can successfully establish themselves.

For all ten providers interviewed, clear business strategies can be identified. These include specialization in training offers, focusing on customer networks, using publicity and prestige of a larger mother institution or offering business process outsourcing.

For three providers, seminars open to the public are of central importance. Other providers use open seminars and the presentations of their offers mainly for networking and marketing reasons. Open seminars are seen as a tool to gain access to internal training projects of enterprises, which contribute the most to the provider's revenue.

All providers underline the importance of long-term customer relationships. Investments in customer networks are crucial and have to be developed continuously. Training projects are generally ordered within existing supplier-customer relationships, being "in" a relationship therefore is important for success.

All training providers work with a minimum of internal staff, trainers are normally not employed on stable basis but contracted for a certain project. Only three providers emphasise that at least a part of their trainers work exclusively for them. Beside the level of training providers – speaking of business units – also the level of individual professional trainers determines essentially the capacity of the Austrian training market. Training provision and organisation development offers are heavily dependent on the competencies of individual trainers.

Given the rather restricted training volume of a single experts (between 100 and 130 training and counselling days a year at a maximum), it is clear that a high number of individuals is needed to meet the over-all training need of enterprises. In the high-qualified segments of the field, structures comparable to professions are unavoidable. Well-established experts sell their limited working capacity at their own risk to their customers. Therefore, it would be of great importance to learn more about qualification, skills and competencies of professions working in the different segments of company training.

While the training seminar depends, in general, on the personality of the trainer/consultant chosen, providers develop rather standardized training concepts, which are provided in a defined quality to enterprises. Here, providers train trainers first to execute exactly the training program previously developed by experts. Standardisation is the only way to meet the needs of rather large enterprises that are interested in further developing larger groups of employees at the same time with the same quality.

Typical business processes of the providers differ according to the typical starting point and the typical share of counselling included. Six of the providers built up their customer projects on the basis of modules, also provided as open seminars. Four providers take mainly their counselling competences as starting point. For at least seven providers, counselling is a more regular part of their typical customer projects.

In general, within business training projects – as long as enterprises do not pay only for single participants in open seminars – there is a mutual definition of the actual training project. The provider has to transform a client's desire or training needs into a manageable and promising training project. Within this process, training providers normally have to take the lead and provide the know-how necessary for the project specification and for the actual contracting.

Experts interviewed have a very differentiated view on innovation in the field of enterprise training. Adoption of training offers to a companies' need is clearly rejected as not being innovative, but as a basic requirement of the field. Creativity and continuous improvement of methods and training settings are also stated as an essential dimension of quality, not of innovation.

In reference to methods and content, most of the experts are rather doubtful if any important innovation has taken place during the last years. They underlined the danger of confusing marketing initiatives – renaming already existing concepts – with innovative activity.

The main field of innovation was seen in the design of human resource development projects. New forms of gaining value-added by training and development measures are seen as an innovative field. Because innovative projects activate learning process on different levels and are rather demanding for organisations, the range of innovation can also be limited. Innovation take place rather on a micro-level and has to be seen as a more evolutionary process without sensational breakthroughs.

Most of the providers see no use for certified quality management systems. Only certifications connected to the right to prepare participants for certified degrees are seen as a promising investment. Independent of the question of certification, a broad selection of quality management measures are applied; particularly to the selection and further development of trainers working for a supplier.

8 Appendix

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8.2 Short description of the training providers interviewed

Manufacturer 1: The provider is the Austrian branch office of an education enterprise, which has worldwide offerings and specialization. It offers technical trainings in connection with the main activity of the parent group (automation technology). The provider has been in the market for more than 30 years and offers technical trainings as well as trainings, which connect technical know-how with the provision of social competences for technicians. The development and the worldwide sale of training facilities is a line of business of the supplier for technical training. Interlocutor was the leader of the provider's Austria branch office.

Manufacturer 2: The provider is a subsidiary firm of a software manufacturer founded within the last five years and offers teaching services for management and control of business processes under IT use. Main emphasis of the offer is an MBA whose certification is taken care of by a partner university. The offers are explicitly not user trainings but convey competence for internal experts and consultants who take on projects in the area of the business process design. The interlocutor is responsible for the development of the training offers' content.

Profit 1: The provider is a family business active for more than three decades and specializing in the development of social competences – particularly of executives. The provider offers consulting services in the area of the organizational development. The interlocutor is one of the two managing directors and also works as trainer and consultant.

Profit 2: This provider was founded within the last five years and is specialized in the area of project management. Both open seminars and internal trainings are offered. Besides training offers particularly development projects are carried out in the area of project management. The clients come mainly from the IT and telecommunication field, plant construction, building and construction industry (high and civil engineering) and the pharmaceutical industry. The interlocutor was the head of the innovation department, who is also active as a company trainer.

Profit 3: This provider was founded only a few years ago. No open seminars are offered. The provider has specialized in the creation of staff development departments for enterprises. The customers are large enterprises that do not have their own staff development department or have out-sourced it.

Profit 4: This provider has been active on the market for more than three decades and belongs to the largest providers of advanced professional training in Austria. The company is organized as a membership association and originally was under the influence of the management and employ-

ees (social partner) and fulfilled tasks of a public institution. From this original form a company organized as an association has developed which does not receive any public subsidies and exclusively finances itself. Open seminars and in-house trainings are offered. However, the main emphasis is on the open seminars. Interlocutor was the organisation's managing director.

Profit 5: The provider is an individual businessman (has his own company) and individual trainer (on behalf of third parties). He has performed the activity full-time for more than five years. The provider is working both in the profit and in the non-profit area. It conducts open seminars for third parties, however it offers mainly development projects with a high consulting share in profit and non-profit enterprises.

Profit 6: This provider exists for more than five years and is specialized in sales training. The company sees itself as a skills coach and offers standardized training for all employees involved in sales (from tele-sales up to sales management). Company trainings (90 percent) are mainly offered to large enterprises (standard education for large employee groups which work in networks of branches of the enterprises). The provider is organized as franchise structure. Lately, the company has expanded into the south German area.

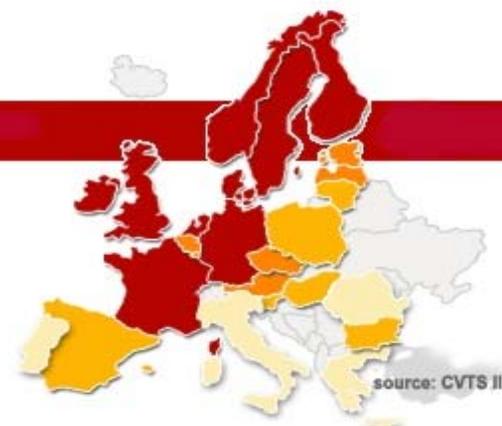
Public 1: The provider is a subsidiary firm, which has resulted from an internal department of an Austrian university within the last five years. The company offers MBA programs, open training and in-house training and staff development projects. The interlocutor is responsible for the acquisition, planning and implementation of in-house development projects.

Social 1: The provider is a department a regional branch of a big further education organisation that is specialized in offers for enterprises. While the entire company belongs to the largest suppliers of an open advanced professional training, the department specializes in providing internal further education and staff developmental measures. The interlocutor manages this department.

National interview report of the Czech Republic

C V T S REVISITED

**Continuing Vocational Training in Europe
Benchmarks and Best Practice**



enterprises with training

- 0 - 24 %
- 25 - 49 %
- 50 - 74 %
- 75 - 100 %

National report on CVT suppliers' qualitative interview survey in the Czech Republic

Prague 2006

Richard Veleta
Jeny Festová
Pavla Kalousková



National Institute of Technical and Vocational Education

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1. Introduction

The Czech market environment is largely opened and liberal in the field of enterprise training. Neither individuals (lecturers) nor institutions have to fulfill any qualifying requirements because concession in the field of training is so-called "free-for-all".

Market with training services for enterprises has developed very dynamically and has been able to catch all relevant trends in the last few years. First training firms and institutions were established at the beginning of 1990 (nearly after the Velvet revolution) and they have been building their positions on the training market for more than 15 years. By this time a few tens of strong training firms have revealed and a few affiliates of strong international training firms have been established on the Czech training market. Some of the Czech training firms have also expanded abroad.

Supply of enterprise training is mostly assured by private firms. In addition it is also possible to find some schools, universities, associations, guilds and non-profit-making organization among the suppliers of this kind of training. In principle, two main groups of the suppliers have gradually profiled on the training market:

- Training firms with own lecturers - complex built-up firms
- Training agencies reacting on demand and hiring external lecturers.

In the Czech Republic, supply of training suppliers has gradually developed (and spread) to the field of consultancy services. The most progressive leaders of the training market try to provide complex services. They have in their portfolio in addition to training supply also such services as assessment centers, development centers, coaching, counseling etc. General trend of the training market has been moving from mass training (with risk for lower effectiveness) to more individual training forms: training in the small groups, coaching, workshops etc. Significant part of the Czech training market offers soft-skills courses.

System of quality management is not very spread in the field of the Czech enterprise training. It is possible to say that the Czech training market is in this area at the beginning. If a training supplier has a system of quality management, it is usually ISO.

Prices are influenced by training market; there is neither price regulation nor special taxes. Tax rate in the field of the training is 19%. System incentives of public sector for the enterprise training are not instituted.

2. Methodology

The survey of opinions of training suppliers focused on the topic of continuing vocational training of employees was implemented in the form of semi-normalized interviews. There were 10 training suppliers included in the selective sample under pre-established criteria (see table). All the interviews were taken personally by the employees of NUOV.

The respondents were contacted mostly by phone (the second alternative was e- contact). The information about the project was provided in two ways, either during the phone contact or sent later. More detailed information about the project and the concrete survey was provided at the point just before the interview.

Two suppliers refused to take part in the interview, because of sensitivity of questioned information. As a consequence, other two suppliers were selected as substitute.

All interviews were made in the premises of the suppliers in length of about 1 hour. They were taped and short summarized in 3-5 pages. Reports of these interviews are not fully published, but quotes were added as a part of this report.

All respondents were considered as CVT experts and therefore the interviews were considered as expert interviews. All companies' data was made anonymous, because of the sensitivity of the topic. On request of some of the respondents there even is not mentioned, in the CR report, a list of educational subjects which were interviewed.

The survey interviews were focused on three main areas considering continuing vocational training, namely cooperation between training suppliers and enterprises, quality of provided training and innovation capacity of training suppliers. Part of the interviews' form were key questions and optional questions. The key questions are especially important for international analysis, which will be provided on the basis of particular national reports by the German partner BIBB in spring 2006.

3. Selection and description of training suppliers

The Selection of the training suppliers was done on the basis of the CVTS2 results (question C5, paid working time spent on CVT according type of supplier). We selected the following training suppliers:

	Number of interviews	Suppliers (see below)
Public schools and colleges	0	
Universities	0	
Specialized training institutions	2	A,B
Private training organizations	4	C,D,E,F
Equipment suppliers	2	G,H
Parent/ associate companies	1	I
Unions	0	
Chambers of commerce, sector bodies, employers' organizations	0	
Other training supplier	1	J

Table: Number of interviews and identification code of the supplier

Supplier A: This supplier is a subsidised organization, established by regional authority (it's a non-profit organization). Supplier A has 5 employees, whose task is to organize courses and give methodological support. Lecturers are externists, they invoice their work or they work on contract of services. The Ministry of education accredits the supplier. Open courses wholly dominate, tailor-made courses are offered as well. Approximately 3/4 of courses are prepared directly for companies, 1/4 courses are prepared for individuals - within retraining scheme. Supplier A also organises education programmes for teachers from secondary schools. These programmes are focused on pedagogical and subject innovations, CVT for craftsmen and professionals from services. The range of the courses varies from one-day-courses till very large programmes - 900 hours. Supplier A is not member of any associations or networks.

Supplier B: Supplier B is a non-governmental, not-for-profit training organization for local and regional government. It was founded in 1991 and delivers its services from the headquarters in Prague and 11 regional branches all over the Czech Republic. Supplier B is accredited by the Ministry of Education to provide training for local and regional authorities' staff and elected representatives of local government in order to implement and reinforce sound, sustainable and democratic approaches and good methods of governance. Total number of staff is 26 employees and over 350 external trainers carry out activities of this supplier. Supplier B offers following services: training courses, conferences, workshops, counselling, study tours, etc.; bilateral and international projects; training needs analyses, network events, information and practice exchange. Supplier B offers both long-term courses and standard short-term courses. Long-term courses for of local and regional government managers are client oriented, with emphasis on active training and good professional practice. Standard short-term courses are focused on municipal and administrative law, general and social legislation, economy, finances and property management, social-psychological topics, municipality citizens relationships environment, management and administration. The scale of activities is updated regularly in accordance with needs and requirements of local and regional government. Supplier B is an ordinary member of the European Network of training Organization – ENTO and holds a seat in its managing body – the Board. Other membership: NIS-PACEE (Network of Institutes and Schools for Public Administration of the Central and East Europe) and the Association for Adults Training Institutions - AIVD.

Supplier C: Supplier C is a private organization, which offers both training and counselling in the field of human resources development. The offered courses are focused on personality development, managerial skill development, efficient teamwork, professionalism growth and lean production methods and processes. In the scope of the offered courses prevail tailor-made courses; public courses are offered in a small amount. The length of courses varies

from one-day courses to several-month multimodular courses. Some of the offered programs are accredited by the Ministry of Education and by the Ministry of Internal Affairs. Supplier C is a holder of the international certificate Q FOR, which is a certificate of the clients' satisfaction with the provided services. Supplier C is a member of a branch of the Czech Society for Human Resources Development and of and the Association for Adults Training Institutions - AIVD.

Supplier D: This private supplier offers continuing vocational training in the field of IT (project management training, Microsoft products - Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Publisher, Outlook, Front Page, Project, Access, SQL Server and training for users of Internet and Intranet) and also consulting and expert service, constructing of the presentations for companies and individuals on Internet. The main clients are organizations acting in the non-profit sector or in public administration, private companies, individuals, foreign companies. Supplier D is represented by the owner and co-operates with external lecturers if needed. Supplier D also regularly cooperates with regional educational organizations, which negotiate cooperation between supplier D and enterprises acting in given regions. Supplier D is not certified.

Supplier E: Supplier E is a private English language school established in 1990. Since then it has gained an excellent reputation and with more and more courses and students. It provides courses for adults (3 %) and teaches mainly in companies (97 %), i.e. its teachers go to various companies and teach employees of the companies (in-house courses) in groups or one-to-one (according to management requirements). Supplier E also runs school courses on its school premises. Its courses consist of general English to adults at all levels and ages, Business English (according to the clients' needs - writing letters, making phone calls, giving presentations, presenting facts and figures, negotiating, running business meetings, etc.) and English for Special purposes of companies (Technical English - e.g. construction, engineering, IT and telecommunications, English for security guards, English for phone operators, English for air traffic controllers, English for international standards, English for doctors and nurses, etc.). Supplier E prepares students for the British examinations – PET, FCE, CAE, BEC. It is the founder member of the Czech Association of Language Schools in the Czech Republic. The aim of this association is mainly to provide clients a review about language schools with high-quality teaching on the market in the Czech Republic. Supplier E is annually ranked among twenty prominent societies in the field of language education in the country.

Supplier F: Supplier F is a training organization existing in the Czech Republic since the beginning of the 1990s. It aims at diagnostics and development of working groups (in the field of communication, teambuilding and team cooperation, creative solution of problems and team leadership etc.) and at realization of meetings supporting company spirit. Clients of the supplier are significant national and international companies acting in the Czech Republic. In its training programs, the supplier practices the interactive methods based on solutions of the model situations and (according to the concrete type of action) their following analyses and theoretical generalizations. Each course of the supplier is a tailor-made original with regard on company needs. Its specialization is outdoor training - the method practicing open-air game and training activities as source of adventure, experience and knowledge. Supplier F belongs to leaders in the field in the Czech Republic. It disposes a lot of rich experience and significantly influences quality standard. Supplier F is the member of the renowned international training organization, which has strictly defined security standards and it is a leader in the field of the outdoor training.

Supplier G: Supplier G is a company established in 1995 and is a sole distributor of software for statistical applications (this software is created by an international company) and a supplier of analytical and statistical services in the Czech and Slovak Republic. The international company is the world-wide most important supplier of the software and solution in the field of predictive analytics. Supplier G is a part of an international network, which acts in more than 45 offices over the world. Supplier G offers a wide range of programs focused on statistical analyses, business intelligence, data mining, marketing analyses, data collection and presentation of results. The courses are focused on the usage of the statistical software, on the data analysis and statistic and on the marketing research. Although the public courses prevail and

tailor-made courses are in the minority, employees of the companies purchasing the statistical software can take part in the public courses. The clients of supplier G are prominent commercial and state organizations, universities and research institutions. Supplier G has 15 employees; some of them work on a freelance basis. Supplier G is certified with ISO 9001.

Supplier H: Supplier H is a company supplying with products of prominent international companies focused on administration, analysis and visual representation of complex information connected with a territory. A group of people specialised in geographical information systems (GIS) and territorial information systems established this company in 1990. Supplier H is a sole distributor of GIS software and is a member of the Czech Association of Geoinformation. The training is offered entirely to the clients provided by GIS technology. Stable staff includes 30 experts focused on GIS, long-distance Earth research, operating systems, computer architecture and heterogeneous computer networks. Supplier H is quality controlled and certified by the international companies producing the GIS technology and designing the courses for users. The Ministry of Education or the Ministry of Internal Affairs also accredits several courses.

Supplier I: Supplier I is a training organization existing on the Czech training market since 1996. Since the beginning of its existence, it mainly aims at preparation of “experience - adventure” courses for company teams by means of outdoor and indoor training activities (teambuilding, leadership, support of the team cooperation and communication, team leadership, project management, time management, motivation programs, management of press and stress situations in team, preparation on and support of changes in team, Assessment Center, Development Center etc.). Clients of the supplier are significant national and international companies acting in the Czech Republic. The supplier works with method “experience - adventure training” that is based on connection theoretical knowledge with experience and with a strong adventure from course training activities. The courses are tailor-made courses with regard on client needs. They take place in various locations. Its programs are realized in Czech or in English.

Supplier J: Supplier J is a non-profit organization, which was founded in 1998 and linked its activities to the running of a psychosocial help foundation. Supplier J was founded for the support of psychosocial activities especially of non-governmental organizations and in aid of the development of help lines and crisis centres network in the Czech Republic. The staff is psychologists, social workers, psychiatrists and other specialists. Supplier J organises educational and training programs, offers professional consultations, organises preventive programs and programs for seniors, runs civil consulting room and centre for co-operation of non-governmental organizations, provides individual and group supervisions.

4. Results

4.1 Cooperation forms

Typical cooperation

All the requested **suppliers jointly share an opinion of importance of their own web sites and the Internet in contacting enterprises**. Customers can find offer of services, public and company courses, resp tailor-made courses on web sites of the supplier. Internet (training servers, search engines etc) and **Internet advertising are seen by the suppliers as an important device for an initial contact to a client**. Enterprises, which are interested in arranging training courses for their employees, use Internet as an initial source to find a suitable supplier, whom they contact later.

“We publish our offer and trainings on our web sites. ... We have been given a good account of leaving clients to contact us on the basis of our web sites.” (Supplier D)

The contacted supplier prepares a concrete offer according to needs and requirements of the enterprise. In some cases it is necessary to take part in tender, in other immediate cooperation is started. Some of the suppliers mentioned that **some placed orders are not adequate** (resp realistic); therefore they make effort to cooperate also **in this phase**, when the **cooperation consists mostly in finding and specifying of rules and aims of the training project**.

“We use e-mail to communicate to our clients, we send them an object, price and time offer.” (Supplier D)

“On the basis of company demand, we prepare an offer that tries to concretely reply to company requirements. Some companies define their orders such a way that it is not possible for us to respond to them from rational view of the language teaching. Then we try together to find what it is not defined among requirements in order, what it is necessary to more specify or to change. (E.g. Language course for 20 employees of intermediate level - it is not order for language school. It is necessary to prepare an analysis of company needs. We need to know when (in which situations) the given student will use the given language – for presentations, negotiations, writing texts etc.)” (Supplier E)

Majority of the suppliers uses **various methods to stay in touch with existing clients**. **Some of the suppliers refuse active offering of their services to possible clients by e-mail**, because they are afraid of rather negative effect (spam character). It is necessary to point out here that participants of the survey were mostly **well-established companies, which usually feel sufficient demand of both existing and new clients**; therefore **they do not feel a need to launch an active campaign to raise a range of new clients**. **The suppliers mostly mentioned that one of the most important sources of gaining new clients are reference, recommendations from management or course participants, reputation of company and membership in an association or union**.

“We do not actively offer courses to companies; it would make an impression as spam. Besides we have enough present clients.” (Supplier D)

“It is possible to differ short-term/single and long-term cooperation. Talking about short-term cooperation, a customer contacts us, because they need a modul from our offer and we arrange the required training. Concerning long-term cooperation it is usually an organized training project for the enterprise. A has a long-term contract in majority of enterprises.” (Supplier C)

“We are used to companies mostly address us themselves. We have a classic advertisement e.g. at our websites and at the various language educational servers. We gain new clients mainly due to our good name, good references (not only from company management, but also from students of our courses) and our membership in the Czech Association of Language Schools in the Czech Republic. We participate in biddings. We do not create active

advertisement for purpose to get new clients because companies demand (of new and hitherto clients) is sufficient for us.” (Supplier E)

“We are sometimes contacted directly, asked to prepare offer, but we usually contact customers ourselves. If the other side is interested, they pre-order, we discuss on phone, explain contents and send detailed information.” (Supplier G)

In case of appliance supplier group, offer of training courses is closely joined to technology supply; training can be a part of the provided package. Nevertheless these suppliers can also offer courses not directly concerning provided appliances.

“Cooperation starts when the customer buys technology which we sell. Together with software supply it is necessary to implement it and train employees.” (Supplier H)

Course implementation itself takes place either **in premises of the supplier, client** or somewhere **in neutral ground** that is typical especially for training programmes focused on softskills, outdoor training or entertainment.

Course division in “open” and “tailor-made” is not strict. We can see an upholding strategy, when a supplier advertises both fundamental offer and offers possibility to modify according to concrete requirements of clients.

The most important

Opinions of single suppliers on what they consider as the most important in cooperation with enterprises rather differ; nevertheless it is possible to detect some common attitudes.

Almost all of the suppliers stress the importance of having **personal contacts with personnel officers (resp people in charge of trainings) and functional, effective communication. The important thing is the contact person to be competent,** have decision authority and be professionally qualified. Suppliers place importance on **professionally prepared orders.**

“For us, the most important person in the enterprise is a personnel officer or somebody who looks after trainings, in small enterprises usually an owner.” (Supplier A)

„People in charge of trainings should better know: how to formulate order, what they could and can demand etc. Some enterprises sometimes prepare orders with almost nonsensical requirements that we can fulfil only with difficulties or that are conversely unessential. The further problem is a goals setting and a lack of material for initial analysis of client needs. Order of the following type - “Our employees need to can English” – is not sufficient for us.” (Supplier E)

The important thing is **reliability, mutual sincerity, confidence in relation with a client and awareness.**

“Mutual sincerity and mutual confidence in cooperation. We work with people (not with products that it is possible to predefine) and each individual is different, we need to know some details that are connected with it e.g. mutual relations among potential participants of the training course. Client should be also able to say unpleasant things (that do not often give a good picture about it) because they are usually the most important for our cooperation. We focus significant stress on reliability (our clients know that can always reckon on us).“ (Supplier F)

“The most important thing is functional communication in a company of a client – information delivery, clearly defined contact person, guarantee that the information will be given further.” (Supplier G)

„We need enough information for course preparation. When a client does not want to say something (e.g. that a problem(s) in the firm) then we are not able to fulfil all client expectations. E.g. Client has an interest in a teambuilding training course for its employees (improving cooperation, communication etc.) At the beginning of the course we find out that there

are some problems in interpersonal relations of participants. Then we cannot realize the planned training program and we have to significantly modify it.” (Supplier I)

The majority of suppliers stress the importance of **appropriate setting and outlining of course according requirements and knowledge of the client** (i.e. enterprise, company policy and course participants). They see a notable aspect in **finding a compromise between enterprise aims and course participants**, which do not have to be the same.

“...the most important thing before the course beginning is its setting, which should maximally suit to requirements of the client/course participants.” (Supplier J)

Another important thing according to the suppliers is **continuous and final assessment of feedback** from training participants.

Initial positive motivation of course participants is felt necessary by the suppliers to put the course successfully into practice.

In case of appliance suppliers, active use of the supplied product is also important for the supplier.

“The most important thing is the supplied system to be lively. Customers should really use it; work with it – this we feel as contribution and good reference.” (Supplier H)

The third side

In most of the cases there is not included any other side like employers’ association, Trade Unions or Chamber of Commerce within cooperation (**on concrete orders**) between suppliers and enterprises.

Only one of the suppliers regularly cooperates to regional training organizations, which have established contacts with companies and arrange cooperation to the supplier.

“In case of need we are contacted by regional training organizations and they later arrange cooperation with a company. It usually regards to special products, more technologically sophisticated issues.” (Supplier D)

Sub-supplies

Suppliers agree on an often reason why they establish cooperation with the third side, which is a need to employ **a specialist**.

Suppliers very often have a range of permanent staff, who create a heart of a company. They also employ **external experts – lecturers**, who work on contract of services, part-time or freelance.

The third subject, which steppes in, often is a sub-supplier with various orientation, e.g. **accommodation facilities, appliances used during the course, travel agency etc.**

The third subject can also become **a firm from the same training field** (a competitor); in case the supplier is not able to backup the project fully. Than we speak about a common project.

“The third subject, which takes part in our cooperation to a client, is very often hotels. We usually realize our trainings out of premises of enterprises. In neutral ground. We often use outdoor space in a lot of our training programmes, which is not possible to be arranged in the Prague centre. Further we cooperate to our competitors, which are able to offer training services in areas where we lack, so that we cooperate on common projects. Finally we use other than training sub-suppliers, who supply needed material background.” (Supplier F)

Training suppliers make effort to cultivate market in some training areas. They see foundation of **an association or union (cooperation among suppliers of the same training field)** as a means, which would help e.g. make quality of training services more transparent, arrange some standards, be a source for further methodical development etc.

The best experience, the most interesting projects – selection

The best experience of suppliers in cooperation to enterprises is very individual and its character depends on type of the supplier and their projects, target groups and character of enterprises, which create main clientele of the suppliers.

A) Personality of the lecturer

“We met a very good response cooperating to a municipal council of a small town, it was a course for leading staff in management and soft skills. Initially they felt it like fulfilling their duty but later they told that it was very useful for them. The success was caused by practical information and training. Totally essential there was a person of the lecturer – his charisma, proficiency, ability of interactive communication with participants. Like the lecturer, like the course.” (Supplier B)

B) Cooperation to The Charles University

“There were organized courses for university graduates in cooperation to information and advisory centre of UK (e.g. project management). With respect to the successful process the programme will be held also in this year.” (Supplier D)

C) Ability to prepare language trainings for diverse target groups

“..significant project is e.g. a three-year training project for an international prestigious radio station that takes place the second year and it is challenging in all fields (series criteria have to be fulfilled according to contract). We have already realized language programmes for multicultural target groups of employees with various English knowledge levels. These people mostly have goal to be able to absorb (understand) information in English and translate (or interpret) them to their maternal language in which they air. Part of the project is also aimed at operating staff – sound engineers, technicians etc.” (Supplier E)

D) Training participants in continuing courses, long-term cooperation to a client

“One of our most important projects was the one prepared for an alcoholic drinks producer. On basis of one single course we started up a serie of 8 continuing softskills courses for the same group of people. We worked with this group of people during the year increasing their skills and we could see the whole progress. The course was attended by about 32 company managers.” (Supplier F)

E) Functional communication

“We enjoyed perfect communication in cooperation to AISA company. The supplier successfully established very good relations with the personnel department, partial training offers were not sent to all participants, but it was sufficient enough to contact the personnel department.” (Supplier G)

F) Managing an unconventional order

“We had very interesting experience while arranging a project for a supranational company. They were interested in organizing a two-day course for 150 employees from 6 European countries. It concerned the first whole company meeting in history of the company. The programme was based on experience training method and should have contributed to development of employees' identification with the company.” (Supplier I)

Changes in relations

Changes in relations between enterprises and suppliers vary a lot; nevertheless the suppliers mostly share an opinion that there exists **growing self-consciousness of enterprises in human resource area**. More and more enterprises are planning trainings for their employees and personnel officers are becoming more professional.

Companies often use web sites to find suitable suppliers and course offer. There is **growing importance of training servers** at the same time. Another trend seen by the suppliers is that more and more **employees do not look for suitable trainings alone, but they place their requirement in a training department**, which finds and prepares the offer.

While **continuing vocational training in Czech enterprises** did not belong to priorities in last years, now **its importance is growing**. **Long-term partnerships between an enterprise and a supplier are becoming a trend**.

A supplier of GIS system mentioned as a cardinal change **an extending range of users of this system** (formerly it was a matter of IT specialists, now it is increasingly used by a large range of specialists). More specialized courses are being required.

“Geographical informational systems used to be used only by IT specialists; nowadays they are more and more used by various specialists. Development is leading up to easier teaching a specialist to work with GIS than an IT specialist to be taught expert problematic.” (Supplier H)

Enterprises focus on effectiveness of their investments in training more than in the past, they control quality of outputs.

“Presently companies that control their investments, more look after outputs and quality of investments to the language training. They want from their employees (participants of the courses) to gain various international certificates. They want to confirm feedback in the form of certificate that has a value (that their employees can use somewhere). They want (as a minimum) a detailed evaluation of their employees in relation with European Reference Framework or to define in which situations participants of the course can use the given foreign language.” (Supplier E)

Interest in entertainment and experience company courses is growing. They are mostly about brand and feeling of identification with the company support, also common experience and teambuilding. Expert side stays in the background.

There has grown a strongly competitive environment in some of continuing training areas. Enterprises put pressure on lower prices of training courses.

“We see changes in a relationship between a customer and a supplier. Currently there is a huge competition on the market. We profile mainly on outdoor management training market. It is extremely difficult to define any criteria in this field; therefore this area is becoming very attractive for various subjects. Because of this trend there grows enormous competition on the market. I think enterprises are aware of it and put pressure on course prices. Mostly at the expense of quality.” (Supplier F)

One of the company training suppliers mentioned that an average length of courses has been distinctly reduced in last 3 years.

“In year 1993, when we were starting, and in following 5 years there were courses shorter than 3 days an exception. Nowadays we appreciate as success when the course is longer than 2 days. The pressure on effectiveness is enormous and we really make big effort to receive the little part of time, which customers are willing to give us. The effectiveness of courses is rapidly falling, because we work with group dynamics, which has its own rules and it is important that participants spend some time together to start up processes among them, open and work on what is “spoilt” there.” (Supplier F)

Expected and planned changes

Also in this area the changes planned and expected by suppliers mostly depend on the type of supplier and their projects, target groups and character of enterprises, which create the main clientele of the suppliers. They share an opinion that clients' **demand will be removed from fundamental courses to specialized.**

"Demand will be removed from simpler to more sophisticated things; it will be more difficult to find suitable courses. There also occurs movement to solutions and implementation of a product." (Supplier D)

The most frequently planned changes happen in offer and matter of offered courses and in creating new projects.

"We are planning changes in our product portfolio; we want to concentrate on competitive specialized courses, which are not widespread." (Supplier D)

"We do not expect increasing of the interest in language training from side of companies. Some companies (especially in banking services) show their employees that their language knowledge (16 years after velvet revolution) should already be their personal responsibility and that company is not willing to invest to it. That is why I do not expect increasing of the interest in language training from side of companies. Other situation will become in case of language specialization or English for special purposes (e.g. how to act in the concrete situations; for translations of technical texts that presently company gives to the external translation – a company employee has expert knowledge but does not dispose sufficient language knowledge of text translation etc.) It means smaller groups of students and larger diversification of courses." (Supplier E)

"We are trying to extend fundamental user courses by specialized suprastructured courses. They have been attended more than the fundamental ones, which have been in our offer for longer time. We would like to set up more intensive cooperation to companies, personnel departments to gain better access to company employees. We would like to be able to offer coherent training programmes (e.g. in half a year blocks or continuously), which would become effective also for companies." (Supplier G)

Some of the suppliers expect **decrease of mass trainings and increase of aimed individual and small-team training programmes.**

"In my opinion company trainings are on the top now, some companies have been holding the second or third serie of the same training. Some of employees have attended communication training for the third time... I think that companies waste money and personnel managers do not have fantasy in sense of this. I expect increasing demand on controlled casuistries, when there concrete cases will be analyzed with colleagues and a facilitator." (Supplier C)

Some of companies are beginning to be aware of importance of a strategic long-term client.

"... a lot of companies are trying to find a strategic long-term partner to train their employees. They are lead both by economic reasons, such a partner is able to provide larger amount of courses for lower price, and by partner approach, because of knowing each other the supplier is aware of his client requirements (specific needs)." (Supplier F)

Survey and analysis of requirements of enterprises

Strategy of finding enterprises' training requirements varies a lot; it is in the range between two poles. On one side it is survey and **analysis of objective information** (e.g. new laws automatically bring a need to manage them). On the other side it is survey and **analysis of information provided by a client and course participants**. Suppliers concentrated more on public courses offer focus on the analysis of objective information, but at the same time they admit to ask course participants to complete questionnaires because of receiving information about their needs. Tailor-made orientated suppliers analyze more information received through direct communication to a client. One of important information sources about company training requirements can be tenders.

"We have been monitoring requirements of authority offices, new legislative and we also have been repeating courses which connect to repeated activities in institutions (e.g. financial management, personnel management – e.g. new employees recruitment)." (Supplier B)
"On the basis of questionnaires dealt at the end of courses we establish further interest, what participants miss in our offer. In case of presentation actions' participants we establish their reactions on being presented software and if they are interested in trainings (in which branch). We also use telemarketing to receive as much information as possible." (Supplier G)

Presentation of offer in on-line databases

Suppliers indicate their on-line web pages as an essential instrument of their presentation. Some suppliers use a paid or unpaid placing of their links within all possible sorts of web search tools. There are some specialized on-line database sources for language education (and probably for some other training fields as well).

As the very important on-line database, the web site www.educity.cz was indicated by Czech suppliers (it was mentioned by 4 interviewers).

Suppliers see on-line databases as the opportunity for their presentation and promotion. As it has been already mentioned above, on-line databases are one of **the most important tool for initial contacting**. On the other hand, **suppliers do not make public overmuch details** with regard to risk of their misuse / stealing by competing suppliers.

"Our web and catalogue of courses are the best way how our clients can get to know about us and our offer. We advertise in specialized magazines as well. We added our contacts to the most widespread web search pages, which we consider as very important in contacting with clients." (Supplier J)

Competitive advantages in comparison with other training suppliers

Suppliers see their competitive advantages in their strong points. During the interviews, the following competitive advantages were mentioned:

- **careful and consistent preparation of the educational project, team work within the preparation phase,**
- **effort to gain and keep the client,**
- **choice of textbooks, trainers, methodological seminars,**
- **individual approach,**
- **tradition, experiences and reputation,**
- **quality of the educational project,**
- **quality of services,**
- **wide/broad offer,**

- permanent development of delivered technology,
- network of branch offices at the regional or national level,
- accreditation of courses (this is the requirement of clients – public bodies and schools).

“Our competitive advantages are quality of services and complexity. Software, which we deliver, is expanded, it is first rate, it does not stagnate, and it is under permanent development. We provide wide offer of courses, hot lines, half hour consultation gratis.” (Supplier G)

“Our system is very comprehensive; it is based on industrial standards. Our approach is flexible – each client can set up the solution according to his needs. We deliver basic knowledge, technical and system support. The users can contact us when they have some problems. We offer to our clients, that we can adapt the technology according to their needs.” (Supplier H)

Harmonization of different expectations of the enterprise and its employees participating in the training events

Suppliers try to properly communicate with clients within the preparation phase. They see that it is the effective way how to harmonize different expectations and how to avoid potential misunderstanding. Some suppliers provide **assessment of trainees**. In some cases **an introduction part of the course** is dedicated to harmonization of expectations. **Flexibility of the supplier (and his trainers) during the course** is mentioned as fundamental as well.

“We declare our flexibility in harmonizing of each order already in the phase of contracting.” (Supplier C)

“The first step in cooperation with client-enterprise is analysis of its needs and needs of trainees. Then we together set down aims and ways how to reach these aims. (...) The worst situation is, when people do not have motivation and a personal aim. Because we want to avoid this situation, we try to negotiate some common aims before start of the course.” (Supplier E)

“It sometimes happens, that a company tries to send maximum of its people to our course. But some of these people do not have proper prerequisites for passing the course. They will not use acquired skills at their work place – they were sent only to fill up the place. (...). Nevertheless, also in this case we try to adapt the course (to a certain extent) according to needs of trainees.” (Supplier G)

Criteria of the selection of suppliers

The suppliers mention these selection criteria (from enterprises' side) as significant: **price, quality of courses, professional experience of the supplier, reference and accreditation of courses**. **A phase of specifying the order seems to be cardinal, because until here a real relation between price – output, effect, quality is seen.**

“Our clients consider as a matter of principle ministerial accreditation of our courses. This proves quality and it is also possible to pay such a course with state grants.” (Supplier B)

“The most important thing is price and reference – mostly in specialized courses.” (Supplier D)

“The main criterion for companies when they make decision about language school selection is price in connection with that price includes (quality preparation and realization). Companies want to know if price includes analysis of company needs and entry interviews, good quality cooperation with company, convenient quality teaching and evaluation etc. Presently, it is common that price per 1 teaching hour is presented without more detailed information.

Then you do not know what it is included in it. Unfortunately, I think presently companies have returned to price as a main criterion for language school selection. In the period approximately 1998 – 2001, when companies did not have to save so much, price was not the most important criterion. It was solved how to measure quality of teaching and what type of results, evaluation to want. Presently (approximately last 2- 3 years) companies have started saved and price has become a main criterion for language school selection again.” (Supplier E)

“It is difficult to generalize. It depends on the company. Some of companies prefer higher quality and are aware of higher costs joined with it. On the other side we sometimes have door closed (it is well-known we are not the cheapest), then it becomes difficult to start up cooperation to a company.” (Supplier F)

“Price is cardinal only by superstructural courses.” (Supplier G)

“The decision making criteria – definitely quality, course arrangement of high quality, which means to fulfill the target and expectations. Unfortunately, we see results after long time (it is not possible to write a test or measure outputs). That is why we consider pre-analysis of requirements of high importance, because some targets defined by a client do not present what the group really needs.” (Supplier I)

The most important orders are realized in form of tenders. Management of the client judge offers and contact chosen suppliers. After individual negotiations concerning contract details they place an order.

Suppliers are aware of their costs and make effort to agree on optimum of a financial question and product during negotiations. **There function absolutely standard procedures, likewise in other products. It seems there are suppliers profiling,** some are quality-focused and so more expensive, some cut prices, dump and are trying to lower costs by cheaper outputs.

Enterprises prefer when suppliers are able to provide a flexible fundamental (modul) offer, which is possible to be changed, after negotiations, in a tailor-made course. It seems that modul or package products represent an optimal solution regarding price: the supplier and client optimize the product with respect to the budget.

4.2 Standards of the suppliers

Quality management, quality certificate

Suppliers are informed about ISO possibilities, some of them have it at their disposal, **nevertheless the majority of them finds priorities somewhere else** and agree on an opinion that clients do not feel it as important (especially in cases, when the supplier does not suffer of lack of clients and cooperation). Some of the suppliers expressed an opinion that ISO certificate is rather quality processed information than quality training.

“ISO has had its day, now it has been business of certificatory companies. We have an international certificate Q For, there it is about quality requested on customers. We are proud of it.” (Supplier C)

“For me as an expert, ISO certification does not have sense, but I would like to obtain Microsoft certification. It would become a competitive advantage; some companies would possibly include me in the pool of players. Currently it is not essential for me, because I am going to have enough cooperation in future.” (Supplier D)

“ ..., because we have still been a rather small company, quality management is not implemented in our company structures. We know about ISO, but we find priorities somewhere else. At the moment we do not feel it would be contribution for us. On the contrary it would be an enormous expenditure of energy that is the reason why we withdrew from that.” (Supplier F)

Suppliers see a guarantee of quality in gaining a membership of an association, union of educational subjects under stated conditions. Another way how to prove quality of the supplier is to fulfil conditions in order to receive confirmation and re-establishment of the licence of operating in the educational field.

“Presently we have worked at ISO. The certificate is rather certificate of quality information handling than quality training. It is not too related to quality teaching. In our opinion our quality certificate is a membership in the Czech Association of Language Schools where quality of training and teaching, cooperation with enterprises etc. should be checked by means of entry inspection controls. If school gets past inspection controls (fulfils the given criteria) quality should be checked.” (Supplier E)

“Quality management in our company is being arranged by a supranational company, which creates software and distributes it as well. This supranational company defines very strict training standards – on the one hand strictly defined subject matter of particular courses on the other hand strictly defined standards, which have to be fulfilled by every lecturer.” (Supplier H)

Another guarantee of quality, which some of the suppliers use, is accreditation of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Ministry of Education. These accreditations are a condition for a successful cooperation to offices and schools.

“Some courses are also accredited by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Ministry of Education, which is necessary for public service employees, because they have to be able to show the courses as a part of continuing training programme. It becomes an economic question for the supplier as well.” (Supplier H)

Qualification sustainability, extending and improving of knowledge and experience

The most frequent sustaining of qualification, extending and improving knowledge and experience of lecturers:

- **self-study with use of various training materials,**
- **internal workshops, seminars, training courses, methodical seminars organized by an educational institution,**
- **internal organized meetings, where lecturers share information** (an often topic are experience from terrain, solutions and reactions on situations in terrain, feedback),
- **seminars and meetings within associations or unions.**

“We have organized methodical seminars once per two weeks. The seminar lasts approximately 1 hour and deals with various fields (e.g. problems in courses, with training or teaching methods etc.). It enables our lecturers to change experience gained in terrain. We organize “company meetings” in companies where we have a larger contract (more courses). They are organized 1 per month or 2 months – it depends on company cooperation. We try to give our lecturers together and to secure information communication among themselves and with company. We try to create and to maintain lecturers’ team in which lecturers can change their experience and knowledge gained from company courses. The team always has a program coordinator – lecturer that has the highest number of teaching hours in the give company – and he communicates with HR (or a person who takes care of training employees). He mainly gets a feedback from a company representative and informs lecturers’ team about it.” (Supplier E)

“Lecturers learn by self-study, they can study training materials in advance and are obliged to pass an exam for every course.” (Supplier H)

Evaluation of programmes – certificates, final assessment

The suppliers mostly evaluate their programmes by using evaluational standardized questionnaires completed by course participants. The suppliers usually evaluate all organized actions (public and company courses) on the basis of the questionnaires, which evaluate how the participants were satisfied, what they felt as pointless, the most difficult, what they think of the lecturers' work etc. In case of long-term company courses there happens continuing evaluation, so that it would be possible to realize slight changes according to requirements of the participants. On the basis of the evaluation there can be realized possible changes of programmes and final results of the evaluation are taken into account when other actions are planned.

The other evaluation form is a **presence of other employees of the supplier** (except the lecturer), **who take part in (continuing or final) evaluation of the course.**

Ending of a training course varies a lot from the certification side. The course participants usually obtain one of the following variants: a certificate, confirmation of completion of the course or a final assessment. The way of ending the course usually depends on an agreement between a supplier and employer. The suppliers mostly have a stated form of their course evaluation. In case a client has another but fulfilable idea the supplier makes effort to find a happy medium to satisfy the client.

We cannot generalize if the participants receive or do not the certificate at the course end. Nevertheless **in cases, when they receive the certificate, there is an usual condition of attendance.**

“Certificates (with a validation) are issued by an independent certificated center. If a language school issues own certificate, it has usually no validation. We (instead of a certificate) prepare a final evaluation (that also includes final tests results). The evaluation should help our student to improve in English - it informs him/her about language knowledge in the various viewpoints but also includes recommendations for further student learning. It should help student to prepare for an international examination. We usually prepare students for Cambridge examinations. If a participant pasts examination, then he gains a certificate with international validation.” (Supplier E)

“We do not make out certificates for our course participants and we do not see it as a competitive disadvantage. I do not know about something like that in our branch of education. We have already faced a situation, when a customer requested a certificate with a stamp to prove that the participants completed the course. If the enterprise is interested in receiving the certificate for the participants, we are able to arrange that. Otherwise it is not for us a standard matter.” (Supplier F)

“We use questionnaires to discover if the participants are satisfied, what they feel as pointless, the most difficult and how they evaluate lecturers. In case of company training we find out what the participants want to concentrate on more or less also during the course run. There can follow some course changes and we use evaluation results when planning a new term.” (Supplier G)

“We use questionnaires to establish opinions of the participants on technical matters (classroom facilities, timetable), informational contribution of the course, access of the instructor, level of training materials. On the basis of comments of the participants we are able to offer possible changes in courses.” (Supplier H)

“It depends on the agreement with the customer. It depends on the concrete aim. We do not give any certificates to our participants if the customer does not require that (which is exceptional, not very frequent). By smaller educational courses we usually provide a final assessment – it depends on requirements of the customer, if it should be evaluation of the team with some conditions, recommendations, where they should lead up to ... or if it should be evaluation of individuals.” (Supplier I)

4.3 Innovation

The last innovative offer

Profile of the last innovative offer is so diverse by sole suppliers that any generalization becomes impossible. Companies often arrange tailor-made courses and see it as innovative contribution.

In some of the most often forms of innovations indisputably belong course innovations (subject matter, teaching methods and environment), which can be instigated by market demand, but also ideas of lecturers, management or directly course participants, technical progress etc.

There are mentioned some examples of the last innovative offers of the respondents of this survey:

“We were preparing a multimodule programme for management of a hospital. We introduced “homework” for the participants among particular modules. They had to prepare miniprojects, which were later presented in workshops. Some of the miniprojects were put into practise in the hospital.” (Supplier C)

“We have been working on programme change. Relating to this there has emerged a new area of education – Training and development of managerial skills, where we have improved the existing method of teaching. We have mostly focused on a group of course participants as a whole, but now we are trying to reflect their individual requirements (groups consist of about 10-15 people).” (Supplier F)

“A course for top management of a company based on a nontraditional teaching method – pantomime.” (Supplier I)

A really innovative offer

The idea of a really innovative offer varies a lot by the suppliers (to a large extent dependent on type of the supplier and their projects, target groups, educational market development in this area etc) so that it is not possible to generalize.

- *“In our branch it would be e-learning innovative, because a lot of enterprises are starting to think if to send their people on a two-day course or give them one hour daily in working hours for the e-learning course.” (Supplier A)*
- *“The innovative thing would be individualized forms of education and training – for example casuistry, managers’ supervision. (Supplier C)*
- *“I generally see teaching of Russian language as an important innovation in our language agency for future (we are being contacted by foreign companies, which are interested in expanding in the East and consider CR as a suitable link). I see another innovation in trend to focus teaching on leading participants to obtain an international certificate. Final assessment will become a device how to reach such a certificate. Future belongs to specialized courses focused on professional English and English for specific purposes.” (Supplier E)*
- *“The most innovative thing would occur at tailor-made courses. We have had a rather low active access so far, we have been mostly contacted. But personal contact is very important. We are going to contact companies actively, offer trainings according to clients’ requirements, accurately tailor-made. We would appreciate companies bringing their ideas and we would prepare a precisely specified programme. We do not want only companies to plan, because they do not need to have good knowledge of the area of education. We are going to provide package public courses well connected to provided software – nowadays we offer only easily combined package courses, which can be ordered on favourable price; newly it would be possible to buy a package “software + training supply” (these services are being sold separately at the moment). We are also go-*

ing to improve contents of our courses, change them, and harmonize with requirements from the questionnaires. (Supplier G)

- *“Innovations considering users’ comfort while operating are of considerable importance, they increase productivity of labour while using the software. The main target is to reduce service to its simplest form and make work with the system more effective. These partial improvements often come up from the users. Another area of innovation is closely joined to growing possibilities of GIS use in connection to Internet expansion (web services, map services, server technologies). We make effort to open GIS to a large range of users through Internet or Intranet and not to limit the use only on specialists.” (Supplier H)*
- *“Experience training method extension based on interconnection between theoretical knowledge and a strong experience. We have been finding and harmonizing extension of our offer, so that we would be able to join more unusual activities. Our training courses are experience method based. We cooperate to a travel agency to diversify our offer. Through their agency we can use their guides, instructors and connect their and our activities together etc. We always make effort to prepare something innovative and interesting for companies. Training course offer is still being developed, there are appearing professionals, who focus on new, unusual nontraditional) educational methods.” (Supplier I)*

5. Summary

- All the requested suppliers jointly share an opinion of importance of their own web sites and the Internet in contacting enterprises. Internet and Internet advertising are seen by the suppliers as an important device for an initial contact to a client.
- CVT suppliers mostly cooperate with enterprises in the preparatory phase, when the cooperation consists mostly in finding and specifying of rules and aims of the training project.
- Majority of the suppliers uses various methods to stay in touch with existing clients.
- Well-established companies, which usually feel sufficient demand of both existing and new clients; mostly do not feel a need to launch an active campaign to raise a range of new clients.
- The suppliers mostly mentioned that one of the most important sources of gaining new clients are reference, recommendations from management or course participants, reputation of company and membership in an association or union.
- Course implementation itself takes place either in premises of the supplier, client or somewhere in neutral ground that is typical especially for training programmes focused on softskills, outdoor training or entertainment.
- Course division in “open” and “tailor-made” is not strict. Realized tailor-made courses are mainly subsequently included in general supply.
- Majority of the suppliers presents as the most important in cooperation with enterprises: personal contacts with personnel officers (resp people in charge of trainings), communication with competent person (in the viewpoint of decisions making and professionalism); functional, effective communication, reliability, mutual sincerity, confidence in relation with a client and awareness.
- The majority of suppliers stress the importance of appropriate setting and outlining of course according requirements and knowledge of the client, initial positive motivation of course participants and continuous and final feedback. In case of appliance suppliers, it is active use of the supplied product.
- In most of the cases there is not included any other side like employers’ association, Trade Unions or Chamber of Commerce within cooperation (on concrete orders) between suppliers and enterprises.
- The third subject, which steppes in, often is a sub-supplier with various orientation, e.g. specialists, external experts - lecturers, accommodation facilities, appliances

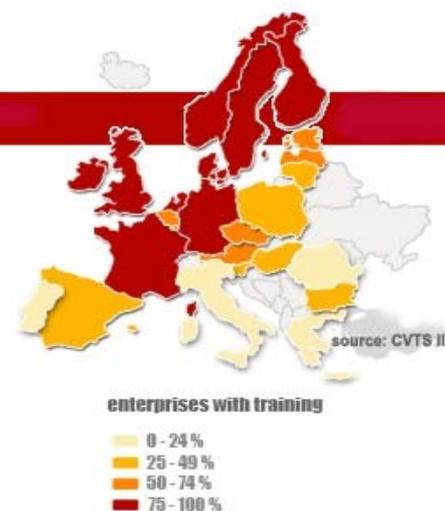
used during the course, travel agency, a firm from the same training field (a competitor) etc.

- Training suppliers make effort to cultivate market in some training areas. They see foundation of an association or union (cooperation among suppliers of the same training field) as a means, which would help e.g. make quality of training services more transparent, arrange some standards, be a source for further methodical development etc.
- Suppliers mostly share an opinion that there exists growing self-consciousness of enterprises in human resource area. More and more enterprises are planning trainings for their employees and personnel officers are becoming more professional.
- In the viewpoint of the changes in the last three years, some suppliers monitor: growing importance of training services, becoming trend of long-term partnerships between an enterprise and a supplier, growing interest of enterprises to focus on effectiveness of their investments in training and to control quality of outputs.
- Interest in entertainment and experience company courses is growing. They are mostly about brand and feeling of identification with the company support, also common experience and teambuilding. Expert side stays in the background.
- There has grown a strongly competitive environment in some of continuing training areas. Enterprises put pressure on lower prices of training courses.
- There is a growing trend to train employees—experts in another, particularly language and IT field. i.e. enterprises want to have employee—expert that is also able to e.g. translate text in foreign language (that only external translator translated) or to use IT programme (that only IT experts mainly used).
- The changes planned and expected by suppliers mostly depend on the type of supplier and their projects, target groups and character of enterprises, which create the main clientele of the suppliers. Some suppliers share an opinion that clients' demand will be removed from fundamental courses to specialized. Some of the suppliers expect decrease of mass trainings and increase of aimed individual and small-team training programmes. The most frequently planned changes happen in offer and matter of offered courses and in creating new projects.
- Strategy of finding enterprises' training requirements varies a lot; it is in the range between two poles. On one side it is survey and analysis of objective information. On the other side it is survey and analysis of information provided by a client and course participants.
- The suppliers mention these selection criteria (from enterprises' side) as significant: price, quality of courses, professional experience of the supplier, reference and accreditation of courses. A phase of specifying the order seems to be cardinal, because until here a real relation between price – output, effect, quality is seen.
- Suppliers are informed about ISO possibilities; some of them have it at their disposal, nevertheless the majority of them finds priorities somewhere else and agree on an opinion that clients do not feel it as important.
- Suppliers see a guarantee of quality in gaining a membership, a licence of an association, union of educational subjects under stated conditions. Another guarantee of quality, which some of the suppliers use, is accreditation of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Ministry of Education.
- The suppliers mostly evaluate their programmes by using evaluational standardized questionnaires completed by course participants.
- Ending of a training course varies a lot from the certification side. The course participants usually obtain one of the following variants: a certificate, confirmation of completion of the course or a final assessment. The way of ending the course usually depends on an agreement between a supplier and employer.
- In some of the most often forms of innovations indisputably belong course innovations (subject matter, teaching methods and environment), which can be instigated by market demand, but also ideas of lecturers, management or directly course participants, technical progress etc.

National interview report of Denmark



Continuing Vocational Training in Europe Benchmarks and Best Practice



Phase 2 – Work Package 8

A view on the supply side of the Danish CVT-system

Danish national report

Centre for Labour Market Research (CARMA), Aalborg University, Denmark

John Houman Sørensen
Lars Rune Møller

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Content and structure of the report

This report is a part of “CVTS-revisited” which is a large and cross-national European research project. The report gives an in-dept view on the supply side of the Danish system for continuing vocational training (CVT) and can be considered the Danish contribution to work package 8 of the European research project. This mean that the report both include the analysis on existing CVT-market surveys and the study based on the interviews with 10 Danish CVT-suppliers which are the two core studies of work package 8. The price study and the results from the provider questionnaires have been handed in to the project coordinators. These results will be reported as part of the cross national synthesis report.

Some of the topics for the market survey and the interviews with the suppliers are closely related. Including both studies in the same report gives us the opportunity to triangulate the data whenever it is possible thereby further qualifying the understanding of the supply side of the Danish CVT-system.

The report is divided into four chapters. The first chapter introduces the reader to some of the main characteristics of the Danish CVT-system. The second chapter elaborates on the methodology of the research conducted for the report. Chapter three and four describe and analyze the data collected on the CVT-providers.

Chapter 1 – Introduction to the Danish CVT-system

In order to fully understand the data collected for this report, a short introduction to the Danish CVT-system is considered necessary. In short one could argue that understanding the strategies and behavior of the Danish CVT-providers is simply not possible without at least a limited understanding of the most important framework conditions of the system. Even though the Danish CVT-system is rather cohesive, as a policy arena it can be considered a highly diversified system, consisting of different subsystems each with its own characteristics, institutional arrangements, actors, history and policy profile.²³

This chapter outlines some of the most important characteristics of the Danish CVT-system. Since 1960, a public provisioned CVT-system was established for unskilled workers. This public provisioned CVT-system has expanded to other target groups and during the years it has grown to be a very important part of securing a highly skilled and flexible labour force in Denmark. Today public supported continuing vocational training is an integrated part of the Danish educational system. This chapter rolls out the history of the public Danish CVT-system and shortly elaborates on its current situation. Finally the chapter gives a very short introduction to the private CVT-market.

Public provision 1 – history of the AMU system

Public provisioned CVT was initiated in 1960 through the establishment of the so-called AMU-system. In the 1950s a lack of qualified skilled workers had been identified and a commission had been set up with the purpose of solving the problem. The majority of the representatives came from the unskilled workers' unions and on the employers' side from the trade associations that specialized in employing unskilled workers. The commission came up with the idea of a ramified, modular educational system for unskilled workers delivered by a number of local AMU-centers. The basic features of this system persist even today. The unemployed also had access to the public provisioned CVT through the employment system. The most important goal of the 1960-reform was to support the transition of unskilled labour from agriculture to the expanding urban trades. This education system was intended to be as close to labour market needs as possible and was designed according to a trade principle, thereby also contributing towards re-allocation and mobility between industrial sectors. The Ministry of Labour was responsible for this new education system, which was under corporatist administration.²⁴

1965 – Access for the skilled workers

The new training and education system quickly became popular, and from 1965 a similar modular system of supplementary training for skilled workers was established as well, also with a corporatist administration. This administration had a structure of several committees - one for each trade - where the unions and the employers' organizations each appointed half of the members.²⁵ Each committee negotiated and developed the courses for their particular area of trade. The programmes for the courses were planned in a rather detailed fashion which gave a limited flexibility for the local AMU centers to e.g. meet particular demands from the enterprises. However the enterprises, the employees and the unemployed did get access to a state financed CVT with a reimbursement rate at the level of the unemployment benefit rate implying that the employers had to pay a relatively small amount to let their employees maintain their usual earnings during CVT-course activity. The Ministry of Labour financed each local AMU centre and the social partners and the Ministry of Labour negotiated the exact allocation of funds.

²³ CARMA: 2006: p4

²⁴ CARMA: 2006: p.5ff

²⁵ CARMA: 2006: p.7

1985 – Access for technicians and introduction of revenue-funded course activity

In 1985 technicians and other professions got access to the AMU-system and perhaps more important at the same time the financial part of the system was reformed opening up the possibility for revenue-funded activities. In reality this meant that the system was now able to deal better with specific demands from the enterprises. If the contents of the courses, or part of it, were not in accordance with the centrally planned programmes, the enterprises had to pay the tuition fees themselves. The Ministry of Labour were however still responsible for the reimbursement for the loss of income.

1996 – Introduction of economic steering through a taximeter system

The financing of the system was reformed again in 1996 as a taximeter model for the AMU-centers was introduced. The allocation of funds was now fully dependent on the number of course participants and the public providers were now the main responsible actors for securing the quality of the courses.

2000 –The current system

In 2000 the whole system for further education was subject to an extensive reform, which also influenced the AMU-system in many ways. The Ministry of Education acquired the responsibility for the system in favor of the Ministry of Employment and the previously fixed structure of the courses and their use was greatly flexibilised.²⁶ Colleague graduates got limited access to the AMU-system but the unemployed lost their extensive access to the courses now being limited to only six weeks of course activity during unemployment. The reimbursement grant stayed untouched apart for the introduction of a minor user fee.

Other forms of public supported continuing training

The AMU-system is not the only public supported organization delivering continuing training in Denmark. Other important organizations are the centers for adult education (VUC), the business schools and the schools for technical education. However the VUC centers primarily cover general, liberal and adult education and as such do not primarily focus on continuing vocational training. Nevertheless they provide general preparatory courses to strengthen the basic skills of adults. These courses are free and can be organized to fit into the everyday life of the participant. This means that they can take place on the workplace.²⁷ The business schools primarily basic education and continuing vocational training in mercantile topics at high-school level. The technical schools deliver basic education and supply the labour market with a skilled labour force. They also deliver continuing vocational training for the skilled labour force.

Corporate administration of the training supply

One of the main purposes of the public provisioned CVT is to provide labour market relevant qualifications for enterprises as well as for individuals. In other words the public provision must ensure that a broad range of interests are met. The different interest groups are relying on institutionalized mediation, negotiation and cooperation by the social partners on different levels and in different branches.

The central steering system is based on cooperation between the Ministry of Education and boards of representatives of the social partners. The boards have been established for each sector or trade and are continually developing the programmatic guidelines for local CVT. The content of these programmes are approved by a central board (REVE). In this way, the labour market's supply of qualified manpower becomes a result of, not some kind of "imme-

²⁶ CARMA: 2004: p.3-4

²⁷ CARMA: 2006 p.10

ciate”, direct demand from the single enterprise, but of a kind of “mediated” demand, co-influenced by socio-political processes, shaping the Vocational/Qualification Structure.²⁸

At the local level the same principles are applied which means that the contents of the courses are developed in close cooperation through local boards or networks between the industry and the AMU-centers. This corporative involvement secures that the contents of the courses are highly relevant to the qualification needs of the given branch or sector. At the local level the courses are based on the current regional labour market and predictions on the future needs for qualifications.

Public provision 2 – The benefits of the AMU-system and the effects of the reforms

Since 1960 there has been a broad public and political agreement behind the view that further education is absolutely necessary and the Danish CVT-policy, with AMU as the prior instrument, has pursued a broad range of political targets:

- Augmentation of productivity, “modernization” of skills (*industrial policy*)
- Increased flexibility and mobility on the labour market (*labour market policy*)
- Reducing unemployment through education and job training (*employment/social policy*)
- Promoting general qualifications, incl. societal knowledge (*educational/egalitarian policy*)

The broad range of political targets has made public intervention and spending legitimate. The four aspects are probably still to be found - as integrated elements in complex financial and organizational patterns - in Danish CVT-policy, even though the balance between them has changed in favor of a more “liberalistic” market-orientation due to the reforms and changes as described in the previous section of this chapter.²⁹

The benefits of the system and the effects of the different reforms

A lot of different actors from scientist to the social partners agree on the benefits that the public provisioned CVT has offered for the labour market in general as well as for the enterprises, the employed and the unemployed. Employers have since 1960 gotten a relative cheap upgrading of the vocational skills or competences in general, thus upholding or increasing their competitiveness at a relative low cost. The ongoing and often demand oriented reforms of the system has in general favored the enterprises giving them a larger local influence on the content of the supply of courses. The introduction of user fees has not changed this picture considerably but larger amounts of user fees might do that. The employees and the unemployed have had good opportunities to increase their vocational skills through the AMU-system thus increasing their value, functionality and mobility both within the enterprise and on the labour market in general. However as noted in the previous section, the 2000 reform limited the access for the unemployed to six weeks of CVT as part of a labour market policy focusing on quick reintegration on the labour market for the employees. Due to this limited access and due to the fact that the responsibility for the system has been given to the Ministry of Education, both the number of participants and the intensity of CVT for the unemployed have dropped considerably. This is the main reason behind a general drop in the number of AMU-participants. The public employment system has reduced its use of AMU-courses because they are no longer financed by the Ministry of Employment making the courses more expensive.

²⁸ CARMA: 2004: p.4

²⁹ Sørensen og Jensen: 2000: p.3-4

The public CVT-provision and the flexicurity model

The reforms and changes to the Danish CVT-system and the Danish labour market policy has raised a lot of questions concerning e.g. the rights and opportunities for the unemployed as well as the labour market mobility for the employed. One may argue that the sustainability and the foundation of the contemporary quite famous Danish flexicurity model are under serious pressure.

The AMU system has played an important part in building up the Human Capital of the employed and the unemployed as well as leading the way for a highly skilled and flexible labour market thus supporting both flexibility and security on the Danish labour market. However the public provision of CVT for the unemployed is now to a larger degree functioning under a Work First regime. This and the ongoing liberalization of the system threaten the “security”-side of the Danish labour market model.

Currently the financing of the reimbursement rate is a subject to ongoing discussion and negotiations by the minister of finance and the social partners. They have already reached an agreement that the state should no longer be responsible for the grant funding. At the present time it seems that a model, under which the social partners themselves will finance the reimbursement through the collective agreements, is the most probable alternative.

The private market for CVT

The private market for CVT is a heterogeneous and in-transparent system consisting of several submarkets. Describing the private market for CVT is thus a quite complex task.³⁰ Keeping it simple one could argue that the private market encompasses the CVT not managed through the public provision. The private market and the private providers can thus be seen as a supplement to the public providers.

The private providers are operating and competing on a market and their customers are typically financing the courses themselves. This means that the behavior and strategy of the private providers are heavily influenced by their customers. The courses offered are aimed at companies in a wide variety of branches and the course participants are for the most part people with medium-length education or university degrees. Typically their work requires a lot of cooperation with different colleagues in professional fields which continually demands them to develop their competences. Another target group for the private providers is executives, managers and employees holding responsibility of different kind. Softer courses focusing on personal and career development are more widespread on the private market.³¹

³⁰ FM: 2006 p.235

³¹ FM: 2006: p.233f

Chapter 2 – Methodology

In this chapter we account for the methodology used in collecting the data.

Interviews with the providers

The interviews conducted with the training suppliers were implemented in the form of semi-structured interviews. Ten training suppliers were chosen according to pre-established criteria's (see table below).

The selection of the training suppliers was done according to the distribution in CVTS2. The following training suppliers were selected:

Table 1 - Training suppliers interviewed		
Type of provider	Number of interviews	Suppliers³² (see below)
Public schools and colleges	3	A,B,C
Universities	0	
Specialized training institutions	2	D,E
Private training organizations	3	F,G,H
Equipment suppliers	0	
Parent / associate companies		
Unions	1	I
Chambers of commerce, sector bodies, employers' organizations	1	J
Other training supplier		

Table information: The number of interviews and identification code of supplier.

Eight of the ten interviews were executed by telephone. The respondents were contacted by phone and the interview was either carried out immediately or an appointment was made for later execution of the interview. Two of the interviews with the suppliers were done face-to-face. Information about the Leonardo project was provided in two ways, firstly as an introduction when asking for the respondents participation and secondly as a briefing before carrying out the interview. All of the contacted suppliers agreed on participating in the interview. The differentiation in the methods of gathering the data is not considered having any impact on the quality of the interviews.

The interviews were taped and summaries in Danish have been made. Reports of these interviews are not published, but there will be added a few quotes in this report. The suppliers and their data are anonymous because of the sensitivity of the topic.

The interviews focused on the three topics as agreed by the project partners. No extra topics were included in the interview guide.

There are a few limitations of the data collected which calls for further explanation. Given the small population of providers interviewed the data collected can not be characterized as representative for the Danish CVT-providers. Second, even though the interviews were qualitative and semi-structured, they should be considered as rather descriptive and introductory only scratching the surface on the given topics. Also the reliability of the data collected can be questioned as we have only interviewed representatives from the providers on the different topics. All the above suggests that some reservation must be made towards the data collected.

³² Further introduction to the training providers are given in the following chapter.

However as mentioned earlier we are using other data sources and thereby further qualifying the data collected.

Finally the CVTS2 categorization of providers does not take the special characteristics of the Danish CVT-system into account. For the analysis of the providers, we have therefore decided to split the providers in two group's respectively public and private providers. Analytically this should provide a more valid and clear picture of the Danish CVT-providers thereby also leaving room for further qualifying future cross-national comparisons.

The market survey

The market survey has been conducted by using existing and quantitative data. It was not possible to find data on all of the topics and in some cases we have used data collected from the provider interviews. From the view of CARMA the main purpose of the market survey is to provide data for cross-national analysis. This means that the report is descriptive focusing on presenting and preparing the data for further cross-national analysis.

Chapter 3 – Report on training providers interviewed

In this chapter we will look further into the data produced from the interviews with the training suppliers. First we shall look at the relations between the suppliers and the enterprises, followed by coverage of the quality measures that the suppliers apply. After analyzing aspects revolving around innovation in the CVT-business we conclude this chapter by taking a short look at some interesting examples of different kinds of networks that the providers participate in.

Differences in framework conditions, target groups, content of the courses and further on all point to the fact that the Danish CVT-system is a highly differentiated system. This is the case for both the public and the private part of the system. Having read chapter 1, and thereby being introduced to the Danish CVT-system, it should come as no surprise for the reader that the differences between the providers are also quite substantial. Grouping the providers seems necessary. *For the analysis, the CVT-suppliers have been divided into two group's respectively public and private providers.* Suppliers A to D are all public providers whilst suppliers E-J are all private providers. Before we start analyzing the data collected a short introduction on each of the training providers interviewed is given.

Introducing the suppliers

Supplier A is a public supported organization that provides a wide range of educational activities mainly in trade and economics. Beside CVT-courses in the field of e.g. IT, sale, economics, language, communication, leadership, supplier A functions as a public school of business. Supplier A delivers its services from five departments all localized in Aalborg. The total number of staff is 337, 22 of these are employed in the CVT department. In addition to this a number of external trainers and subcontractors carry out some of the activities. Supplier A offers a combination of tailor-made and standard CVT-courses. The customers or clients range from unemployed people to enterprises, public institutions and their employees. The length of the courses varies from short one day courses to long-term courses. Supplier A is considered a public CVT-provider.

Supplier B is a public supported organization that provides a wide range of educational activities in mainly technical science and craft. Beside vocational oriented CVT-courses related to subject and branches as e.g. IT, electronics, technical design, hairdressers, bricklayers, tourism, smiths and other craftsmen supplier B primarily deliver education in technical science (at high school level) and advanced studies. Beside that supplier B also provide courses for unemployed to upgrade their skills. Supplier B delivers its services from eleven departments all localized in Aalborg. The total number of staff is 650 including regular educational activities and the CVT department. Supplier B offers a combination of tailor-made courses and standard courses. Approximately 1/3 of the courses are prepared directly for companies while 2/3 is open standard courses. The customers or clients range from unemployed people to enterprises, public institutions and their employees. The length of the courses ranges from one day to long-term courses. Supplier B is considered a public CVT-provider.

Supplier C is a public supported organization that provides a wide range of general, liberal and adult CVT-activities for people having a short education. Supplier C runs school courses to upgrade skills in reading, spelling, writing and math. Supplier C delivers its services from headquarter in Aalborg and eleven regional branches situated in the northern region of Denmark. The total number of staff is 300. On a yearly basis the supplier has 10.000 participants in both tailor-made and standard courses. The main clients are industrial companies and public employees. Supplier C is considered a public CVT-provider.

Supplier D is a public supported specialized training organization and function as an AMU-centre³³. CVT courses are divided into seven competence areas related to transport, building, electronics and technology, service, nursery garden, process and organizational development. The total number of staff is 230. Supplier D offers a combination of tailor-made and standard courses. The customers or clients range from unemployed people to enterprises, public institutions and their employees. Supplier D is considered a public CVT-provider.

Supplier E is a private specialized training organization that offers engineering counseling. The CVT courses are divided into main areas focusing on design, operation and maintenance of industrial machines and development of products and concepts. Beside these courses with a focus on updating technical skills, Supplier E also offers courses in system and management development. Supplier E delivers its services from headquarters in Copenhagen and eight regional sites situated in some of the major cities. Supplier E furthermore has subsidiary companies in Sweden, Norway, Netherlands, USA, Brazil and Russia. The total number of staff in Denmark is 949. Supplier E offers a combination of tailor-made and standard courses. The main customers or clients are public organizations and private companies. Supplier E is considered a private CVT-provider.

Supplier F is a private independent training organization founded of the textile industry. Supplier F offers advanced studies and CVT courses primarily in design, purchase, sale and management. The educational activities are related to main areas as: textile and clothing; shoes and leather; furniture and interior. The total number of staff is 135 and in addition to this a number of external trainers and subcontractors carry out some of the activities. Supplier E offers primarily standard courses and a small amount of tailor-made courses.

Supplier G is a private commercial training organization co-operating with public job centers to get unemployed in job by offering CVT-courses. The participants receive practical education and trainee work combined with individual education executed by suppliers G's educational consultants in co-operation with supplier A, supplier B and private educational institutions. Supplier G delivers its services from headquarters in Copenhagen and six regional branches situated in some of the major Danish cities. The total number of staff is 52. Supplier E primarily offers standard courses.

Supplier H is a private commercial training organization that offers CVT-courses in management. The CVT courses are divided into main areas focusing on management development, management competences, personal development and coaching. Supplier H offers a combination of standard and tailor-made courses.

Supplier I is a CVT-provider with ties to a large trade union. The CVT course participants are members of the union who is primarily employed in the public sector. Supplier I concentrate their activities on different kinds of project management and coaching. There are 12 employees in the CVT department. In addition to this a number of external trainers and subcontractors carry out some of the activities. Supplier I offer both standard and tailor-made courses.

Supplier J offers courses in management and for entrepreneurs. The courses for entrepreneurs are focused on guidance on how to start up a company and furthermore set the participants up in networks. As a supplement supplier J also offers courses and counseling in management systems, systemically environmental management, product- and enterprise-

³³ See chapter 1 for further introduction to the Danish AMU-system

development and food safety. The areas of competences are in entrepreneur, products, production technology, management systems, organizational development, funding, export, internationalizing and generation shift. Supplier J offers a combination of standard and tailor-made courses.

Relations between suppliers and enterprises

Relations between suppliers and enterprises take place both formally and informally and are influenced by the history and structure of the Danish CVT-system. In reality this means that the relations are taking many different forms and that they are heavily influenced by central, local and branch level actors as well as history and tradition. Ultimately relations between suppliers and enterprises are an empiric question. However some general tendencies and interesting phenomenon's can be identified.

In general cooperation between the suppliers and the enterprises is an important part of the Danish public CVT-system. Cooperation and negotiation is institutionalized in the local boards as described in chapter one. Relations also take place in other institutionalized forms or network as well as informally and typically between the training provider and medium the larger enterprises. This is the case for the public as well as for the private providers.

The public providers

The public providers plan and deliver courses for a rather wide target group of both employed and unemployed. They deliver everything from general and liberal adult education to vocational education. These courses are often planned and developed for certain branches or certain target groups. In general the public providers are primarily oriented towards the skilled and unskilled labour force in branches of industry and manufacture. However as noted in chapter 1 there is also access for technicians, academics and the unemployed. The public providers have competences on different areas, some focusing on serving the white-collar staff of the corporate world; others primarily serve the industry or people having a shorter education. The public providers deliver both low cost standard and tailor-made courses.

The public CVT-system can be looked upon as a quasi marked ultimately forcing the public providers to pay a lot of attention to the demand of their direct customers. Due to the taximeter system, as described in chapter one, the public training institutions have an economic incentive in raising their number of course participants. To ensure that their courses are in touch with the demand from the enterprises, the providers generally have representatives from the enterprises in their vocational committees or boards. They also offer training directly on the particular work place. In general all of the public providers interviewed were very much demand driven, and more than relying on enterprises to establish contact, they strategically contacted enterprises looking to establish some kind of collaboration ultimately leading to CVT-activity. In general the enterprises are offered CVT at a very low cost and also have the possibility of influencing the supply offered. Enterprises with a demand for the types of courses that the public providers can deliver thus have an interest in a rather tight relationship with the public providers. Consequently this means that the enterprises are either relatively closely related to the public training providers or share none or little relation with them. The latter are often smaller enterprises, enterprises without a large demand for the types of courses offered or enterprises who have established internal CVT-systems.

One of the public providers (provider B) has explicitly chosen a strategy that is fully market driven. They form their organization and their activities according to the demand of the enterprises. They analyze the enterprises demand for CVT and contact medium and large enterprises in different branches. They have employed staff who understands the economic side of the public CVT-system to service the enterprises in reaping the benefits from of the reim-

bursements rates and tuition fees. They also offer help with administrative burdens. The provider has established a database on the enterprises. It contains information on the qualifications of their employees and general information on their areas of interest. Based on these data they send out unique brochures to the enterprises.

In addition to meeting the demands of the management, one of the providers (provider A) are also emphasizing that they include the individual employee in planning and executing their CVT-activities. They typically cooperate with the HR-manager and representatives of the employees focusing on putting together courses which are flexible according to the need and wishes of the individual employee. The objective is to secure courses which satisfy the demands of both the employer and the employees. They send out CVT-consultants before they initiate the courses. These consultants analyze the culture and expectations of the employees. However they are not planning the courses directly with the employees. They believe that including the employees is necessary in order to secure successful courses.

As described earlier in this section the public providers are primarily driven by demand and operate as actors on a quasi-market. However they do not compete on price as these are fixed at least for the standard courses. The primary objective of the public providers is to secure the highest possible number of course participants to ensure further grants from the state. The public providers thus compete on slightly different parameters than the private providers. The interviewed providers all note that courses of high quality are important which should come as no surprise. Some of them also point out the importance of being flexible both in the content of the courses and in accordance to the delivery of the courses. Intensive courses are easier to sell for the providers because the enterprises typically can't do without their employees for longer durations of time. This is especially the case for smaller companies.

“The all-important parameters are time and quality” (Interview with provider A)

It is also important that the course material is directly applicable for the core functions of the employees. Using the internet is increasingly seen as important especially towards new customers.

The private providers

As noted in chapter one, the private provider are market driven and primarily focus on branches and target groups not covered by the public provision. It's simply impossible for the private providers to compete with the public supported provision of CVT. Private providers typically deliver shorter courses and conferences. These usually have duration of two or three days. A lot of providers are also selling modular course programmes which totally amount to two weeks. Only 10 % are providing the opportunity of using E-learning.³⁴

There is a large variety in the demand for the types of CVT that the private providers can deliver. This means that the private providers operate and compete on several sub-markets. To give a few examples some providers have developed competences in CVT for business managers, some for employees in public administration and others provide CVT for different branches like the textile and clothing business. The market for private providers is thus highly differentiated. Describing the market for private providers on the basis of interviewing only a few is similar to describing a room having only looked through the keyhole. In general the market for private providers consists of commercial firms, branch related and/or independent organizations, employer's organizations and trade unions. Sharing two thirds of the market, the commercial providers are by far the dominating type of provider.³⁵

³⁴ FM: 2006 p.247

³⁵ FM: 2006 p.237f

In general the relations between the private providers and the enterprises are considered to be quite tight. However the forms that the relations take differ quite much. Most of the customers of the consultancy firms are enterprises and their key staff, while the branch related providers primarily focus on delivering courses for the enterprises within their branch. This means that the strategy of these types of providers is centered on establishing tight and long-lasting relationships with the enterprises. The branch related provider (provider F) interviewed has established tight relationships with lots of enterprises within their branch and continually discuss the current and future need and demand for CVT. In addition to this, every second year they analyze the qualifications and competences needed in order to ensure further growth in the branch. Most of their course participants are former students from one of their basic vocational training programmes.

Looking at the trade unions and employer organizations the picture is slightly different as they primarily focus on delivering relevant courses for their members. This suggests that these types of providers are more oriented towards their individual members. Financing and permission to enter courses is however often decided on the basis of negotiations between the enterprise and the individual employee/member. Of course this means that these types of providers also have to pay attention to the needs of the enterprise, the organization or the institution that employ their members. The trade union interviewed is very much focused on delivering courses useful for both the individual member and their employer;

"To put it blunt, the course participants are looking to fulfill personal, professional and career oriented needs which means that they primarily look at their own personal development and career possibilities...The enterprises are looking to develop the competences of their employees towards their need. The interest of the enterprise and their employees come together on the professional level when both the employer and the employee agree that a given CVT course is directly useful at the enterprise." (Interview with provider I)

The union provider cooperates with enterprises covering their need for CVT and developing courses which are directly useful for the particular enterprise. However in analyzing the demand for CVT they primarily ask their members.

The picture from the interviews show that almost all of the private providers deliver both standard and tailor-made courses, most of them focusing on the latter. In general decisions on the types of courses to deliver are primarily driven by the demand on the market and the business strategy of the provider.

Just like the public providers, the private providers generally don't compete on the price of the courses. Instead they compete on parameters like quality, flexibility, innovative capability and ability to understand the enterprise and its needs. One of the consultancy firms (provider H) have based their entire strategy on the idea that developing employees both personally and professionally ultimately develops enterprises and creates growth. They try to establish connections with enterprises sharing that belief. For those types of enterprises the price is less important. The provider sees this duality in their approach as their main parameter of competition. The branch related provider and the union provider are very much focused on their brand as an organization and enterprise. They are trying to brand them selves as stable, well-known and quality-oriented providers and have no interest in taking part in price competition.

Quantitative data on the relations between suppliers and enterprises

It is quite difficult to establish an exact overview as to how widespread a phenomenon relations and interactions between suppliers and enterprises are. Meanwhile data produced in a survey conducted by Oxford³⁶ gives a good estimate on the relation between private providers and enterprises. In the survey 252 private providers were interviewed. The providers were asked how they continually follow the development in the demand for different CVT-courses. Two thirds of the private providers identify the demand for CVT by continually having dialog with their largest customers.³⁷ Consequently it should be noted that informal relations between enterprises and private training institutions seems to be widely used. However it seems that the SME's are lacking behind in this area primarily due to the fact that the training institutions are not focusing on servicing these enterprises as much as the larger enterprises.³⁸

Quality measures of suppliers

In general quality measures are widely adopted by the CVT-providers in Denmark. Quality assurance is an important part of the public steering of the provision of CVT. According to law³⁹ the providers delivering public provision continually have to evaluate the quality of their education and training. The government is adapting measures to secure transparency, customer influence and choice in order to promote competition and quality in the provision. Important methods for securing quality in the courses are user evaluations and quality standards for the personnel. Furthermore the government is managing the public provision through inspection and supervision of continuing benchmarking of the effects and results of the provisions.⁴⁰ Most of the courses offered through public provision are certified and diplomas are delivered if the course demands an examination which is often the case. These courses often merits or qualify for participation in other courses.

The private providers are not obliged to apply quality measures and there is no widespread demand from their customers for extensive quality assurance. Consequently this means that the private providers are not using quality measures at the same degree as the public providers do. There is no coordinated quality assurance or public demand for certification of the courses. This suggests that the quality standards for the private providers are primarily market driven. If the customers demand quality measures or some sort of certification for participation in courses, the providers are prone to deliver. However the only quality control widely utilized by the private providers is user evaluations.⁴¹ The data from the Oxford survey show that 89 % of the private providers evaluate their courses by letting their participants give them feedback through written evaluation. Verbal evaluation are used by 67 % of the private providers and 65 % of them are strategically using CVT for their own teaching staff in order to secure quality. Only 3 % of the private are ISO-certified.⁴²

Quality measures of the public providers interviewed

Not surprising the public providers is first and foremost focusing on meeting the minimum requirements on quality as demanded from the Government. This means that in general they have all adapted quality measures on their courses and their staff. This however does not mean that they are all applying the same types of measures or methods.

Three out of the four public providers interviewed use their quality measures as an important part of their relation to their customers. One of the providers (provider D) is very focused on

³⁶ Now NewInsight

³⁷ Oxford: 2006: p.55

³⁸ CARMA and New Insight: 2005 p.12-13

³⁹ Law 144 on transparency and openness in the education system from the 6th of june 2002

⁴⁰ FM: 2006: p.132f

⁴¹ FM: 2006: p.132ff and p.233f

⁴² Oxford: 2006: p.31

giving their participants a good personal and professional experience. This provider is also very aware of using the same equipment as the enterprises do. Another provider (provider B) is evaluating the satisfaction of both their participants and their employers every second year. This evaluation is used to identify vocations and branches where the provider has to engage in further dialog in order to secure the future quality of the provision for this vocation or branch.

Quality measures of the private providers interviewed

As mentioned earlier there is no legal demand for quality measures on private market for CVT. Nevertheless the private providers have an interest in securing the quality of their courses. They need to know whether or not their customers are satisfied with the courses. Due to the fact that there are no public quality standards that the private providers have to meet, the strategies that private providers are applying in order to secure quality are somewhat different from the public providers and depend on the types of courses delivered, the branch area, the demand from the customers and on the culture within the provider and its general business strategy.

Some of the private providers are primarily delivering open courses attended by lots of participants from different enterprises and organizations while others are primarily focusing on delivering exclusive and tailor-made courses for each customer or a smaller group of customers. The former types of providers primarily use formal and quantitative measures to secure quality whilst the latter does the opposite. The quality of tailor-made courses is often secured in close cooperation with the enterprise. One of the providers (provider H) limits their number of participants in order to secure that each course participant benefits from the course. This provider rarely lets more than six persons participate in their courses.

In general the private providers do not have problems recruiting qualified staff. It is considered both prestigious and profitable to teach at a private provider. The private providers continually develop the competences of their core personnel. In order to minimize problems due to lack of qualifications they rely on networks and the use of external partners and consultants.

Innovation and development of courses

Gathering the data for this report we did not apply a clear definition on the term “innovation” thus giving room for a variety of interpretations. Some of the providers included the continual development of courses as a form of innovation while others limited the use of the term “innovation” to account for revolutionary new forms of shaping the CVT-supply. In order to minimize confusion, we define and use innovation in a broad sense including both views.

Innovation and development – public providers

As described throughout this report, governing and steering of the public provision is divided both centrally, regionally and locally and includes various actors from the social partners to government representatives. In addition to this, much of the content of the courses are influenced by the different branch level boards. These framework conditions limit the capability for the individual provider to freely develop and innovate their CVT-supply. Furthermore framework conditions as the taximeter system suggest a very demand led innovation in the public provision. To some extent it can be argued that the introduction of the taximeter system have forced the public providers to be innovative in different ways.

One of the providers is sharing its view on the need to be innovative;

“We must continually improve and develop our staff and our supply of courses because the world is always changing and we have to keep up with the pace and we do.” (Interview with provider A)

The provider has set up a council for development of their CVT-supply. The council freely disposes of one million Danish Crowns each year for innovation. Until now a lot of different results have come from this council all of them sharing one common denominator. The innovation has been demand oriented and has only focused on organizational matters and teaching methods.

The institutionalized framework conditions limit the individual public provider’s capability of being content-innovative. If a broad demand for new content in the CVT-course is identified, lots of formal procedures must be undertaken in order to secure that the new courses are publicly supported. This limits the public provision’s capability to support branches and enterprises with a fast moving and ongoing change in demand for qualifications and CVT. However the public providers have a degree of freedom and flexibility through their revenue funded course activity.

Innovation and development – private providers

The private providers do not share the same institutional framework conditions as the public providers suggesting that they have a higher capability of being innovative. In general the providers are innovative in accordance to the structures of the market they operate on. The customers of the private providers are often enterprises with a highly educated staff as their core employees. These enterprises are often product innovative suggesting a larger need for innovative solutions from CVT-providers.

Innovative capability is looked upon as quite an important parameter of competition and all the private providers interviewed look upon them selves as being very innovative. One of the providers (provider E) has 60 years of experience in innovative development of technological solutions for a broad range of business sectors and industries. They focus on transforming highly specialized engineering knowledge into practical and cost-effective solutions for the enterprise. Innovation is thus their main area of expertise. The branch oriented provider (provider F) is continually collecting information on the current development and innovation in the branch. They focus on delivering a content innovative product designed to improve their customers’ competitive advantages. Customers of these two types of providers are typically very product innovative.

Summary

The relations between the suppliers and the enterprises are very much demand led both for the public and for the private providers. In the public CVT-system local cooperation and negotiation are institutionalized in local CVT-boards securing courses that are highly relevant for the enterprises. Other relations between public providers and enterprises take form in different networks and also informally. In general the taximeter system is a larger driver of behavior for the public providers making them very demand oriented. It should come as no surprise that providers on the private market are even more demand led and try to establish tight business relations to relevant enterprises. However the union and employer organizations focus equally on their members. Concerning competition all of the providers agree that parameters like quality and flexibility are far more important than price.

As mentioned quality measures are widely adopted by the public CVT-providers in Denmark and are an important part of the public steering of the CVT-provision. The public providers have to evaluate the quality of their education and training. Most of the public courses are

certified. The private providers however are not obliged to apply quality measures and there is no widespread demand from their customers for extensive quality assurance. If the customers demand quality measures or some sort of certification for participation in courses, the providers are prone to deliver. However the only quality control widely utilized by the private providers is user evaluations.⁴³ So in spite that the private providers compete on quality they do not extensively and formally apply quality measures suggesting other forms of measuring quality on the private market.

In general innovation is something that all of the providers consider important but there are large differences between the public and the private providers. The public providers are limited by some of the framework conditions in the system making implementation of new and revolutionary ideas a slow process depending on the agreement of a lot of different actors and interest. However this slow process also secures that broad interests are met and that the courses are highly relevant. Furthermore the taximeter system suggests a very demand led innovation in the public provision. To some extent it can be argued that the introduction of the taximeter system have forced the public providers to be innovative in areas other than the content of the courses. The private providers do not share the same limiting institutional framework conditions as the public providers and innovative capability is looked upon as very important. All the private providers interviewed look upon them selves as being very innovative. In general the private providers are innovative in accordance to the structures of the market they operate on. The customers of the private providers are often product innovative enterprises with a highly educated staff as their core employees suggesting a larger need for innovative solutions from CVT-providers.

The use of networks

Finally it is interesting to have a closer look on networking on the Danish CVT-market. In addition to the institutionalized cooperation and negotiation which take place on different levels especially in the public Danish CVT-system, the providers are heavily relying on different types of networks. All the training providers interviewed considered networks very important and all of them participate in networks. There are large differences in the shape of the networks, some of them tighter and more frequently used than others, some of them consisting of different types of CVT-relevant actors, others only consisting of providers and so on. Full coverage of networking in the CVT-sector is ultimately an empirical task. In this section we draw attention to a few interesting examples of networking. The examples are inspired and drawn from the interviews with the CVT-suppliers.

Network Northern Jutland – Tight cooperation of public CVT-providers

In the Northern region of Denmark, all of the ten public CVT-providers have established a network in which they cooperate very tightly. All of the public providers interviewed are a part of this network. The main purpose of the network is to secure a coordinated, better and more demand led CVT-supply in the Northern region. The providers cooperating by sharing expertise, coordinating their supply and referring customers to each other in order to fully utilize the capacity of each provider in the network. This regional based network is a unique way of dealing with incentives like the taximeter system. All of the providers share a common ground in their interests in securing the quality of their own supply, maintain their customers, attracting new customers and ultimately increasing the number of people participating in their courses. In theory the network have the potential of improving the public CVT-system in many ways. One could argue that the network makes it easier for the individual CVT-provider to meet more specific demands from enterprises and that it improves the innovation capacity of the regional CVT-providers ultimately supporting economic and employment growth in the region.

⁴³ FM: 2006: p.132ff and p.233f

Textile and clothing – Networks of a private provider

The branch related provider (provider F) is participating in lots of different networks and considers networking to be absolutely vital. In general the branch for textile and clothing is internationally oriented and product innovative. The provider is cooperating and coordinating both with the social partners in their branch as well as networking with the Technical University of Denmark (DTU) and foreign universities and schools. Moreover they are networking and cooperating across branches trying to develop new and intelligent textiles products with the ICT-sector, the medicine industry and with the industry for nanotechnology. They are not participating in networks with larger enterprises as they get all the information they need on their demand through branch analyses.

Technological infrastructure – The GTS-network

One of the private providers (provider E) are primarily specializing in providing technologically innovative solutions for their customers and are participating in the so-called GTS-network together with nine other providers who share their specialization. These ten providers have all been approved as technological service institutes and together they cooperate and coordinate tightly in order to secure them selves as the most important providers of counseling and CVT for a broad range of business sectors and industries. Together they see them selves as a key actor in the further development of the technological infrastructure in Denmark. Apart from coordinating CVT-supply and reference of customers they act as an interest organization influencing different policy areas. Recently they had success with the passage of a resolution which established public support to SME's in applying for EU-research funds. In general they see them selves as playing an important role for innovative SME's. They identify a large potential for further growth in these enterprises and see them selves as important players in securing, developing and implementing the necessary technological infrastructure for this growth. The private provider is also cooperating tightly with enterprises and different foreign and national research environments.

Chapter 4 – Survey on the market for training suppliers

It has not been possible to collect quantitative data for all of the outlined variables. Furthermore analysis of existing quality measures and the cooperation of suppliers has been included as part of the previous chapter as have the data on the suppliers self assessment. The main purpose of this chapter is to present and prepare data for further analysis by the partnership.

Overview based on the CVTS2 data

External and internal CVT: overall price and volume in hours

From the CVTS data it can be derived that in average the Danish employees have spent 14 out of 1000 hours on CVT courses.⁴⁴ This means that the average Danish employee is spending 1,4%⁴⁵ of his working hours on CVT. There is no other EU country with a similar or higher score on this variable. The EU-15 average is 0,7%. The fact that the Danish enterprises are also spending the highest amount on CVT courses for their employees should therefore not come as a surprise. The Danish enterprises are spending 3% of their total labour costs on CVT courses. The EU-15 average is 2,3%.⁴⁶

Distribution of the overall training supply according to suppliers

As one can see from the table below most of the Danish training suppliers are specialized training institutions, private training institutions and public schools and colleges. The suppliers in these three categories are providing 64 % of the total amount of training.

Type of provider	Number of providers
Public schools and colleges	15
Universities	5
Specialized training institutions	30
Private training organizations	19
Equipment suppliers	6
Parent/associate companies	7
Unions	3
Chambers, sectoral bodies and employers organizations	6
Other providers	9

(Source: CVTS2: 2002: p.88)

Distribution of the training domains according to suppliers

It has not been possible to find any quantitative data on this subject and there are no exact guidelines defining this variable. To some extent we have already described the relation between different training domains and the suppliers. As outlined in the previous chapters of this report, the Danish CVT-market is consisting of several submarkets some broader and more large than others. Furthermore the suppliers are also different some focusing on one training domain some focusing on several domains. The section describing the relations between the providers and the enterprises have already mapped out the distribution between training domains and the suppliers.

⁴⁴ Eurostat, CVTS2 (1999): p.82

⁴⁵ Calculation: $(14/1000) * 100 \% = 1,4 \%$

⁴⁶ Eurostat, CVTS2 (1999): p.90

Structure of suppliers

Number of training providers

The exact number of both public and private CVT providers in Denmark is not known. There is no complete and continually updated database. However it is possible to give an estimate on both accounts. There are roughly around 5000 private providers of CVT courses.⁴⁷ Attaining the number of public CVT providers is a quite complicated process. There are 3556 public educational institutions in Denmark. 2420 of these are primary schools, which leaves us with 1136 other public educational institutions. The problem is that all of these very different institutions potentially can be CVT providers and in reality most of them are.⁴⁸

Distribution of training providers according to type

There are no data available on the overall distribution of all providers according to type apart from the data illustrated in section 2.2 of this report. There is however data on the total amount of participants enlisted in different types of providers, which can give an idea of the distribution of providers according to type. The data on the private providers is broken down by type of provider and their number of training participants. The data on the public providers is broken down by type of VEU supplier and the distribution of their training activities.

Type of provider	Number of participants	In percent
Private training organizations	106.800	36 %
Employers' organization/ trade organization	32.900	11 %
Unions	64.300	21 %
Alumni Associations	21.400	7 %
Self-governing institution	61.100	20 %
Educational association	14.000	5 %
Total	300.400	100 %

(Source: Danmarks statistik: 2005 p.108)

As the table shows the private market is dominated by respectively commercial companies, union providers and self-governing organizations.

Type of VEU provider	In percent
Liberal adult education	11 %
General adult education	49 %
Adult vocational oriented education	38 %
Other	2 %
Total	100 %

(Source: calculations made from ME: 2003; p.6)

As mentioned in the previous chapters there are different types of public providers. The public providers range from the AMU-centers over the business and technical schools to the VUC-centers. Concerning this variable we have however chosen to look at the types of courses delivered. Table 4 shows that almost half of the public providers deliver general adult education (49 %) whilst 38 % deliver adult vocational education. only 11 % deliver liberal education.

⁴⁷ FM: 2006: 234ff

⁴⁸ ME: 2005: p.43

The different types of courses are focusing on different target groups. To give an example the liberal education is something that is primarily directed towards civilians who pay a rather small user fee. Other types of courses are primarily labour market oriented and targeted to both the unemployed and the employed. Therefore this distribution should not be considered as an indicator for the enterprises usage of the public provisioned CVT. In general most enterprises are using the public provision for purposes which are vocational oriented and secondary they are using the offers for general education.

Training providers according to size

There is not any information available on the distribution of the Danish providers according to size. Based on the aforementioned survey made by Oxford Research it is nevertheless possible to estimate the distribution of the private providers.

Table 5 - Private providers according to size of company		
Number of employees	Number of providers	In percent
1-2 employees	99	40%
3-4 employees	27	11%
5-9 employees	33	13%
10-19 employees	29	12%
20-49 employees	24	10%
50-99 employees	15	6%
100-200 employees	11	4%
More than 200 employees	12	5%
Total	250	100%

(Source: FM: 2006: p.239)

Viewing the table one can clearly see that most of the private providers are rather small. However this does not mean that they also carry out most of the training. In fact the providers with 1-4 employees only carry out 4 % of the total amount of training hours provided by private companies. On the opposite it should be noted that even though there are only a relatively small number of large providers they are carrying out the largest amount of actual training. The providers with over 100 employees, which consist of 9 % of the total amount, provide 43 % of the total amount of training hours.⁴⁹

Development of the training supply market

For the public training supply market the figures available show that the total training activities has been shrinking substantially the last few years.⁵⁰ The government has made considerable cuts in the budget a few years ago which by some part was covered by user fees and efficiency improvements, but also partly explains the decrease in the supply of training.⁵¹ The public expenses for CVT have dropped 23 % from 1998 to 2002. During the same period a drop of 26.5 % in students enrolled in training can be identified.⁵² The supply from private providers has, contrary to the public supply, been growing although quite slowly.⁵³

⁴⁹ FM: 2006: p.234

⁵⁰ CARMA: 2006: p. 17 and FM: 2006: p. 233[0]

⁵¹ CARMA: 2006: p.4

⁵² ME: 2005: p.74

⁵³ FM: 2006: p. 233[0]

Number of training professionals involved

No data has been found for the number of training professionals involved. The previous variable on the development of the market suggest that the number of professionals on the private market has increased whilst the opposite is the case for the public provision. However as mentioned there is no data available.

Main training domains

As table 6 below show, the largest fields of training seems to be computers and computer software, followed by engineering, manufacturing and construction. Finally personal development is a rather large training domain. The rest of the training is widely spread in other domains.

<i>Table 6 - Percentage of Hours in CVT Courses by field of training</i>	
Field of training	In percent
Foreign language and cultures; mother tongue	3%
Wholesale and retail sales; marketing and advertising	5%
Finance, banking, insurance, accounting and taxation	3%
Management & administration	5%
Secretarial & office work	2%
Personal development; working life	9%
Computer science; computer use	15%
Engineering, manufacturing and construction	13%
Environmental protection; occupational health and safety	3%
Personal service (includes tourism, hotel, restaurant); transport services; security services	3%
Other fields of training	39%
Total	100%

(Source: CVTS2: 2002: p.88)

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⁵⁴ Link: http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/programmes/leonardo/new/leonardo2/cvts/index_en.html

⁵⁵ Link : http://epp.eurostat.cec.eu.int/cache/ITY_OFFPUB/KS-BP-02-007/EN/KS-BP-02-007-EN.PDF)

⁵⁶ <http://pub.uvm.dk/2005/taldertaler/87-603-2475-9.pdf>

⁵⁷ <http://pub.uvm.dk/2003/voksenuddannelse/hel.pdf>

⁵⁸ <http://www.fm.dk/1024/visPublikationesForside.asp?artikelID=8162>

National interview report of France

C V T S REVISITED

**Continuing Vocational Training in Europe
Benchmarks and Best Practice**



Report on investigated training suppliers in France (10 qualitative interviews)

February 2006

M'Hamed DIF
BETA/Céreq Alsace
University Louis Pasteur of Strasbourg

&
Strasbourg Conseil
(Subcontractor for the execution of the interviews)

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1. Investigation methodology

Ten face-to-face in-depth qualitative interviews (for 45 to 120 minutes) were conducted within different sized CVT providers to enterprises within Alsace region according to the interview guidelines agreed on by the consortium of “CVTS2-revisited” project. This process was implemented through the following main steps:

- CVT providers selection, interviews organisation and realisation;
- Identification of the basic characteristics of selected and interviewed CVT suppliers to enterprises.

1.1. Selection of CVT suppliers, organisation and realisation of interviews

The distribution of the required ten qualitative interviews by types of CVT providers was obtained through the application of the criteria established (in table 1) on the basis of CVTS2 results (in terms of the distribution of time spent on training according to types of suppliers: question C5).

Table 1: Distribution of CVT suppliers (number of interviews and identification codes):

	Public schools and colleges	Universities	Specialised training institutions	Private training organisations	Equipment suppliers	Parent/ associate companies	Trade unions Chambers of commerce, sector bodies, employers' organisations	Other training providers	
Number of interviews	1	0	0	6	1	1	0	1	0
Suppliers's codes	A			E, F, G, H, I, J	B	C		D	

Identified through their indexing web-sites, the ten selected CVT providers (according to table 1) were at first contacted individually via e-mail to introduce them to the subject of the investigation (including the reference to the project website) and informing them at the same time that they will be contacted by telephone (in a week-time) to arrange for a 45-minutes-face-to-face interview with the person responsible for CVT supply to enterprises. Among these first ten training providers contacted by telephone, only four responded favourably in the due time. The others were late to respond for various reasons such as the non-availability of the person in charge of CVT supply to enterprises at that moment. Leaving their contact coordinates with them for later reactions if possible, the interviewers continued contacting other training suppliers to secure the realisation of the required ten interviews (according to table 1 distribution) in the due time. Among the interviewed CVT suppliers, only two did not accept that the interviews should be recorded.

1.2. Basic characteristics of investigated CVT suppliers

The following table 2 presents the main characteristics of interviewed CVT suppliers to enterprises.

Table 2: Main characteristics of investigated CVT suppliers

CVT suppliers :	A	B	C	D	E
General information concerning the training supplier :					
Type and legal status:	University	SA (Joint Stock Company)	Association	CCI (chamber of commerce and industry) public establishment	Association (with 4 entities on national level)
Number of employees:	6 (+ variable of number temporary employees)	80 (on the site)	5 (on the site)	90 (on the site)	2000 on national level (40 on regional level)
Main customers:	Enterprises' executives; job-seekers	Enterprises ; Jung people	Industry	Enterprises, institutional social partners (Region, etc.), OPCA, Individual learners and job-seekers	Enterprises, institutions, administrations
Quality assurance management:	ISO	OPQF	None	None (it secures its own quality) management with its customers	Yes, on the level of the centre and inter regional and national levels
Membership of a network of co-operation and partnership:	Conference of the High Schools	Yes, a headquarters in Paris, with 41 regional establishments (50 abroad)	50 C providers in France (a national network linked to the Union of the Metallurgy whose founder is the Chamber of Employers)	Linked to chambers of commerce and other networks for delivery of homologated certificates for example	Emanating from the Professional Confederation for Transport (administrative or public authorities)
Types and characteristic of provided CVT :					
On supplier's site provided training (usually Open standard training):	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
On enterprise's site provided training (usually Tailor-made training):	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
E-learning:	None	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
- Fields of training	Management; Commerce; Marketing; ICT.	Personnel effectiveness; Commerce; Sales management; Techniques of professional	Law; Management; Commerce; Managerial economics; healthcare and security; Environment;	Managerial competences; Occupation-oriented competences. Linguistic abilities.	Logistics; Transport; Commerce;

		communication; Languages; Bureautics; Accounting; Management.	Industrial or- ganisation; Industrial Techniques; computing; Languages.		
Weight of training provided to enterprises in comparison with other offers (to individuals and other public and private organisations) :					
	n.d.	30%, (increasing)	95%	33%	70%

CVT suppliers :	F	G	H	I	J
General information concerning the training supplier :					
Type and legal status:	“SARL” (Limited liability company)	“SAS” (simplified Joint stock company”	“SAS” (simplified Joint stock company”	“SARL” (Limited liability company)	“SARL” (Limited liability company)
Number of employees:	20 (full-time equivalent)	7 permanents and 20 temporary trainers	6 on site and 800 on national level	14	25
Main customers:	SME’s, Students	Administrations, Enterprises	Enterprises, Administrations	Enterprises, Administrations	Enterprises, Industry
Quality assurance management:	It ensures its own quality	OPQF (Office Professional de Qualification des Organismes de Formation) Professional certification	OPQF professional Certification for FFP : Fédération de la Formation Professionnelle	None	ISO
Membership of a network of co-operation and partnership:	None	3 centres in Alsace, formalized groupings for projects	10 regional centres with 40 partnership training sites (Laureate network group)	2 establishments with 8 training centres	4 agencies with 7 commercial units
Types and characteristic of provided CVT :					
On supplier’s site provided training (usually Open standard training):	None	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
On enterprise’s site provided training (usually Tailor-made training):	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
E-learning	None	Yes	Yes	Yes	None
Fields of training:	Accounting; Management; Computing; Communication	32 languages; ICT; Takeover and creation of enterprises	Management; Organisation; Marketing; Languages; Communication; Law; Quality; Bureautics; Commerce; Sales; Networking; Telecommunication	Bureautics; Management; Info-graphics; Multimedia; Programming; Industrial design; Structure planning	Logical building blocks of safety ; Programmable automates and safety buses ; Safety sensors; Control and operation relays; Adapted programming to various safety automation.
Weight of training provided to enterprises in comparison with other offers (to individuals and other public and private organisations) :					

	60%	10% (of enterprises)	n.d.	50% of the number of personnel (20% of the turnover)	99%
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2. Results of the investigation:

2.1. Relations between CVT suppliers and enterprises:

The aim of each training supplier proposing continuous vocational training (CVT) to enterprises is to allow them as customers to acquire competences and know-how adapted to their own development. In other words, basically all investigated training providers endeavour to develop and propose training offers which meet as precisely as possible the training requirements of their customer companies. According to some of them “the training supplier does no longer sell training services, but offers solutions adapted to the strategy and the real needs of the enterprise” (suppliers F and H).

In this perspective, the co-operation between training suppliers and their customer companies is increasingly characterised by:

- Spontaneous requests, i.e. increasing direct demands from companies, as regular and irregular customers, asking the providers for more training offers adapted to their punctual needs. They basically learn about these offers through internet or their contact with other companies. As confirmed by one of the suppliers, “an increase of about 30% in these types of demand has been observed during the last years” (supplier C);
- The adoption of marketing-oriented approach in CVT supply, more based on preserving the customer’s loyalty than investing in the development of new customers. Here, the traditional techniques of marketing are applied, namely in the sense that it is easier to preserve satisfied customers than looking for new ones.

On the whole, when a certain cooperation relationship is established between a company and a CVT provider, it basically concerns either a punctual standard form of training which can be used by the company at any moment, or a wide range of training programmes which can be specified, organised and realised through a collaborative learning partnership.

In fact, it is necessary to distinguish between two basic forms of training by all investigated training providers:

- ‘Inter training’ (on supplier’s site provided training) which usually corresponds to a catalogue of an open or standard training for all customers;
- ‘Intra training’ (on enterprise’s site provided training) which generally corresponds to tailor-made training.

There is also an increasing tendency among most of these suppliers to offer e-learning to the employees of its customer companies.

Basically each of all the investigated CVT suppliers to enterprises relies heavily on its own portfolio of loyal and regular customers, which corresponds to the “goodwill” it developed through its collaboration with enterprises. In certain cases, 70% of the contracts are automatically renewed with the same customers companies.

It is noticed through the investigation that all interviewed training suppliers have already created or in the processes of creating an on-line data-base about their training offers to the enterprises. This aspect has its importance insofar as it allows the company (as a potential customer) to identify training offer which:

- corresponds exactly to its needs,
- potentially evolving towards meeting its needs;
- has never thought of, but it allowed it to fill in some lacking information and needs that could have identified at that particular time.

However, the importance of this development in favour of this more or less standardised open training remains rather relative. This is basically due to the fact the training offers are increasingly becoming tailor-made offers which are not presented through the on-line data base.

In addition, few organizations among the investigated training suppliers are involved in a real long term prospective strategy for the development of their training markets. This is basically due to either budgetary constraints or simply because they are still attached to the preservation of their traditional markets in which they have been active for a long time.

On the other hand, all organisations are adopting an approach based on keeping regular contacts with the enterprises in order to identify the training market needs and to maintain their already established relations. This is usually achieved by organising visits to companies, phoning persons in charge of training within the enterprises and/or keeping them informed about the achievements of their employees during and after the completion of their training, etc.

Given the challenging fact that training suppliers have to meet the enterprises needs in their domains of competence, it is of primary importance for them to maintain a continuous proximity-based relations with the companies in order to follow and evaluate the results of their training activities. During the training period, they have to keep the customer company continuously informed about the development and the achievements of their trainees. "The training provider has to remain at the disposal of its customer company to listen and learn about its real needs" (supplier D). It is particularly important «to preserve the professional links, in the two directions, to define and redefine the incoming needs connected with the development in the professions" (supplier E). "The best follow-up results are obtained when a company recalls for an update or a renewal of the training demand" (supplier E).

Certain training organizations advocate that organising meetings with large enterprises is very significant in this connection since these companies are markets leaders in the domain.

In order to be effective in meeting the companies' needs, one of the investigated organizations insisted particularly on the paramount importance which they attach to the quality of trainers. "Regarding training offers, the first thing which the customer company buys in most cases, is the trainer. This is particularly linked to the intangibility of the offer itself, which requires the establishment of a trustworthiness-based relationship... I have been working in the domain of training for 25. I learned through this long experience that companies buy the trainer... Changing the trainer (either free-lance or permanent), has always created problem with customer" (supplier C). Customer companies are more interested in the trainers who gave satisfaction in their work, especially in certain domains considered particularly important for the enterprises. The trainers are required to be neutral in their speech (not to criticise the company in front of the trainees). It is thus necessary for the trainers to treat with tact certain subjects linked to social rights or management. Therefore, the seriousness and the label of the training supplier come in the second position (after trainer's value) when the customer company buys training services.

The training offer of the investigated organisation is addressed to any type of company, even if SME's represent frequently a significant share of their developed collaborations. The func-

tions occupied by the groups of employees who take part in the training are variable according to training programmes proposals. In general the participants are managers, executives, engineers, high technicians and operational employees.

Concerning the forms of training provided, they include basically (cf. table 2):

- Open or standard form of training: It is the classical type of training offered according to a published catalogue or an on-line data base. It is an obligatory form of training for the enterprises in the sense that it meets their recurrent training needs. They usually take place on the site of the training provider.
- Tailor-made form of training, developed through a continuous dialogue with the customer company. It varies according to the changing needs of the enterprises and the strategy of the providers themselves, their possible specialization, and their relations with the companies.
- Specific or punctual form of training. It is dependent in particular on the overall trends in the market which in their turn, are variable according to the strategy of the organizations, their possible specialization, and their relations with the market. As an example, certain organizations had to provide punctual forms of training specific to the passage towards the Euro. But this offer had very short lifespan.

In addition to training provision in itself, the training organizations tend to integrate administrative facilities into their service, to assist the companies in their diagnosis and to carry out the engineering of the project, including dealing with its financial arrangement as it was the case with the implementation of the project "DIF" (Droit Individuel à la Formation: individual right to training) and other projects.

The surveyed organizations belong regularly to regional and national network of variable sizes (cf. table 2). Partnership relations are usually developed with other organizations according to the training areas and the history of the organization: suppliers, subcontractors, employers' organizations, professional branches, conventions and partnerships with the chartered accountants organisations, SME confederations, employment agencies, etc.

Concerning the question "what was your best experience of cooperation with companies?", we seldom had precise examples. Most of the interviewed organizations declare that they had successful collaboration with the majority of their customer companies, given that this constitutes the basic goal in quasi-permanent follow-up process. It does not seem possible (or desirable) to identify precisely more successful forms of cooperation than others. What it matters here is that the maximum was done so that each action of co-operation is successful.

Some overall examples in this connection are as follows:

- The "qualification contract" preservation and development through the CVT system;
- "A partnership has been created with an important commercial organisation during the last ten years, with allows each year for the organisation of certification-based training leading to the professional qualification certificate "CQP" which is delivered by professional branch. A pre-recruitment is carried out by the organization, then the training takes place" (supplier A);
- "We trained a whole layer in the hierarchy of team animators in General Motors (GM). They were propelled as animator to meet an urgent need for supervision and control of team working. They were some kind of relay without a real hierarchical status and authority. They were not in comfortable position, and GM became aware of that. We thus set up for them a certification-based training (via an UMM certification). 24 of them took part in this first wave of training. At the beginning, they were wary, less motivated and convinced that GM wanted them to go through a selection process. The attitude of their direct hierarchy was identical. Fortunately, the top management was firm in its decision to go

on with training. Soon after, the results were encouraging, and their direct hierarchy started to see the achieved progress and became more interested. The company was interested in the trainees and their achievements. The chairman, the two directors of the production and the DRH were on-line for the final results. A second wave of 30 trainees followed the first one, they got immediately motivated and interested" (Supplier A). This can be considered as successful actions which go beyond just a simple transfer of competences.

Most of the suppliers were pointing to difficulties they encounter in their collaborations with enterprises, particularly with the small companies. Small companies have a tendency to consider that the prices of training are relatively high. However, "the training has a price, which reflects the real value of training for them: the company must really feel the training cost "(supplier F). We will reconsider the role of the price further on in this report.

Concerning the changes which have been taking place in the cooperation relations between training providers and companies during the last three years, the intuitive answer obtained from the investigated organisation is that on the whole there has been no change. For them, if there is any change, it must be an exceptional case.

However, it is important to underline that the structural changes is more or less common to all customer companies. In fact, there is less and less time devoted to training. This tendency is really linked to the budgetary constraint "what we used to do in three days, it should now be done into two...we got into a rather strange situation" insist one the suppliers.

Moreover, the companies finalise their training plans more and more late within the year. In other words, the training plans have to be implemented over a increasingly shorter duration. This gives rise to the difficulty of smoothening the distribution of the workload over time for the training provider. The latter is forced in this situation to have many trainers at the same time to do the same thing in different companies.

Nowadays, the competition between training providers is becoming very strong. And "the companies are increasingly looking less at quality and more at the price". The demand for training is clearly becoming "a purchasing act for companies... The training market has developed towards an increasing profitability requirement by the enterprises "(supplier D). This tendency might create a problem, particularly insofar as the training offer is not always transparent and where the small companies have more limited resources.

Indeed, given the increased significance of strategic aspects of companies' needs for training, the training organisation are increasingly forced to offer targeted services to these companies, in order to meet better their real needs. Thus the training supply has evolved during the last years towards more adaptability to companies' needs through the development of tailor-made or individualised training courses. In terms of cost, this is not as obvious as it is the case in offering a standard training course for a large number of companies.

Moreover, being initially preoccupied with satisfying the participants' needs for the acquisitions and development of new competences as a basic goal, the training providers and the enterprises are equally confronted with the issue of dealing with relatively low and less transparent prices for training. "Let us take the example of a company seeking a supplier. It calls a first organization which requires X€ per week. Then, it calls a second supplier which proposes X€, but for two days. It is more likely that the company will choose the lowest price, without paying attention to the other details of the offer". In fact, either the training offer of the first organization is not really a tailor-made one, or that this organization is "breaking down" the prices. But in all the cases, this shift of the prices occults the transparency of the

training offer. As a result, the company which does understand the price or does not have an important training budget will be frequently encouraged to turn to the least expensive offer. This seems to be more frequent situation for small enterprises which have a small budget for training. In any case, "the offer must be a response to a problem, to a real need. It is this offer which is sold!"(Supplier F). But in this context, there is a "strong pressure on prices" where some are inclined to "sell their souls, but all are not ready to do it" (supplier F).

Concerning the implementation, "in many cases, the training does not take place, because the expected trainee gave up in the last moment, particularly for lack of time" (supplier F). This issue is connected with the functioning and organization of some companies. Many training projects do not succeed, because the employees concerned are not sufficiently involved in these projects from the very beginning. In this case, there will always be a defection for lack of will or time. For instance, "within the DIF training scheme, employees are encouraged to go on for training, while some of them are not interested" (supplier F)

On the whole whole, none of the investigated organizations expects major changes in its relation with companies. The evolution of the co-operation will be a function of the sensitivity of the heads of companies and the importance which they will agree to grant to training. Today, the training offers tends to be shifting towards more tailor-made and individualised forms of training and less of the traditional standards ones.

Distant training has been observed to be developing too. But according to some of the training organisations, this type of training does not seem to be an acceptable response in the majority of the cases since "the companies and individuals do not want it anyway. It is necessary to be pragmatic. This might work for bureautics and language courses, but these are exceptions" (supplier C). However, almost all the surveyed organizations are interested in offering distant learning through internet (e-learning).

Due to competition, some training providers are intending to have a larger involvement with companies. For this purpose they are planning to increase the number of commercial and marketing staff in charge of prospecting and developing their relations with the enterprises. For most of them, customer relationship development is becoming strategic in their training provision policy. For companies choice, "It is the established trustworthiness-based link with the companies which seems to be the most significant factor in this connection"(supplier D). Then in second position come the other selection criteria, which can be the prices, the quality, the proximity, the calendar (such as "do you do training on Saturdays?") (supplier E). The role of the price will also depend on whether the training offer is tailor-made or standard.

In general, "we observe a permanent pressure on the overall costs, the levels of price and the training durations of formation..." (supplier H). "The training budgets are reduced, the means put at the disposal of the persons in charge of training are decreasing every year" (supplier C). But "once the price is fixed, it is very difficult to vary it significantly afterwards" (supplier C). One of the factors which might allow for possible changes in the price is "the importance of the first service and its quality..."(supplier G). It is also important to note that training costs are linked to the level of the trainees 'the higher the level of the trainees, the higher the price...while the deployed pedagogical talent is different and the difficulties faced by the trainer are not the same'.

In this configuration, it appears that in general the small companies are less inclined than larger ones to discuss the prices of training. Although the training providers have no problem in contracting activities with small companies, big companies are more accustomed to negotiate everything.

Nowadays, "a satisfied company by the service offered will remain a loyal customer until interesting price is found elsewhere" (supplier E).

On the whole, the CVT suppliers identify the factors behind their competitive advantage as linked to their size, their possible specialization, their duration of existence in the market, the importance of the network in which they integrate, the quality of their trainers and services, etc. These competitive advantage factors include for instance:

- Internal quality and quality of the trainers;
- Knowledge of the world of the enterprises and the ability to identify correctly their needs;
- Long presence in training supply market;
- Capital of trustworthiness (capital of a trustworthiness-based collaboration with customer companies) ;
- Tailor-made training;
- "Political and professional weight of the network in which they integrate" (supplier B)
- "Playing precursor role in the development of training to management in France" (supplier H);
- Know-how;
- National meetings between delegations to discuss, to compare, and to develop training offers;
- Logistics infrastructure and modern equipment;
- Exclusive partnership relations with enterprises which ensure significant volumes of activity and price reduction;
- Accessibility to their training sites ;
- Regular training of the trainers themselves.

2.2. Quality assurance management within CVT suppliers:

According to most of the investigated training providers, quality assurance management and certification is not generally considered as determinant factor for the choice made by the enterprises concerning them. However, the quality assurance management and certification become important when the training organisations have to deal with invitations to tender. They are important for some large groups and industrialists.

Some of them go as far rejecting the idea of certification. For them, certification is just a simple reproduction of the same training providers with no originality. Given the legal character of their responsibility in their domain of activity, the training providers have in fact a relatively large room for manoeuvres in this connection. For them, certification is not considered as one of their challenges. This is why few surveyed organizations have a quality assurance certification such as ISO (suppliers A and J) and OPQF (suppliers B, G and H).

On the other hand, all the investigated CVT providers consider that companies are cooperating with them concerning quality evaluation. For them, formal quality certification is significant, but it is the company itself which evaluates quality offered.

Concerning the trainers' qualifications, the requirements of the investigated organizations are divergent. Some of them ask for an experience of 5 years minimum, others require a minimum of a formal qualification (diploma) equivalent to the level of teaching, etc. However, the training organisations preferences seem to concentrate, in general, on the trainer's personality, competences and the "teaching potential"; the diploma is considered less significant.

The trainers' qualifications are generally updated internally, sometimes via external training. When the trainers are university academics or teachers within the national general education system, etc., it is self-directed learning which prevails.

Moreover, the surveyed organizations seem to have a tendency of recruiting their trainers "up to 100%" (suppliers C, E and J) among the ex-employees of the enterprises. Former experts are also privileged because they are already familiar with assessment of the functioning of the company and its organization. "In CVT provision activity, individuals possessing a working experience with and/or within companies are highly needed" (Suppliers D and H).

In fact, it is the link developed by each training organization with companies which allows for an effective evaluation of the training schemes. In addition to the usual follow-up of their relations with companies, certain training organizations are setting up a feedback procedure with customers. According to this procedure, the customers fill in an evaluation card straight on after the implementation of the training programme. Then, the CVT provider makes inquiry within the customer companies and carries out a reevaluation of the results.

Thus if the company is satisfied, it renews automatically its demand for training and further collaboration. It is this form of valuation which seems to be most frequently practised.

In general, the participants receive diplomas and/or certificates of participation after the completion of their training. Obtaining satisfactory results seem to be generally linked to assiduity and going through an examination. Customer companies are usually satisfied when their beneficiary trainees got examined and/or received diplomas.

2.3. Innovative capacity of CVT suppliers

It is important to underline at the beginning that a large majority of the interviewed training organizations considers that innovation is permanently connected with the process of continuous development of the training offer to meet at any moment the needs of their customers.

Any improvement in the training supply is not achievable by means of a simple anticipation of the major changes in the behaviour and needs of the companies. On the contrary, it is highly dependent on the innovative capacity of the CVT supplier to improve its performance, and hence its supply through continuous evaluation and adaptation of their training programmes in close collaborations with its customers companies. "The training supplier must sell what the company needs, i.e. what is required" (supplier F). Thus the training supply is continuously developing according to the demand. "Discontinuity is not a good happening. It might even create barriers" (Supplier D).

In this connection, "innovation is taking place every day in accordance with the company's demands. If the training supplier does not adapt continuously, the customer is lost. Of course, there are cases where the supplier has to convince its customer of the non-feasibility of its demand" (Supplier E).

"Given that immobility is killing, the best remaining thing for us to do is to go forward. Of course, we cannot reinvent the wire to cut butter within the existing CVT suppliers' market configuration. But, our supply must rely on a great capacity of adaptation. It is necessary to know what to do rapidly within a very limited margin of manoeuvres. Then, and only then, it becomes important to inform people that we have an innovative capacity"(supplier G).

This again, confirms the importance of more direct follow-up approach based on close and regular collaboration with companies.

Concerning the examples given by the surveyed organisation about their innovative experience in CVT provision, they fall into two basic categories: They either represent a general feature of a normal evolution of the training supply, or they correspond to precise projects more or less different from the previous offers but without real major changes. In most cases, the training suppliers did not really produce "headlight products" which are particularly innovative. Among these examples, we find for instance:

- Opening towards companies: "It is an innovation for my organization, not for me. Until now, public communities and institutions were our principal customers. The objective is that our supply reaches 40% of companies since the public funding is becoming less and less important. We want, at first, to have a good start at regional level"(Supplier G). The prospects for the creation of new training offers seem to be promising at present.
- Development of qualifying training programmes for potential executives. "They correspond to a multi-purpose training supply programmes, in which a distinction is made between a Master certification-based programme worked out by a steering committee, and tailor-made programme, elaborated through a direct collaboration with the HRD department of the company" (supplier A)
- Development of new training topics: "Recently, too much talk has been going on concerning the development of certain accounting standards and principles (IAS and IFRS). We had to organise a seminar connected with this topic. We also organized seminars on the reform of continuing vocational training "(supplier D). The new training offers are connected with the newly developed themes.
- Pedagogical development of in training provision: "In certain domains, it is possible to mix face-to-face training and semi-autonomous or even distant training, particularly in language training courses for example" (supplier C)

- Training with accompaniment: "for heavy-engine drivers, where the training combines an alteration between theoretical simulations on the computer and control on a real simulator... Informatics makes it possible to develop a great flexibility in training provision so that the employees who are on the training course do not waste much time in the process" (supplier E)
- Development of tailor-made and punctual training: "Currently we propose more and more tailor made training programmes. But they are time consuming at the beginning. This type of training make it possible to propose a true solution to a given problem, identified in collaboration with the company. But, it is more expensive than the other forms of training; and this, of course, creates a budgetary problem for some companies, especially the small ones"(supplier F).
- Development of CD-ROMs, handbooks and other training support means usable in both companies and training organization;
- Competitiveness and productivity development project: Development and implementation of an accompaniment-based training programme for productivity improvement in production processes. The achieved "return on investments was rapid and high: four times higher in less than a year" (supplier C)

The investigation reveals that there are many constraints to development of the innovative capacity of the training suppliers, namely:

- Increased budgetary constraints on companies' investment in training: This concern particularly the development of their tailor-made and individualised forms of training. This is why "the head of the company does not always find it worthwhile to put as much money in training" (supplier F);
- Omnipresent social legislation connected with investment in training. However, this seems to bring more a regulating framework for training development than constituting a real constraint.
- The problem of employees' availability and interest in training and/or its subjects: the individual initiative and the effective availability of its employees are not sufficiently integrated by the company when they make a training request. This is why, "we have many cancellations of training" (supplier F). Additionally, "there are fields of training in which the employees are not interested" (supplier D).
- The new pedagogical training opportunities offered, particularly through the use of ICT technologies, are not that quickly accepted by the trainees themselves. This is why the training providers have to keep pace (in their training offers) with the concerned trainees' readiness and interest.
- The public policy measures can constitute a constraint. "The innovation development is the result of many policy actions which are generally influenced by public policy decisions and actions...For instance, before November 2005, the training actions undertaken by the national employment agency were concentrated on groups or collectivities. But since the problem of the suburbs in France, it was necessary to reconsider an individual-oriented policy measures... Since then, only individual-oriented training offers proposals are acceptable ..." (supplier G).
- Budgetary constraint on some of the training suppliers themselves (especially small organisations) to invest in the development of innovative and expensive training proposals such tailor-made training programmes, which in their turn require high investment in re-training or recruiting highly qualified trainers.

In order to reduce the effect of these constraints on their innovative capacity, the CVT provider are seeking to develop, in addition to their corporate (supplier/enterprise) networks, institutional partnership networks which include national employment agencies, ministries, regional and local authorities. Some of them created observatories to deal with training devel-

opment issues and changing constraints; Thus allowing for “training contents changes to keep pace with constraints change” (Supplier G).

The majority of the previous innovating training schemes are still proposed today, very little were abandoned. These training schemes became either:

- Regular training schemes: they correspond to "traditional" open programmes, repeatedly proposed each year without or with little changes. They correspond particularly to standard forms of training supply to all customers.
- Cyclic training schemes primarily linked to the structural development of the market. For example, "since years 1975, the cost of the fuel fluctuates regularly... training programmes for the development of an economic behaviour was proposed and implemented to cope with the raising prices of the fuel. The programme was stopped when the fuel prices had gone down. Then, there is come-back when the price of the fuel started to increase again, etc."(supplier E);
- Punctual training schemes which are linked to punctual market opportunities. They are often of very short lifespan. As it is the case, for instance with the punctual "training project connected with the introduction of the Euro and its implications" (supplier D). Here, "we are on a market of opportunities" (supplier C)

Thus, the training schemes have variable lifespan according to:

- the evolution of the market and its opportunities,
- the demand for training and its development,
- and the existing constraints.

3. Overall conclusions

Although the results of these interviews are not representative of the whole situation of the French training suppliers market, it is important to underline some of the following basic features characterising CVT provision to enterprises in France:

- The relational interactivity between the training suppliers and enterprises is increasingly based on cooperation within the framework of regional, national and even international networks and learning partnerships. The training provided in this context include basically: a)-Open or standard form of training offered according to a published catalogue or an accessible on-line data base. It is usually an obligatory form of training for the enterprises in the sense that it meets their recurrent needs. It usually takes place on the site of the training provider. b)-Tailor-made form of training, developed through a continuous dialogue and cooperation with customer companies. It varies according to the changing needs of the enterprises and the strategy of the providers themselves, their know-how, and their relations with other companies. c)- Specific or punctual form of training which is linked to punctual market opportunities. It is often of very short lifespan. The factors which determine most of the training providers' competitive advantage in the market are basically linked to their size, their know-how and speciality, the duration of their existence in the market, the level of their relational interactivity with customer companies, the importance of the network in which they integrate, the prices they offer, the quality of their trainers and services.
- The quality management in training provision is becoming a normal feature for many CVT suppliers. This includes for instance the well known ISO standards and the French OPQF certification delivered by the "Office Professionnel de Qualification des Organismes de Formation) of the FFP (Fédération de la Formation professionnelle). However, most of the investigated CVT suppliers consider that although "formal" certification is important (especially when they are cooperating with large companies and groups), it is the established link of relational interactivity with customer companies which really determines the quality of their training offers. For them, the quality of the training offer is also determined by the quality and professionalism of their trainers.
- Concerning innovation in training supply, most of the investigated training organisations underline that that innovation is permanently imbedded in the process of continuous development and adaptation of the training offers to meet at any moment the demands of their customers. This is why, they are increasingly diversifying their training offers in accordance with the changing needs and requirements of the market. In addition to preserving the traditional standard forms of training provision, they are also moving towards more flexible tailor-made and/or individualised training offers with accompaniments. This also includes the move towards new forms of ICT-based training, especially e-learning. However, there are constraints to their innovative capacity in this domain such as: the budgetary constraints amplified by the reduced public funding (for both training and enterprises), the relatively high costs of tailor-made forms of training, the omnipresence of social legislation connected with regulating investment in training.

Report about 10 qualitative interviews with training suppliers in Germany

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1. Selection and description of training suppliers

The Selection of the training suppliers was done on the basis of the CVTS2 results (question C5, paid working time spent on CVT according type of supplier). We selected the following training suppliers:

- 1. Supplier A:** This private supplier offers a wide range of trainings in the field of ICT. Trainings can range from rather simple courses for users (e.g. ECDL) to courses for equipment suppliers for network administrators (e.g. MCSA and MCSE). The supplier was founded 20 years ago. It offered around 80 courses in 2005, which mostly lasted for three days. 10 teachers are employed on a permanent full-time basis. 15 to 20 additional teachers are free-lancers. The interview partner is head of the local branch office of the supplier. The supplier is not quality certified, but certified by different equipment suppliers for doing training for their products.
- 2. Supplier B:** This private supplier belonged in the past to a big German enterprise. Since 2004 it is an independent subsidiary company of this enterprise. Since summer 2005 it is in insolvency, because mainly the reduction of courses financed by the labour office caused financial disruption. It offers ICT-courses and courses on social skills (mostly trainings for managers). Almost 90% of the courses are ICT courses and the rest are on social skills. The supplier had a turnover of 18 Mio. € in 2004 (30% came from the parent company). The interview partner is head of a department of the supplier and in charge for the contact to enterprises. The supplier is quality certified by DIN ISO 9000.
- 3. Supplier C:** This supplier belongs to a chamber of commerce and offers a wide range of courses on various topics in the field of industry and commerce (mostly metal and electronics). 60 teachers are employed on a permanent full-time basis and approx. 250 additional teachers are free-lancers, but almost all teachers are engaged as well in IVT as CVT. The interview partner is in charge for contacting and consulting SME. The supplier is yet not quality certified, but the accreditation process takes place right now.
- 4. Supplier D:** This private supplier is solely engaged in the field of welding. It is certified to approve enterprise for areas of high safety (e.g. bridges, motorways, building). Beside this accreditation of enterprises as a whole it trains employees of enterprises. The certification process of enterprises results often in training courses, because of a lack of qualifications in the enterprises. Most courses take place in Berlin, but the supplier is even internationally active (e.g. China, England, Norway). 25 teachers are employed on a permanent full-time basis (no free-lancers). The interview partner is head of the supplier. The supplier is quality certified by DIN ISO 17024.
- 5. Supplier E:** This supplier is a free-lance trainer. After studying adult education and making a placement in a big ICT-company in Germany he has been engaged for making training about social skills (e.g. communication in general, how to present, project management, group dynamics, mediation of conflicts). He makes 90% of his courses for one enterprise and 10% for variety of public and private organisations of various branches. He is active in the field for more than 8 years.
- 6. Supplier F:** This private supplier is solely active in the field of language training and there mostly in the field of German for non-native speakers (80% of all courses). 4 teachers are employed on a permanent full-time basis and 16 to 20 additional teachers are free-lancers. The supplier is not quality certified, but it is intended to do such a certification in the near future. The interview partner is head of a branch office.
- 7. Supplier G:** Supplier G offers a wide range of trainings in the field of ICT. He exists since 1990, but merged in 2005 with another training supplier. Trainings can range from rather simple courses for users (e.g. ECDL) to courses for equipment suppliers for network administrators (e.g. MCSA and MCSE). The annual turnover amount to 3 Mio. in Berlin and 10 Mio. in Germany. The supplier employees 75 teachers on a permanent full-time basis and 150 on a freelance basis. The supplier was not quality

certified, but certified by different equipment suppliers for doing training for their products. The new merged partner is ISO-certified. The interview partner is head of the supplier.

8. **Supplier H:** This private supplier offers a wide range of courses. Courses can deal with social skills, technical skills for “Meister” (master), IVT or with skills of various professions (“from metal to nursing”). These course are financed by the labour office, by individuals and by enterprises. In 2004 they have had 2.000 participants in open courses (individually and enterprise-financed) and 1.000 in courses financed by the labour office. The interview partner is the founder of the local branch office of the supplier, which is rather big training enterprise with many branch office all over Germany. The supplier is quality certified by DIN ISO for a long time and has been many times re-certified.
9. **Supplier G:** This supplier belongs to chamber of crafts and offers a wide range of courses for various fields of training. The supplier employees 50 teachers on a permanent full-time basis and 200 on a freelance basis. The annual turnover amounts to 1.7 Mio Euro, which means a deficit which has to be covered by the chamber of crafts. The supplier is quality certified by DIN ISO.
10. **Supplier H:** This public supplier is a “Volkshochschule” (folk highschool). It offers a wide range of courses from general to vocational education. Enterprise-provided training is only a small part of the offers. The interview partner is head of the department which deals with labour market related subjects.

All suppliers are situated in Berlin, although some of them have branch offices in other cities in Germany. Despite the original goal of making interviews less with the managers of the suppliers, but rather with persons on the intermediate level, most interviews had to be made with the managers. Although mostly persons on the intermediate level were asked for an interview, most suppliers preferred to have a interview with the manager, because of the sensitivity of the issue.

2. Preparation and execution of the interviews

All suppliers were asked by mail if they were willing to make an interview about the collaboration between training suppliers and enterprises in the field of continuing vocational training (CVT). They were informed about the project CVTS2rev (e.g. the link to the homepage was given) and they could find the guiding questions for the interview attached to the mail. It was promised that all personal data will be kept anonymous. After this pre-information by mail contact was made by phone in order to discuss the interview in detail and to arrange date and place of the interview. Only one provider refused to take part in an interview, because doing interviewees was considered as the task of representatives of the umbrella organisation of the training supplier. As a consequence, another supplier was selected as substitute.

All interviews were made in the premises of the suppliers. They were taped and short summaries of two to five pages were made for each interview. To the quotes in this report is information be added which is referring to the lines (e.g. supplier A, L: 95-87) in the summary. Thus the quotes can be easily traced back in the original summary. All data was made anonymous, because of the sensitivity of the topic. The interviews were analysed by using the method content analysis (Früh 1998, Mayring 1997, Merten 1995). All interview partners were considered as experts in the field of CVT and therefore the interviews were considered as expert interviews. The central goal was to explore the explicit and implicit knowledge of these experts in the field of CVT. (c. Meuser/Nagel 1997) Quotes from the interviewees are translated from German into English.

3. Preliminary remarks concerning the results

A big variety of suppliers was selected for the interviews (e.g. fields of training, size of supplier, legal status), because of the goal of having diverse insights in the field of enterprise-provided CVT. The results are also rather diverse, which seems to be at least partly caused by the different activity areas of the suppliers. We consider it as very important to keep in mind the diversity of the suppliers when looking at the results of the interviews. Despite this diversity some general remarks can be made.

4. Results

The results of the interviews are presented according the structure suggested by BIBB:

- a) Relations between training suppliers and enterprises
- b) Quality standards of the training suppliers
- c) Innovation capacity of the training suppliers

4.1 Relations between training suppliers and enterprises

Forms of contacting enterprises

Trainings suppliers are using many different channels for their contacts to enterprises. Means for having contacts with enterprises are:

- catalogues/programmes with offers are sent by post to enterprises or presented via internet
- enterprises are contacted by telephone
- offers are placed in public databases
- suppliers are eager to have a top-ranking in search engines like Google
- networks with other suppliers, enterprises or umbrella organisations are used
- newsletters are sent to former participants
- meetings with former participants are made once per year

Catalogues/programmes are used by all training suppliers as an important form of public presentation. Contacting enterprises individually and establishing wider networks is of increasing importance for many suppliers. Some supplier expect that **having direct contacts with enterprises** will be much more important in future, which means that qualifications and competencies of the personal of training suppliers have to change:

- "Our employees have deficits in the management of customer relations. The thinking in visions and strategies is not sufficiently developed." (supplier G, L: 20-22)
- "We as a training and service provider are not yet adjusted for distributing our products... We have administrative staff which can handle questions concerning the catalogue and we have teachers which can make courses in the enterprises. It is a totally different thing, to adapt to the situation in the enterprises. Firstly without thinking about CVT and then making a transfer from needs in the enterprises to training needs. How can I ask for the needs? Therefore you need practical techniques for questioning, which are missing right now. It is an organisational problem. We don't have a team for distribution. I'm the only one, who is financed by special projects... We have business economists which have no idea about pedagogics and we have trainers who have no idea about sales and distribution. That's the fundamental problem. A new form of employees in educational institutions is developing. It is developing and we need projects. It is a little bit like trial and error." (supplier C, L: 84-109)

Good relations with customers are increasingly important. The personal of providers has to have intersectional knowledge in the two areas of business and pedagogics. This is needed for offering good services to the enterprises. At least the interviewees C and G see here a need for raising the level of competencies of their personal.

Although many suppliers place their offers in national and regional *databases* in the internet, many report that they do not see an important role of these databases. Two supplier compared the role of databases with the role of *search engines* like Google and stressed that the search engines are more important. They are engaged in having their institution at the first page of Google for some thematic key words:

“We do something for being found by Google. When you are on the first page of Google you are standing alone for a moment. In the databases you are in competition with others.” (supplier A, L: 27-30)

Many suppliers expressed an increased need for the *establishment of networks and co-operations* in various aspects. Networks between suppliers are important for being able to make big offers. Some suppliers have subcontracts with other suppliers (e.g. for using premises, equipment and teachers). Networks with enterprises (especially SME) can help to make tailor-made offers for many enterprises at the same point of time, although only a few people from different enterprises take part. One interviewee said: “Co-operations and networks are more and more essentials for survival” (supplier I, L: 178-179)

Rather special forms of having contacts to enterprises are channelled through *continuous contacts with former participants*. Supplier B reported that they sent newsletters to former participants. In these newsletter they inform about technological trends and suitable training offers. Supplier I reported that he is making annual meetings for former participants which establish a form of networking.

Personal contacts

Besides these different forms of communication all enterprises stressed that it is very important to have *long-term contacts to enterprises and persons in charge in the enterprises*. These contacts a very essential for receiving orders by the enterprises. Some suppliers report about contacts which date back many years.

The *functions of the contact persons* in the enterprises are also very different. Almost all suppliers report that they have to do with a variety of people. Sometimes the first contact is established with the human resources department, while in later stages the eligible thematic department takes over (e.g. ICT-department), because the human resource department does often not have the expert knowledge for all topic-related questions:

“We prefer to talk to the ICT people, because you can talk directly to each other.

When I talk to a person from the human resource department and she says I have somebody who needs a training in Unix administration, and I ask her something in detail, she gives up very quickly. Then I ask her for somebody in the ICT department of her enterprise.” (supplier B, L: 48-53)

The head of the enterprises is often the contact person in smaller enterprises. Some interviewees report about *conflicts between different departments in bigger enterprises concerning CVT*:

- “Everything below 5.000 € is OK in enterprise A. Everything above has to be approved from the hierarchy. That’s difficult. The department in charge for purchasing goods and services makes then pressure. They ask for a discount and with part of the discount they finance the own department.” (supplier B, L: L: 112-115)

- “A negative example. Decided by the head of personal in enterprise A. So far, 14 days of CVT were in principle OK and the superior and the employee decided jointly. The new rules say that it will be decided two levels above in the hierarchy. That’s the best measure for saving money! You talk to your superior, but to go two levels above is much more difficult. In the end a lot of people abstained from having CVT.” (supplier B, L: 203-207)

- “It is a quarrel between persons and functions. You have one who wants continuity. He says I want that trainer, because I know that the training will work out with him. Then you have in big enterprises the other side. The department in charge for purchas-

ing goods and services. That person is not interested in quality, because he is only interested in figures, meaning costs. He knows that there are cheaper and more expensive trainers. Then the functions fight each other. I think that arguments are there not really important. It is important how the superior of both decides. Arguments are known and exchangeable. You notice that both sides don't understand each other and don't want to understand each other. It's a pure question of decision and enforcement, because both sides haven't a clue about the other side." (supplier E, L: 177-126)

- "Sometimes it is difficult, especially in big enterprises. You receive telephone calls concerning a course. And then you are informed that you have to contact special departments. They have to give permission. Sometimes single departments are calling without permission and we have to be cautious if these people have really a say in their enterprises concerning CVT." (supplier F, L: 18-22)

CVT in big enterprises is in big enterprises a matter of different departments and different levels of hierarchy. This can lead to conflicts, because of different interests. Especially the question of costs seems to be of central interest. The interest to reduce costs seems to be big in the enterprises. Especially the management and the department for purchasing goods and service seem to be crucial actors in this respect.

Location of training

There exists a big variety of locations for courses. Some suppliers report that most courses are taking place in the premises of the supplier (supplier A, D, F and I). Others report that most courses are taking place in premises of the enterprises (supplier E, G and H). Especially courses concerning social skills (for managers) are often taking place in hotels (supplier B, E). One general rule of thumb seems to be that courses which need a lot of equipment (e.g. computer room, welding laboratory) are more likely to take place at the location of the supplier, because enterprises are not likely to have the full technical equipment. Although there seems to be a general trend that courses are increasingly held as in-house seminars in the enterprises, the practices differ a lot between the suppliers. Some suppliers are rather critical of in-house seminars:

"If employees in the enterprises, they will be seriously interrupted. If they are away, they will not be interrupted. In-house seminars are darkened by the prospect that from four people two will be called very half an hour. That is no seminar, that is a railway station! Then you have to be tough as teacher and to tell them: Seminar or railway station? What do you want? That is difficult and many people do not accept it. We make that experience rather often during in-house seminars." (supplier A, L: 43-50)

Giving courses in the work place or close to the work place can be difficult, because the learning is threatened by interruptions because of matters of daily work.

The location of the supplier is sometimes for enterprises one important criteria for choosing a supplier:

"The co-operation with enterprises is increasing. Partly because of our location. We are close to enterprise A, enterprise B and enterprise C" (supplier F, L: 30-31)

Time of training

Some suppliers report about an increase of courses in the leisure time of employees:

"We make a lot of courses at the evening or at the weekend. The enterprises like that, because the employees are not missing and the employee uses his leisure time. The enterprise pays and both have a profit. I think that is the right way. We make it similarly with our employees. Of course!" (supplier D, L: 54-59)

Another interviewee even report that enterprises cut down their spending on CVT, because **enterprises expect from their employees to invest individually in CVT**:

“There is a tendency that enterprises cut down their spending in education. Investment in CVT is increasingly seen as the responsibility of the employee.” (supplier H, L: 63-64)

Others stress that the **majority of enterprise-provided courses takes still place within paid working hours** (suppliers A, E, F). For one interviewee it was difficult to answer to this question, because the structure of working time is changing in one of his enterprises:

“My courses a during the week, which actually should mean during the working time. But it is different for every participant. Every participant has different time structures. Some have fixed working times and thus they are trained normally during their paid working time. Then you have people who have sovereignty over their time. They have no fixed working time, but are solely directed by agreements on objectives. There are enterprise regulations, but you have to reach your goal. If you need 10 or 80 hours, that is your business! There you can not say if it is within or outside paid working time! Then you have people who are solely paid by the turnover they achieve. There education is in competition to working!” (supplier E, L: 90-100)

Generally, most courses seem to be still located within paid working time, although the experts reports about trends of a flexibilisation of time structures and of an increased usage of the leisure time of the employers for CVT.

Decision-making process concerning CVT in enterprises

The question concerning the criteria of enterprises for deciding for or against CVT worked very well. There was a tendency of some suppliers to stress that the **price has become much more important**, while quality is less important:

- “It’s just the price (...) Price, price and then you have to wait until quality is relevant.” (supplier B, L: 60 and 74)
- “The enterprise spent less money. They look more for the prices.” (supplier D, L: 21-22)
- “My price is stable, but it is obvious that they try to reduce prices. They know they have the option to reduce prices. I know from colleagues who reduce their prices in order to stay in the business. The enterprises know that and they try to make use of that.” (supplier E, L: 101-105)
- “CVT is the area which you can cut down costs most easily in crisis. The price has become the worst in Germany. Quality is of minor importance.” (supplier G, L: L: 34-36)

In an economic difficult situation enterprises in Germany spent less money on CVT. They also try to raise the pressure on suppliers to lower their prices. The behaviour of most enterprises seems to be characterised by a **pro-cyclical planning of CVT** and not by a long-term strategic planning. This seems to lead to a loss of quality from the point of view of the suppliers, but one supplier reports about an **increase of orders because of the low prices** of the supplier:

“We have had recently a dialogue with an enterprise. There we were classified very clearly. We are the discounter ALDI in relation to supplier XY (note: XY is a very prestigious and well-known supplier in Germany). That was meant positively. We look for the prices. That might be the reason that we are now more busy than before. We give language courses and our competitors are much more expensive. So far we haven’t had a say in the market. But that seems to change!” (supplier F, L: 33-38)

The market share of the supplier seems to grow, because of its low price structure. Overall, many suppliers consider prices as most or very important while others stress *factors influenced by the supplier* as being more important:

- “The price is not decisive. In can’t confirm that tendency. That can be only possible when the decision-maker in the enterprise has no knowledge. When somebody has no idea about the topic, he just orientates himself on the price. It is decisive to give the enterprise basic knowledge. Then the price doesn’t play a role anymore. We have noticed that the price is not important, when explaining it correctly and in a good way.” (supplier C, L: 62-68)
- “Making good network work leads in the sum to the result that the price isn’t decisive. It’s astonishing. The price is then the least decisive.” (supplier I, L: 75-77)

These suppliers have the opinion that the pre-occupation on prices of some enterprises is only explainable by a low level on information in the enterprises. They report from experiences that enterprises are not so pre-occupied on prices when they know more about the value and benefit of CVT. Thus suppliers should be very active in “enlighten” enterprises and especially decision-makers on CVT. *Offering consultancy* is considered of increasing importance:

- “The service is the consultancy. Therefore we have engineers with a substantial competence. That’s why they decide for us, because we are a small organisation, quick and we offer a good consultancy.” (supplier D, L: 40-42)
- “The need for consultancy will increase.” (supplier I, L: 80)

To offer consultancy is difficult, because of different reasons:

- “A training supplier is something like a driving school and no car mechanic. We are no enterprise for fixing the car. I tell the people it is very simple. I’m as driving teacher can explain you how to drive. When your car is broken, you don’t call for a driving teacher! Then they understand it. It is a totally different kind of work. It is not my goal to solve problems in the working place. Teaching and problem solving are two different businesses.” (supplier A, L: 101-107)
- “It is difficult for me as a free-lancer to get paid for consultancy. Seminars are paid. Preparation is normally paid. Consultancy needs a lot of time, but you don’t get paid for that. You have to incorporate it in other costs.” (supplier E, L: 49-52)
- “The analysis of training needs of the enterprises is an intensive joint work by the enterprise and the training supplier, but, so far, the needs analysis is yet no product for which you can ask for money.” (supplier H, L: 37-39)

Supplier A draws a strict boundary between teaching and giving consultancy for work-based problems. He does not want to be involved there. Supplier E and H point out to a situation in which consultancy and need analysis by training suppliers is welcomed by the enterprises but not considered as a good for which enterprises have to pay. Thus suppliers hide the costs in the training costs and they will probably be interested to keep the consultancy to a minimum which sometimes not be enough. Because of *bad experiences with consultants* by the enterprises, training suppliers have to avoid to use the word consultancy within the co-operation:

- “A great problem is, that we have to avoid the impression of being consultants. In this area you will find a lot of burned earth. A lot of consultants have tried, at least that’s what the enterprises say, to give consultancy by a monolithic concept. That wasn’t successful. The people spent money and it didn’t work out. They are suspicious. Nonetheless, we want to make consultancy even if we can’t name it like that.” (supplier C, L: 46-51)

In Berlin exists a *public financing scheme for CVT in SME*. Enterprises can apply for public subsidies for the training of their employees. Some training suppliers are very active in giving advice and extensive support to the enterprises:

- “Our work with SME is successful, because we tell them, that we will do all of the application stuff. We will arrange the papers, we explain it to you, we talk with the public agencies and you just sent in the applications officially. The programme is good, but the response takes too long. After the approval of an application we go to the enterprise and ask, what they need now.” (supplier B, L: 84-93)
- “The whole management of using public subsidies is made by us. From the application to the payments. That is part of our service.” (supplier H, L: 64-66)

Suppliers are managing the whole programme for the SME. One problem is that the approval of an application takes some month, which results in difficulties in offering the CVT later, because the training needs are mostly of immediate need. Thus suppliers and enterprises have later to explore what is actually needed, because the training needs in the application are already of no relevance anymore. ***Suppliers stress the need of a quick approval of applications for public financing schemes for SME.***

Some ***suppliers complain about the low level of professionalism in the enterprises*** concerning questions of CVT:

- “Some enterprises understand it, but especially SME lack that understanding. It is not enough to buy an expensive software. Let’s describe it by a story. A man comes to a group of workers, which are really eagerly working with blunt saws. He suggests that they should take some time off for sharpening the saws. After that they would work better and quicker. The workers then say: Wonderful idea, but we have no time, no time, no time... How often do we see enterprises who are working so terribly complicated. We see worst case scenarios. They don’t take their time. It would be important to change here something.” (supplier A, L: 182-190)
- “The problem is that enterprises mostly can’t say what they need. The enterprises do not have a medium-term educational planning. That’s really terrible. Especially in the smaller enterprise. That’s really horrible.” (supplier B, L: 106-108)
- “The tendency is to employ people who are not educated for that. The educational positions within the enterprise are without exemption filled with non-trainers. Sometimes psychologists. Perhaps business economists with some knowledge about personal. But mostly ‘self-approved’ and ‘moved-there’ people. You miss simple consistency. No systematic system. You would never employ an engineer in the accounts department, but it is normal to employ an engineer in the educational department. It’s chaotic, I see no professionalisation in the whole area. No difference between big enterprises and SME. You see the same neglect.” (supplier E, L: 160-168)
- “Human resources development doesn’t really take place in the enterprises. They have mostly no strategic planning of CVT. SME are more likely to work effectively with a concept. The enterprises do often nothing know about the knowledge of their employees. The planning of CVT is increasingly done short-sighted. The thinking is god damn short-sighted. I have to look every single month for what they need.” (supplier G, L: 35-37)

Suppliers criticise that the enterprises are neglecting CVT. The insight to invest in equipment is existing, but the need for CVT is underestimated. ***Enterprises do not approach CVT in continuous and systematic way.*** Persons in charge are not qualified enough for dealing with CVT. Some suppliers consider the situation in SME worse than in big enterprises. Others see no difference between enterprises of different size. The suppliers have no idea how to improve the situation in the enterprises beside offering their consultancy to enterprises and to build networks with enterprises.

4.2 Quality standards of the training suppliers

The general trend in the interviewees was that most training suppliers are already quality-certified, but mostly they stress that the certification is not important for the enterprises. Nonetheless, it is interesting to look at this topic more in detail.

In the field of ICT-training quality certificates are of lesser importance, because of the special role of the big software companies in this thematic field.

- “Yes, we are certified by software companies. DIN ISO? Not at all! The certificates of the software enterprises are really tough. Our trainers have to be certified by the software enterprises every year. That’s really expensive.” (supplier A, L: 126-128)
- “We are only certified by software enterprises, but our merged partner is ISO-certified. Our costumers have no expectations concerning quality certifications.” (supplier G, L: 29-31)

The accreditations of software enterprises are here much more important than the quality certificates. It seems to be also a question of resources, because the accreditations by the software companies are already rather expensive and it is difficult for the supplier to afford also additional quality certificates. Nonetheless, even in the field of ICT the tendency to quality-certificates are visible. Suppliers in other fields of training are even intending to be quality-certified despite doubts of the usefulness of it:

- “I have a kind of allergy. When the whole topic quality came up, I have had the impression that it is just a new field of business. Just new people who want to earn money. We were against it. We stress that we have good references and are certified for teaching German. But we notice that especially costumers who haven’t expert knowledge in the field of languages look for this. In the long-run we can’t avoid becoming certified.” (supplier F, L: 55-60)
- “We are ISO 9000 certified. Some are asking for it. It is required for call of tenders by public institutions. Enterprises want to be sure that the course takes place and that we have qualified trainers.” (supplier B, L: 138-140)

Quality certificates have become an essential for most training suppliers. Enterprises orientate themselves sometimes at these certificates. Especially during the implementation of courses questions of quality are not so important as somebody could expect. For example ***evaluation is of differing importance*** for the enterprises:

- “After big trainings evaluation is mostly expected. For the smaller one, Excel or other stuff like that, not. That’s really a joke! That’s really funny. There is never an evaluation by the enterprises for the more simple courses... We evaluate every course. Three categories: How was the topic? How was the trainer? How was the organisation? The grade range from one to five. When somebody marks three, I call him up personally and ask why. That’s our quality management.” (supplier A, L: 143-151)
- “I try personally to have a written and a oral feedback. Sometimes I make a second wave in order to know if it is really used at the work place. Enterprise A doesn’t have an interest in that.” (Supplier E, L: 139-141)

The suppliers seem to be more interested in evaluation than the enterprises. Suppliers consider it as part of their quality management. They want to know if their courses are working out. The interest of the enterprises in evaluation seems to be much lower or more fragmented. ***No supplier did report about a big interest of enterprises in evaluation***. Sometimes the motivation for evaluation seems to be even inspired by purely monetary motifs:

“Some enterprises ask their participants to fill in questionnaires. When the trainer is rated badly they call us up for having a discount. They get it. The costumers have ever the final say!” (Supplier B, L: 179-183)

Evaluation is here used for saving money by pressing the supplier to give discounts. The improvement of the taught lessons seems to be no objective of the critique.

The *qualification of the trainers seems to be more of interest* for the enterprises. As already mentioned giving consultancy is of increasing importance, although a substantial number of employees of the suppliers are yet not ready for this kind of work. It is expected that in future employees of suppliers have to be more competent in the area of services which means especially being a consultant in the area of business and pedagogics simultaneously.

4.3 Innovation capacity of the training suppliers

Almost all suppliers talked immediately about *forms of blended learning* when explicitly, but openly asked about innovative offers in the field:

- "It could work out if we would have high-speed networks and webcams for webseminars. It should be totally easy. One virtual trainer for 10 participants. He makes his lessons which can be watched by webcam. That would be an idea. It has to be the same atmosphere like being present. That's our expectation, but we are a little bit cowardly. That needs a lot of money for starting it. You need high-speed networks. It must work without any interruption. Besides, people want to meet each other. That is part of it." (supplier A, L: 172-180)
- "Blended learning is an emerging market, but you have invest something in the beginning." (supplier B, L:191-192)
- "We have just long-distance courses developed. Blended learning. Learning at home, at the working place and here. There are now more people who know how to use a computer. These people know how to learn with the computer at home. We are making material for learning at home. This has to be accepted by the public long-distance agency (remark: Fernlehrinstitut) and it has to be accepted internationally. We want to marketing it internationally. We have sold it already in Austria and Switzerland. We want to go now to England and Norway, for example. That's the biggest innovation." (supplier D, L: 77-88)
- "We are thinking again and again of going into blended learning. For the moment, I don't think that the investments would pay off. They are too high when thinking of the outcome. I would say it is not attractive right now." (supplier F, L: 78-81)
- "The costs for investing into e-learning, server and tele-tutors, were too high. We are searching for a co-operation partner with the required equipment." (supplier I, L: 27-29)

It is clearly visible that the topic innovation is mostly connected with ICT-innovations in the area of blended learning and e-learning. Nonetheless, many suppliers are rather sceptical about the implementation of blended learning, because of the investment costs. They are sceptical about the technical functioning without any problems and the outcomes of it. So far they do not expect that the financial outcomes will justify the costs of investment. Others search for co-operation partners. Supplier D is busy in *exploring international markets*. E-learning is therefore the necessary means.

After being asked about innovations beyond blended learning the suppliers express a big variety of ideas and expectations:

- "There will be further flexibilisation of dates, times and locations. Within and outside paid working hours. There has to be a mixture of training and consulting in a high-level segment of the market. We introduce a new product, consult and train the people simultaneously." (supplier B, L: 117-120)
- "It is an advantage when the arrangements of social partners and enterprise-specific arrangements have a place in the conscience of superiors. Accounts for learning time

are also interesting, although I don't know something practical about it right now.” (supplier B, L: 196-198)

- “I think the way we are exploring, making tailor-made offers for enterprises will be the future way. We hope to get more return for the potentially market.” (supplier C, L: 81-83)

- “There is a thematic movement to conflicts at the moment. There is big pressure and simultaneously a little amount of competence in the enterprises. It is done in a piece-meal way” (supplier E, L: 169-170)

- “There will be a further concentration process in the field and we will have mergers of training suppliers.” (supplier G, L: 35-36)

- “Innovative development are initiated from technological developments, changing work organisations like for example quality management and public regulations like environment protection, waste economies and safety areas. These three fields are monitored by us very dearly. It is important to meet the nerves of a region by an offer.” (supplier H, L: 41-46)

- “There will be a greater need for consultancy. Marketing will be more important. There will be an increased need for thematic and organisational flexibility. The demand for modularised offers is increasing. Co-operations and networks are more and more essentials for survival” (supplier I, L: 174-179)

On the micro-didactic level different ideas and experience exist. Some suppliers expect a *move towards flexible tailor-made offers*. The topic of *conflict management* is of increasing importance. *Training and consultancy* are increasingly intermingle to a joint offer.

On the macro-didactic level is partly a *need for public regulations* which are used by the superiors in the enterprises expressed. For example *Accounts for learning time* could help to ease the pro-cyclical actions of German enterprises. It is expected that there will be *mergers of suppliers*. *Co-operations and networks in the regions* are more and more of crucial importance.

5. Summary

The results of the interviews are of course not representative, but they are mirroring very well some important features of CVT in Germany at the moment. The drawback of public financing (e.g. cuts by CVT financed by the labour office) and enterprise-financed training has caused some insolvencies and mergers in the field of training suppliers. The general economic difficult situation of the economy in Germany has resulted in cuts of CVT by the enterprises. German enterprises tend to spend pro-cyclical and CVT costs are rather ease to cut from the point of view of suppliers.

The results are also rather diverse, which seems to be at least partly caused by the different activity areas of the suppliers. We consider it as very important to keep in mind the diversity of the suppliers when looking at the results of the interviews. Despite this diversity some general remarks can be made:

- Networks and co-operations with enterprises and other suppliers are also increasingly used for sharing resources and making joint offers.
- Public financing schemes especially for SME are welcomed and already intensively used. The approval of applications has to be speeded up because of the mostly short-term and not medium-term training needs.
- The professionalism of CVT in many enterprises is rather low from the point of view of training suppliers. The opinions are diverging a lot if this feature is more typical for SME or for big enterprises.
- The price of the offer is often most decisive for decisions concerning CVT. Many enterprises cut down their costs for CVT, because of the generally economical difficult situation in Germany. Training suppliers are increasingly interested in co-operating

with enterprises because of public cuts in financing CVT (especially cuts by the labour office)

- Offering consultancy and training is of increasing importance in the field. Training suppliers try to widen their service there which leads to changing needs concerning the competences of the personal of training suppliers. The development is handicapped by the reluctance of enterprises to pay directly for consultancy of training suppliers. This seems to be partly caused by bad experiences with business consultants.
- Blended learning is discussed intensively, but the supplier are reluctant because of the high level of initial investment with unclear outcomes.
- Tailor-made offers for single enterprises or networks of enterprises are also of increasing importance, although classic catalogue offers remain meaningful as well.
- CVT seems to take place within and outside paid working-time. There is a slight tendency to use the leisure time of employees.
- Quality management has become a normal feature of most suppliers, although the interest of enterprises seems to be often rather superficial and purely formally oriented. Evaluation of CVT is sometimes of no or low interest for enterprises. The quality of trainers is more important.

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National interview report of Italy

CVTS 2 REVISED

WP8

**REPORT ON THE INTERVIEW WITH 10
CVT SUPPLIERS
IN ITALY**



Training suppliers selection and description.

Distribution of Interviews

Country	Public Schools and Colleges	Universities	Specialized Training institutions	Private Training Organizations	Equipment Suppliers	Parent/ Associate Companies	Unions	Chambers of Commerce, Sector Bodies, Employers' Organizations	Other Training Providers
IT	0	0	3	4	1	1	0	0	1
Supplies (see below)			A,B,C	D,E,F,G	H	I			L

PUBLIC TRAINING CORPORATIONS

Foreword

In Italy Public Training Corporations, also in the light of the recent scholastic reform, Law no. 53 of 03/28/03, are the Scholastic Institutes, specifically the Technical and Vocational Institutes and the PTCs, Permanent Territorial Centres, which operate in the education for adults, both Italian and foreigners, within the basic competencies (language and information technology) and the social competencies.

Considering that the PTCs almost never co-operate with the enterprises, precisely according to their institutional purpose, even though in such sense a ban by law does not exist, for the goals of the present research the following sample has been selected:

1. A Corporation: Permanent Territorial Center, operating in the Lazio Region: no. 10 employees among collaborators and stable workers, the Center Director answers.
2. B Corporation: Technical and Industrial Public Institute, operating in the Lazio Region: no. 35 employees among employees and teaching staff, the Scholastic Executive answers.
3. C Corporation: Technical Commercial Institute, operating in the Lombardy Region, no. 47 employees among employees and teaching staff, the Scholastic Executive answers.

a. Relations with the Enterprises

A Supplier: In 1997 the Department for Public Education has set up the Permanent Territorial Centers. The PTCs are public institutions which refer to - regarding to physical structures: classrooms, facilities, etc. - to scholastic institutes. The above-mentioned centers are primarily devoted to adults' education, typifying it as the reading place of training demands, a planning place where a concerted action of the education and training initiatives among public and private subjects could take place and, finally, as a co-ordination place of training offers on the territory. A structure that should develop integrating public school, vocational training and territorial services, to offer **cultural, training, guidance activities** for those citizens who wish to pursue a path of study, personal and vocational growth. All Italian and foreigner citizens can join the Centers' activities, whatever qualification they have.

Every Center organizes a first stage of **welcome** to get to know the people enrolled, to understand which are their **interests**, their learning **demands**, their **skills and competencies**.

The welcome period culminates in a **training pact**: an agreement among the Center and the single subscriber in which a **study path** is defined, as well as its stages, which objectives to reach, the resources and the modalities which will be employed for reaching them, the criteria to determine the results, the activities duration in hours. The paths can end with frequency certificates, competence certifications, and issue of a qualification. The path upshot can be, at discretion of the subscriber, a stage from which to depart for a new path.

As previously noted, the PTCs in general, for their institutional function, do not have among their usual customers enterprises. In fact, as stated before, the Permanent Territorial Centers constitute a direct and free reference-point for the adult citizens who wish to strengthen their basic competencies, both for an empowerment of the citizenship state and for one's working activities.

The interviewed PTC, according to the contacted person in charge, does not exclude a development in the long term, which should occur considering the enterprises as possible customers/subscribers. Having mentioned this, we learn that within the training activity carried out by the center, there are some cases of employed subjects, who, independently from the opinion of the firm of affiliation, took part to the courses mentioned before, also for their own working activities.

Particularly, the interviewed PTC works inside a Rome district with a wide presence of immigrants in co-operation with other public and private institutions, such as: the University in Rome, Religious Corporations of the district and other operational associations within the social domain. *"It is not excluded that in a foreseeable future we will, and partly we must converge with the firms' world, at least with regard to basic and advanced Information Technology courses... obviously I refer to the Office Automation package."*

The PTC at issue is accredited with the Lazio region for the continuous and advanced training and its training offer is primarily made up by:

- English Language courses
- Information Technology courses
- Courses for the historical and artistic knowledge of Rome
- Mosaic course

B, C Suppliers: On the grounds of the recent and brief school reform (Law no. 53/03), the Scholastic Institutes (public and private) take on a wider management autonomy, both in respect of ordinary scholastic paths and the so-called integrative paths of school/labor, addressed both to the pupils and to subjects coming from the external world, and particularly from the firms. Within the above-mentioned integration between school and labor, there has also been a genesis of paths which foresee the workers' participation and therefore they take more and more the shape of continuous training real courses. A Supplier: *"We are purchasing more and more space and we have the inner competencies to be able to succeed, within the training offer addressed to the workers of small and medium enterprises; the big ones have another market of reference."*

Therefore, the offers addressed outside take the shape of technical or transversal training paths (i.e., information technology, management courses and courses with a specialist technical feature). Or, as for one of the cases we have interviewed, the offer can take shape within the STET paths – Superior Technical Education and Training - that in turn constitutes one of the main methodological innovations of the reform of the scholastic system. Supplier B: *"We have carried out an STET named: "The person responsible of the enterprise's Internationalization, which proved to be greatly successful also within the firms, we have had 5 students on 22 who were workers of small and medium enterprises."*

The STET courses are typified by a high number of hours (1000 - 1200), the duration is one or more years, and people can attend the whole course or part of it. The competencies of technical and professional type are introduced following the basic and transversal ones to facilitate the workers' participation within the Capitalizable Training Units (CTU), which are

extremely interesting for them. The STET's are carried out in co-operation with Universities, firms and training corporations.

The interviewed Scholastic Institutes recently intensified the relations with the territory enterprises. The co-operation occurs both through a training offer from the above-mentioned institutes toward the enterprises, both, through a direct involvement of some business representatives in training moments primarily addressed to the institutes' students (we particularly refer to the institute in Lombardy. *"Our co-operation experience with the enterprises of our territory dates back to before the Reform of the scholastic system..."*).

In the case of the B Institute, the training offer primarily refers to competencies of technical and managerial type: courses on administrative and managerial themes and management audit, and, for the C Institute, courses on alphanumeric machines. With regards to the co-operation of business representatives in the classroom, for the two institutes, some informative and indicative meetings for the students have been organized, regarding the local productive reality and the relative specificity concerning the competencies required by the local market.

A direct relation with the territorial co-operative realities (on the employer side and on the union side), which act as a link with the territory firms and the local administrations of reference, is unanimously considered essential.

In the Lombardy region it is considered essential to take part to the local planning tables and networks in order to understand (through formal progressions, such as the co-operation tables with the social parts, the academic world and the local administrations) the development and the metamorphosis of the territory's training and professional requirements.

As stated before, and with a higher incisiveness relating to the Lombard Institute, some active co-operation is found in study networks and planning co-operation with social representations and the academic world. As far as the Lazio institute is concerned, recently a project of co-operation with a Roman university started in order to carry out an excellence training center for the relative territory of competence. The centre intends to offer a physical meeting place for the above-mentioned realities to carry out, also with the presence of advanced facilities, an integration between the labor world and the education /training the world. The integration will be carried out through elaborate training/indicative paths on the real demands expressed by the local productive realities and the labor world.

As far as successful experiences are concerned, the experience already quoted, carried out by the B Supplier is mentioned here:

It concerns a STET course carried out by one of the two institutes of the North. The course was named: "The business manager for the enterprise internationalization." The whole path combined 1200 hours, divided in no. 3 consequent teaching ranges: basic competencies, which included science technology and language training; technical and vocational competencies, which included teachings that ranged from international law, fund raising, political economy, management audit, etc.; technical and advanced vocational competencies, which primarily pertained to tutorial moments, with some successful cases relating to the internationalization experiences carried out in practice. The course ended with a role playing which planned the carrying out and the launch of facilities to be built in Asian countries. The course was attended by the Institutes students and, at the final stage, there were also some business world representatives (5 students out of 22).

A greater attention by the enterprises to continuous training has been noticed, especially for the Lombard institute, although the change is not so evident to suggest a change of course in a trend which still reveals a strong backwardness compared with the European average. Therefore, from a practical and operational point of view it has been noticed that there is **a great and more frequent meeting among the business training demands and the offer that the institutes are able to work out.** C Supplier: *"I must say that the enterprises target is acquiring a more and more increasing position in our training offer framework..."*

In the brief and intermediate term meaningful changes are not forecasted in the approach strategy for the enterprises which wish to keep on developing the strength of the existing

network relations. This is also due to the fact that, even though this should develop by means of the new education path, the schools are not yet completely able to carry out intermediate and long term commercial and marketing projects on a competitive market, although it is not as competitive as the services' market in general.

The expectation, is to clinch a "bilateral" co-operation with the territory enterprises, which would allow an information interchange on the real requirements, in order to enable the schools to formulate useful training paths for the students and the enterprises.

The current existing relations primarily refer to the small and medium enterprises and the engineering and wood production in Lombardy and the small and medium enterprises working in the information technology sector concerning the institute located in Lazio. On the average the interested enterprises are ranked in the dimensional range that goes from 11 to the 50 employees and rarely exceeding 20 employees. On the average the above-mentioned enterprises produce for the local market, except some wood realities in the Brianza area (Lombardy), which also produce for the European and world foreign markets. In the above-mentioned enterprises, structures devoted to the development of the human resources are almost absent and therefore the decision to resort to training as a strategic incentive for development, arises exclusively from the entrepreneur's attention and sensitivity concerning the continuous training skills in terms of innovative skills and adaptation of the enterprise to the markets.

The above-mentioned institutes have a training offer so-called by catalogue, not directly and continually elaborated on the basis of the immediate demands of the enterprise. Having said that, one has to stress the fact that, recently, some experimental systems have been devised for the record of the training requirements financed by the single regions which involve the social parts and the academic world. However, without any "academic" rhetoric, the Institutes believe that the best way to know the real vocational requirements, and therefore the training ones, of the territory firms, lies in a exhaustive knowledge of the territory itself and not in the non-mediated contact with the entrepreneurs, who know better than others the needs of their own firm, mostly if the small and medium enterprises are taken into account. C supplier: *"I recognize the usefulness of the various analysis on the training requirements carried out in various ways but, I am convinced that, especially if we refer to the productive realities of small and medium enterprises, the true knowledge of what one needs to do in terms of training for development, lies exclusively in the analytical skills of the entrepreneur. Undoubtedly, a small advisory aid, particularly to steer the entrepreneur towards the knowledge of the local training offer and the various opportunities put into effect also with public financing, is useful and desirable..."*

In the large majority of cases and foremost concerning the training paths concerning management and administrative competencies, the entrepreneurs themselves take part to them, the second group which sees the greater number of participants are the employees and junior managers' (cadres) one, and only in the most technical courses, which present a lesser amount of offered hours compared to the average, do workers take part to.

The training activities addressed to the firms do not represent the Institutes' "core business", although this is a continuously developing activity, that should be integrated in a system perspective more revolved to a contribution for the integration of school /job, rather than on a pure market horizon. Within the experiences of the interested institutes, it is observed that the territory's small and medium enterprises in selecting a training supplier primarily rely on the local connection network. As for the other local markets, the proximity to the productive site is therefore the element that influences in large part the enterprises' choice. As for the Training Corporations, the direct contact with the enterprises proves to be essential, through the person of the entrepreneur. The small and medium entrepreneur, who is rarely able to understand the importance of continuous training, is very careful to the real requirements

expressed by its productive structure and therefore makes use of the Corporations or the schools which offer courses able to satisfy the above-mentioned needs

The investment in training is not predominantly considered in Italy and, especially in the small and medium enterprise, this is an investment of primary importance. The cost becomes therefore a variable that often, except cases of urgent need, determines the choice.

b. Qualitative Standards

Only the Lombard Institute has the quality certification, but, in the relationship with the enterprises, this is not considered an element of remarkable importance for the enterprises, as usually one primarily operates with small and micro enterprises.

The staff of trainers consists in, for all the corporations interviewed, permanent trainers with ten years experience. The training of the teachers occurs through periodic initiatives of the institute or with ministerial and the European Social Fund's programs.

The assessment occurs with normal tools, in this case gathered from those normally used for school courses. With regard to small and medium enterprises and the courses enjoyed by them, the adopted competencies are generally tested with practical exams, while in case of training to managers simulation tests are carried out, while real examination tests are rarely carried out, except in the previously recounted case of the interviewed TCP. The certification of the adopted competencies is granted only in some cases in which the involvement of the local administration employees for the examination test is provided. The attendance certificate is normally delivered at the end of the course.

c. Innovation Skills

By their very nature, the Corporations that make up the present group of interviews don't have innovation projects concerning the continuous training activity. In fact such activity currently represents a minority part of the corporations' global activity, which in one case are PTC, while in the two remaining cases are real school institutes. Having mentioned this, one has to point out that exactly in such setting, considering also the recent scholastic reform, among the interviewees, a strong sensitivity for the theme of training innovation is noticed. There is often a reference to the use of new technologies, such as the e-learning, but school executives are not yet fully aware of the real usefulness and feasibility.

PRIVATE TRAINING CORPORATIONS

Foreword

In Italy many structures that operate within continuous and vocational training can be connected, in a more or less evident way, to the most representative social parts (employer and union organizations). Such structures carry out the greatest part of their own training activity addressed to firms using national and community public funds: Law no. 236; Law no. 53 (personal training); Inter-professional Funds for Continuous Formation; European Social Fund. The corporations operate on the whole national territory, they have a central office and some decentralized offices at regional and provincial level. The four corporations selected for the interview have been chosen on the basis of the social representation of belonging: n. 2 of employer part and n. 2 of union part.

D Supplier: Employers training agency whose target is small and medium enterprises, in Emilia Romagna region, operating at a provincial level, with an establishment of n. 20 workers and a training offer which ranges from technical and vocational themes to basic and transversal themes.

E Supplier: Agriculture and Food Sector Employers training agency. The interviewed structure is the national center. The training offer refers mostly to employees, junior managers (cadres) and executives of agricultural firms. The carried out activities at an institutional level also include the vocational update by the officials of their own regional structures on the themes of continuous training and union bargaining.

F, G Suppliers: Trade Union training agencies. National structures, operating mostly in the area of continuous training financed by public funds. They have a ten years experience within training plans carried out through the funds of Law no. 236. Such agencies work as reference-points, on their own union side, at the productive categories level; F in particular is the reference-point for the textile sector, G is the reference-point for the engineering sector.

a. Relations with the Enterprises

In regard to the corporations D and E, the contacts take place within associate firms. Therefore, a list of associate firms exists; these are periodically consulted and followed in their development through the use of continuous training. The D corporation, operating at a provincial level, conducts also a commercial activity outside of the sphere of the small and medium enterprises associated to the employer's side, deriving by the corporation. While the E corporation presents its own training catalogue, which is quite strict, the D corporation founds its activity on a first analysis intervention of the training and organizational requirements. The Corporations F and G, even if they own their own training catalogue, for their nature of union representatives, hardly directly intervene within the firms, preferring pre-arranged territorial projects or those addressed directly to medium and big enterprises. One needs to highlight the existence of Inter-professional Funds, which finance the continuous training activities. Such Funds have allowed to streamline the application procedures for financing, consequently reviving commercial activities addressed to the firms on a large scale. For the first time in the Italian history of the continuous training, the entrepreneurs, with the due and temporary reserves given by the launch situation, are able to activate the training initiatives in times and ways that befit the business ones.

The four corporations agree in stating that the essential element in the relationship with the enterprises is the transparency and the reliability of the corporation, in fact, D Supplier: "*the training market addressed to the enterprises is sadly dotted by suppliers with a not too clear and debatable professionalism!*" In fact it often happens that companies of doubtful seriousness offer to small and medium enterprises training services on which the entrepreneur can hardly give his/her opinion beforehand, subsequently proving to be iniquitous and ineffective. The four interviewed corporations have an experience of about 20 or 30 years of substantial activity and curricula, therefore they are also facilitated in the contact with the firms, as they are an integral part of the services offered by the associative networks.

Concerning the experiences of excellence carried out within the continuous training field, what follows can be observed.

D Supplier: the best recent experience carried out is a project financed with the funds of Law no 236 of 1993, denominated Rubik, which involved around 800 workers and 60 enterprises on the whole Italian national territory and which lasted two years. The project aimed at formulating an intervention model to elaborate personal training paths for the workers, also keeping in mind the requirements and expectations of the enterprise. The project, corresponding to a bilateral perspective of concerted action, carried out a detailed activity of analysis of the business training requirements and the budget of competencies of the individual involved workers. The project results were training paths pre-arranged by the social parts for about 800 workers.

E Supplier: it is a continuous training plan carried out on a territorial level for the Reggio Calabria province; the plan concerned the training of the security staff for agriculture and food enterprises. No. 60 training hours were scheduled for no. 150 employees and no. 100 enterprises of the territory. The training contents concerned those provided by national regulations for the workers' safety; training methodology provided 40 classroom hours and 20

hours of practical experience with simulations and problem solving situations. The project was considered a successful experience as only 5% of abandon was noticed in the classroom and the satisfaction acknowledged by the enterprises and the workers was expressed at the maximum levels.

Supplier F and G: With regards to the two union training agencies, for both of them one has to refer to experiences carried out by using the two Inter-professional Funds calls for continuous training in the trade sector and in the craftsmen one. Both reference plans are plans with a sector feature, one of this is in its closing phase, according to the above-mentioned reference sectors. Within the plans concerning numerous projects, both company and inter-company, there are numerous training themes among training relating to basic, transversal, technical and specialist competencies.

With the Inter-professional Funds introduction for continuous training, a greater dynamism in the market of the continuous training has been noticed. Actually the firms have not significantly raised the demand level, but through the activation of promotion network of the possibilities that the above-mentioned Funds can offer, the firms became more careful and inclined, and this is also due to the huge sums made available in the national system, referring to training as a strategic incentive. In fact the existence of the above-mentioned funds, has contributed in a crucial way in raising the enterprises' attention, which often worked with a scarce knowledge of the sector and asymmetrical information which did not allow an in-depth knowledge of the offer and the offer referent-point on the territorial and national level.

For all the interviewed Corporations on the average what follows is observed:

- The majority of the subscribers of their own training courses are employees and junior managers (cadres) ; they are followed by the managerial positions, while workers are found only as the last group. For the latter ones, training paths of technical and specialist feature are rarely attended, while the course concerning basic and information technology are greatly attended. The same thing occurs with the employees, for whom there are also courses on administrative accounting themes. As far as the junior managers and the executives are concerned, they prefer teachings on transversal and managerial competencies: self-assessment and performance assessment, business organization, enterprise internationalization, business English, etc.

- The big and medium enterprises often have inside their structure offices referring to the development of human resources. In the cases in which such situation does not exist, the big enterprises refer to companies operating on the whole national territory, with great experience. The small and medium enterprises refer instead to the local market, taking into account the prices and the reliability of the structure. The small and medium enterprises' entrepreneurs are also very careful of the courses' transparency and effectiveness. This is the reason why the positive practical result of the training path is the prime element at the basis of the training paths drawing up by the corporations.

d. Qualitative Standard of the Training Suppliers

Supplier D, F, have the quality certification Vision 2000 and the ISO 9000 certification, G does not have the certification. The latter believes that the certification pertains to the procedures and operational modalities that do not befit with the real corporation needs. All the interviewed Corporations have as well obtained the formal certification within the regional system they belong to. Such certification is requested for activities connected to training interventions financed with public money. The certification areas obtained by the interviewed corporations vary from continuous training, vocational training, advanced technical training, guidance. The staff is made up by Senior teachers with more than ten years of experience. The teachers' curricula are subject to regional certification and therefore are submitted for credit and need to match the parameters of national character. Especially in the two employers training agencies, the training by skilled workers who have previously worked in firms is preferred, particularly for the thematic areas regarding administrative and/or management competencies.

In most cases, the certification concerns attendance certificates and where no examination tests are foreseen, certification certificates of the developed competencies are granted. These real formal certifications recognized at a national level, of exclusive competence of the regions, are only granted in the cases in which in the examining board, where and when it is provided, there is a specific region representative for this particular purpose. The most frequent cases are the so-called FTSE, long term courses carried out in co-operation with Universities, firms and school institutes.

The assessment procedures used are manifold: there are real examination tests with classical procedures and innovative procedures, such as role playing and problem solving situations.

e. Innovation Skills

From all the interviewed Corporations a particular attention to innovation does not emerge, except the one encouraged by the sector of continuous and vocational training in the national system itself. The innovation meant is defined as a strong relaunch reform of the sector by using training as a strategic incentive of industrial policy. When one faces the subject of new technologies on the average there is some distrust as the Italian online training experience does not present frequent successful experiences, with the exception of experiences carried out by big enterprises working online. Therefore the idea that training conducted in a traditional way prevails, consequently classroom and/or support, at least for continuous training, are considered the best methodology historically and presumably the best for the future in the brief and intermediate run.

EQUIPMENT SUPPLIER

An enterprise has been selected, we have denominated it H and it operates in the ICT sector. The society at issue has a staff organic of no. 15 employees (8 permanently employed and 7 collaborators) and has been operating for years in the sector of planning and production of "custom-made" software for small and medium enterprises. The produced software concerns the following areas: administration, business organization and personnel management. The H society consequently offers training concerning the requested software to the customer firms' employees. Therefore the training offered by the H society is strictly linked to the product and can only indirectly trace back to the concept of continuous training. Consequently the offered training can be more easily compared to a targeted training featuring brief training interventions: 20 hours maximum.

a. Relations with the Enterprises

H is a service society working in the local market. It also had some customers located in the North of Italy. Within the local market it carries out a commercial activity mainly through the contacts implemented by the chief executive. The commercial contact occurs with a first stage of agreement and presentation of the services that the H firm offers. The second stage is carried out at the presence of a technician who analyzes in detail the demands of the customer firm. Such stage develops through a careful monitoring of the labor flows and the processes which will have to be automated through the software. The analysis is also able to propose an organization optimization by introducing new work procedures and new organizational models. Once this stage ends, the company formulates an initial project that develops till the final formulation, through a sharing of the production progressive steps with the customer firm. When the product is ready in its definitive version, it is presented to the customer firm employees and a training intervention on its management is carried out. The training intervention rarely exceeds 20 hours. The tutorage on the software use lasts up to 4 months in

the average after the software implementation in the firm, in the cases expressly provided in the contract, the tutorage can be extended paying an additional price.

The essential element that distinguishes the firm in examination, according to the statements of the interviewed representative himself, is the close cooperation with the customer firm in the product development. Such cooperation, which started with a detailed analysis of the requirements expressed and not expressed by the firm, develops within a precise sharing of the intermediate results of the software chain of production. This process allows minimizing the errors and the criticality due to a non-transparent shared path with the customer firm. The other outstanding element of great importance for a good service is the training offer on the use of the software and the tutorage up to the starting of the software itself. Obviously it has to be a supported training carried out with great precision through an effective and efficient tutorage.

With regards to the training activity in particular, a recent experience carried out for a supermarket chain located within the provincial territory of belonging is hereby mentioned. It concerns no. 25 outlets and about no. 700 employees. It consisted in achieving a new management for every single outlet. Such software, through the input of data of different kind regarding the sales and the purchases, allowed to carry out a precise management audit, at both the outlet and the centralized management levels. The process was very long and required a very detailed organizational analysis, carried out with the aid of experts of the sector of large-scale retail trade. Once the whole system was realized and implemented in the outlet network, no.25 branch managers, no. 25 manager assistants and no. 3 Central Direction clerks, for a total of n. 53 students had to be trained. Therefore the training process required a considerably greater effort compared to that carried out by the H firm concerning the normal production and sale practice of its own products. Therefore the training was developed online through specifically worked out applications, which simulated various situations of the software use. No. 5 tutors were available to follow the paths. Afterwards the above-mentioned intervention, some examinations were administered to each student at the presence of a tutor. From the training, useful suggestions came from the students themselves on how to improve the practical aspects of the software itself.

Concerning the recent changes detectable in the market of reference, it has been noticed that the use of software which improve the small and medium enterprises management, increased both in quantitative terms and in qualitative terms. Consequently, a certain improvement has been noticed at the commercial level and the request expressed by the firm points out a greater awareness of the IT usefulness. During a several years' experience within the offer of services connected to IT and particularly addressed to small and medium enterprises, a request of computer training for one's employees has been noticed, also and in particular on the use of the Office package. There is an assessment to build an area which should exclusively focus on the training offer addressed to the enterprises. The necessary competencies are already within the firm and the experience within training exists on the basis of what was previously mentioned. The usership target of the courses with regards to the customer firms, concerns mostly employees, junior managers and executives. The mostly considered business areas are the administrative, management and personnel ones. In the examined case the offered training is strictly linked to the product, therefore the commercial relations with their customers are exclusively carried out on the basis of the requests. The enterprises are contacted and those which contact the H firm usually do it through word-of-mouth and primarily due to the fact that the firm is among the best operating in the territory of reference. Training is currently included in the product cost. Even if training is strictly linked to the product, it is carried out with great care, both for a reason of reliability towards the customer and to avoid continuous and disagreeable complaints on the customer side due to a non-clear use of the software.

b. Quality Standards

The H society has the quality certification Vision 2000. This constitutes a qualification element with regards to the customer, but, speaking about small and medium enterprises, with the exception of a few cases such as the one mentioned earlier, this is not an element of primary importance in the development of the work relationship with the customer. In fact in the territory small and medium enterprises often do not recur to such certification. Currently the available training staff is formed by the same project leaders who take care of the software. These people have also been trained to develop skills concerning the training activities. Their updating occurs within the working activity and through recurrent courses for the updating of the programming languages, which the staff attends according to the business requirements. No specific marking models are used for the training paths, since they are not strictly necessary. Essentially the assessment is exclusively based on the attainment of the objective, supplying the customer firm's employees with the right know-how for using the software in an effective and efficient way.

c. Innovation Skills

Knowing the central activities of the interviewed firm, the interlocutor thought was not significant in answering the present group of questions.

PARENT / IN PARTNERSHIP COMPANIES

I Supplier: spin off venture by a great Italian company operating in the sector of the electric energy offer. The "I" company is completely controlled by its own holding. It has a staff of no. 35 employees among which there are no. 8 collaborators. The activity is mainly directed to the training, on the whole national territory, of the holding's employees, which are about 25.000. An activity addressed to the external market is also carried out; the "I" company among its other activities, is also a certified corporation within the C.E.M. system (Continuous Education in Medicine) for the e-learning activities. The firm is made up of no. 2 areas, one specialized in e-learning and one which carries out classroom training. Currently, in the perspective of a Holding's general reorganization, the "I" company is undergoing a stage of deep change which will very probably see it turn into a holding's division almost exclusively aimed at the training of the internal staff.

a. Relations with the Enterprises

Regarding the activity directed to the internal staff, training is carried out on the basis of a development plan for human resources concerted with the social parts, which is carried out in spans which can also be multiyear. The single training interventions are therefore carried out periodically and included in a wider business development context. The activities are carried out on the whole national territory.

With regards to the training offer directed to the external market, a distinction has to be made: training within the CEM and the training for the big firms.

For the CEM the customers are: medical associations, hospital trusts, medical search institutes, etc. The customers themselves contact the I society, up to this point the process regards a normal processing of the services' activity: audits are carried out in order to establish which are the formative requirement in general, the second meeting conducted with an expert trainer provides a more detailed analysis of the training objectives and therefore the production and drawing up process for the shared product is activated. For the CEM the commercial promotion activity is also carried out by means of stands at the sector exhibitions.

With regards to the training offer directed to the big firms, as for instance banks which operate at a national level, the contact often occurs from the latter ones, as they recognize the I firm as one of the best in the market. Some of the commercial contacts are carried out by the holding's referent-point through the connection networks at a national level.

As mentioned earlier, the "I" company considers the cooperation with the customer firm essential regarding the steps of production sharing.

Regarding the training paths connected to the CEM, the "I" company makes use of expert advisors on the medical themes which are faced. The cooperation with the sector experts obviously occurs at the level of the contents' elaboration and therefore it is exclusively carried out by those in charge of the elaboration of these (story board production).

The most meaningful experience, or at least the one that has more recently presented excellence elements, does not refer however to external job relations: it was a training intervention addressed to the workers of a foreign company (Eastern Europe) recently taken over by the holding. The training had a quite complex training objective, that is, it wished to supply English language competencies to promote an all-round communication between the Italian structure and the foreign one. But its primary aim was to create a spirit of affiliation to the firm and a connection network for the newly-acquired foreign society. The course was carried out by means of e-learning procedures, virtual classrooms and in presence meetings within the foreign center. The experience was judged as successful on the basis of technical assessment of the training path and on the basis of wide-ranging considerations regarding the success in the sense of affiliation development mentioned earlier. Relating to the market of reference, remarkable changes have not been noticed in the relationship with the enterprises, except a quantitative increase of the custom base with a subsequent jobs' intensification. Contextually to such development and as previously claimed, a structure shake-out is forecasted due to inside development policies which intend focusing the attention on the training for the employees of the national structure.

According to interviewed the person in charge, "... *the firms look for the training supplier mainly considering the reliability and the seriousness of the firm bidder.*" Considering the particular customer base target, the training costs are certainly an element taken into account, but which is not considered as a central element in the decision.

b. Qualitative Standard

The I society has the quality certification ISO 9001. Also the majority of the customer firms have the same certification; therefore the presence of such certification turns out to be useful in a lot of occasions.

Concerning the courses carried out in the classroom, the trainers are selected in the greatest part of cases in the network of senior advisors according to the themes that need to be addressed. For the e-learning courses the contents are drawn up with the cooperation of sector experts. Till now the assessment was conducted with classical methods through approval questionnaires addressed to the course attendants. A more complex system of assessment should include a continuous qualitative/quantitative monitoring also aimed at succeeding in the assessment goals. A methodology for the impact evaluation of the training paths, in the middle and long run is also being studied. Such methodology becomes also very important in the light of the wider focus on the efforts for the internal staff development through training paths.

With regards to the training directed to the internal staff, an attendance certificate is granted and, besides the carried out path it is recorded in the file of the personnel office. Carrying out a training path is useful to define the career path and for business mobility aims as well.

c. Innovation Skills

Recently in cooperation with the ESA (European Space Agency), as far as the technological support with Corporations and medical Institutes is concerned, the possibility to supply medical updated paths via the satellite system and the satellite TV interactive channels use is being studied.

INTER-PROFESSIONAL FUNDS FOR CONTINUOUS TRAINING

As last corporation to be placed in the group: *Other Training Suppliers*, one of the Inter-professional Funds operating in Italy has been selected. The Joint Inter-professional National Funds for continuous training are associative nature bodies promoted by the Social Parts organizations of representation through specific Inter-confederal Agreements stipulated by the most representative employers' and the workers' union organizations at a national level.

Joint Inter-professional Funds can be set up for each economic sector: industrial, agricultural, tertiary and craftsmanship; the Inter-confederal Agreements can also provide the setting up of Funds for different sectors, as well as, within these, the establishment of a special section for the training of executives.

The funds are financed thanks to the 0.30% mechanism which allows the enterprises to earmark this mass wage share of contributions paid to the INPS (the so-called "obligatory contribution for unintentional unemployment") for the training of one's own employees.

So the enterprises can ask the INPS to transfer the contribution to one of the Joint Inter-professional Funds, which will provide the financing of the training activities for the affiliate enterprises' workers.

The Funds established and authorized till now, representative of a large part of the world of the enterprises and the workers, are:

- Craftsmanship Training Fund - Fund for continuous training in craftsmanship enterprises.
- Fon. Coop - Fund for continuous training in the cooperative enterprises.
- Fondimpresa - Fund for continuous training.
- Fund for Executives of small and medium enterprise' - Fund for the continuous vocational training of executives of small and medium industrial enterprises.
- SME's Training Fund - Fund for the continuous training of SME's.
- FONDIR - Fund for the continuous training of executives of the tertiary sector
- FOR.TE. - Fund for the tertiary continuous training.
- Fondirigenti - Giuseppe Taliercio Fondirigenti (Institution for management training in the industrial enterprises)
- FON.TER. - Fund for the continuous training of the employees in the tertiary sector enterprises: tourism and distribution services sections.
- Fondoprofessionisti - Fund for the continuous training in the Professional Offices.

The Joint Inter-professional Funds finance training business, sector and territorial plans, which the enterprises, individually or in partnership will decide to carry out for their own employees. Besides financing, completely or partly, business, sector and territorial plans, with the changes introduced by the article 48 of Law 289/02, the Inter-professional Funds can also finance individual training plans, as well as further introductory activities or in any way connected to the training initiatives.

The Department of Employment and Social Policies has to carry out, together with vigilance and audit tasks, a strategic monitoring of the financed activities.

The interviewed Fund – FAPI - established on the basis of some agreements together with CONFAPI (Italian Confederation of the Small and Medium Private Industry and CGIL-CISL-

UIL, the three mostly representative union organizations in Italy) has as specific reference target, the small and medium enterprises and in these months is overcoming the start up stage. Some of its internal and organizational procedures have not yet been optimized and therefore it works in continuous self-analysis in order to reach the objective to tick over in the shortest time possible and in the best way.

The Manager explains how, once the start up stage ends, in which public funds are divided according to representativeness logic and transferred through Ministerial Decree, a moment of commercial activity begins on a market very similar to the competitive type one. In fact, starting from the above-mentioned moment, the Funds could obtain an increase of their financial availability only through an increase of their associates. For this purpose the fund at issue endowed itself with numerous regional articulations which mostly operate as terminals of commercial feature in order to find associates on the whole national territory. The regional articulations carry out their respective commercial activities through referent-points, who, exploiting the employer's reference associative network and the workers' union ones, get in touch with the firms to let them know the advantages of the association to the Fund. The answer by the firm exclusively depends on the entrepreneur's sensitivity toward training's usefulness as a development incentive, as the 0.30% payment, as explained in the foreword, is an obligation by law. The procedure by which the firms can obtain the financing from the Fund, to carry out their own training activities, provides the latter's participation to contracts which are periodically issued on the basis of an annual planning; relating to the interviewed Fund, it is necessary to specify that the budgets concerning each contract are divided regionally according to the registered quantity, which is updated half-yearly. In order to carry out training paths, the firms can make use of Training Corporations that are present in the territory they belong to.

None of the Funds, and therefore not even the interviewed one, has a quality certification, but in the foreseeable future they forecast to obtain one so as to optimize the internal working procedures and the related forms.

For what pertains to innovation, one has to highlight that the Funds are the Institutions which in Italy currently represent the most advanced innovation frontier, which directly or indirectly, have the financial power and the know-how to accomplish the so longed-for national system's renewal, passing also through a decisive continuous training demand promotion, which at the moment is not sufficiently expressed in Italy.

National interview report of Lithuania

Vidmantas Tūtlys
Vytautas Magnus University,
Centre for Vocational Education and Research

REPORT ON THE INTERVIEW WITH THE CONTINUOUS VOCATIONAL TRAINING SUPPLIERS IN LITHUANIA

1. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Selection of the interviewed continuing vocational training suppliers.

The interviewed institutions were selected referring to the existing structure of the continuing vocational training suppliers in Lithuania. The representation of the all existing sectors of the continuing vocational training supply was one of the most important criteria for the selection. The following suppliers were selected:

- private training companies (one company providing the ICT training services for public and private enterprises, three companies providing the management and business training services for the companies, one company providing the language training services);
- associated structures providing training services (regional chamber of industry, commerce and trades);
- public institutions providing training on the state legal regulations (state centre of the health and hygiene);
- public vocational training and higher education institutions (two colleges (non-university higher education institutions, one regional vocational education and training center);

These suppliers were selected from the three regions of Lithuania: Vilnius, Kaunas, Klaipėda and Alytus.

The interviewed persons represented different positions in their organizations: the most of them were the managers and directors, others – experts of the training.

Organization of the interviews.

The interviews were carried out by the team of researchers of the Vytautas Magnus University composed of 4 persons.

After the selection of the institutions the researchers sent them the presentation of the research and the translated questions of the interview. Then there followed the phone calls to settle the interview conditions, time and place.

All the carried interviews were face to face interviews. The duration of the interviews – from 45 minutes to 1,5 hour. The material of the interviews is summarized in the protocols.

The contents of the interview:

There was followed the contents of the interview defined by the proposal of the BIBB. The process of the interview proved, that the topics covered by the interview and the contents of the questions were really understandable and important for the continuing vocational training providers and did not require additional commenting or explanation of the contents of questions. The main areas covered by the interview was the structure of the continuing vocational training service process, ways of cooperation between training suppliers and enterprises, quality of provided training services and innovations in the fields of training contents and the organization of training provision.

2. DESCRIPTION OF THE INTERVIEWED SUPPLIERS OF CONTINUING VOCATIONAL TRAINING.

1. Private and corporate providers of the continuing vocational training services.

JSC Informatikos mokymo centras. It is a public company established in Kaunas in 2002 and providing the ICT training services for the public institutions, private companies and individuals. Their main activities are the continuing vocational training and the publishing of the training materials in the field of the ICT. This company is certified as the ECDL testing centre and the registered partner of the „Microsoft“. They also created their own system of the distance training in the field of ICT. The training staff consists of 22 trainers.

Kaunas Chamber of Commerce Industry and Crafts represents interests of the regional companies. It was established in 1991. The organizational structure of The Chamber is of a corporate character: there are corporations of industry, trade, services, transport, construction, finance, innovations, small business and crafts, tourism, and education acting at the Chamber. The leaders of these corporations make a Board of the Chamber. One of the activities of the Chamber is the organization of the different training sessions and seminars for the enterprises.

The Chamber organizes regularly consultative seminars (~ 60 seminars per year), arranges directing studies, etc.

Verslo Poligonas is an international training services provision company, specializing in sales and leadership training and development of efficient working skills. *Verslo Poligonas* provide the training in the following fields of the human resources management :

- a) development of responsible attitude towards work;
- b) development of efficient working skills;
- c) assisting to integrate the acquired knowledge and skills into the everyday works.

Their customers are the big and middle sized national and international companies.

The private company „Kalba“ is the biggest provider of the foreign language training in Lithuania. They provide the foreign language training services for the private companies (business English), public institutions and private persons. This provider has the training centers in Vilnius, Kaunas, Klaipėda, Šiauliai, Panevėžys and Alytus. Company „Kalba“ is the certified provider of the language training services for the public institutions.

Business People House, the center established by Kaunas Regional Association of Small and Medium Enterprises (KRASME). This center was established in 2000. Their activities include trainings, seminars, public discussions on actual business issues, as well as consultations on business start up, taxation, marketing, staff management, financing, EU structural funds and other possible financial resources for SMEs, employer's duties, computerization, etc.

Amber Training – new management training and consulting provider, company established just one year ago. Their customers are the different companies from the tertiary sector.

2. Public and state owned providers of the continuing vocational training.

National centre of the public health and hygiene. It is a public institution, responsible for the supervision of the health and hygiene conditions and the prevention of epidemic diseases. One of their functions is the training of the employees responsible for the supervision and control of the healthcare and hygienic regulations in the companies and enterprises.

Colleges of Alytus and Klaipėda. These colleges are state governed higher education institutions. The colleges in Lithuania were created on the basis of the former special secondary vocational training schools of the soviet period – *technikums*. In 1991 these schools were

transformed to the higher vocational schools and from 2000 there started the process of the establishment of colleges. The colleges are interesting for the analysis of the CVT in Lithuania, because one of their missions is to become the supplier of the skilled and high-skilled workforce in the regions. The colleges are developing rather fast and gaining more and more confidence from the side of the enterprises and the school leavers. The continuing vocational training services in colleges are rather successfully coordinated with the organization and provision of the initial training and studies.

Lithuanian Labor market training authority. This institution was established by the Ministry of the Social Affairs and Labor of Lithuania and their main mission is to coordinate the employment training for the unemployed persons. Currently the Lithuanian Labor Market Training Authority has fourteen subordinate labor market training centers with their branches and sub offices in other towns. The main activity directions of labor market training centers are vocational training, retraining and advanced training of adults, including the unemployed. These services afford a person the opportunity to learn a new trade and to raise the level of professional education. Among persons accepted for training there are ones directed by employers.

3. RESULTS

3.1. Forms of co-operation between the suppliers and the enterprises.

There can be distinguished rather big variety of the forms of co-operation between the suppliers and enterprises. The interviews helped to discern the following factors which influence the forms of co-operation between the CVT suppliers and enterprises:

1. The specificities of the field of training. For example, the providers of the ICT training are more inclined to exploit the information and communication technologies in the marketing activities. For example, the supplier of the ICT training use such tools as the on-line registration to the training courses, or the on-line language skills assessment tool. Colleges use their traditional relations with the employers in the field of the organization of the practical training for their students. In the process of the organization of the practical training of the students the enterprises also present their needs in the personnel training and discuss the possibilities to organize the training for their employees. The colleges usually do not make any special marketing efforts in the field of the continuing vocational training, because it is not their main field of their activity. Therefore the initiative in proposing the cooperation here goes from the enterprises.

The continuing vocational training providers in the field of management and marketing use rather wide and aggressive marketing techniques. They advertise their activities through the media, use their web-sites. One of the specific characteristics of their co-operation with the customers is that they try to create the „pool“ of the constant customers and to exploit the name of the company in the market. These suppliers try to establish the close and constant relationships with the customers.

„We offer our services ourselves to our customers and in this way we gain about 80% of our customers. Other 20% of the customers find us themselves, when they hear about our services from the existing customers. The main feature of our typical cooperation with the customer is the sustaining of the continuing relationship. We do not forget the customer after the service is provided – we remind him about our organised seminars, send the greeting cards on the holidays, offer different free seminars, organize the education and training camps for the children of the employees of our customers.“

Training providers established by the employers organizations extensively use the network of their organizations and associations. For example, the training organization of the regional employers association have the direct and constant relations with the members of this association and exploit these relations to find the new customers. The Chamber of Industry, Commerce and Trades of Kaunas provide their training services to the members of the Chamber and try to find the new customers using the existing network of the member enterprises. Some public providers which provide the training in the fields of obligatory state regulations to perform different activities do not need to exercise any specific marketing activities. This is the case of the Centre of the Public Health which provides the training on the work safety, healthcare and hygiene regulations. The main task of this institution in the field of the cooperation with customers is the provision of the information about the organised training courses and events. The National Labor Market Training Authority also use the relations with the employers established in the field of the employment policies and unemployment prevention measures. Ten-fifteen years ago the national labor market training centres were almost the only suppliers of the continuing vocational training in certain fields, especially in the technical field and the training of workers.

2. The development of the continuing training provision through different national and international projects. Most of the interviewed suppliers of the continuing vocational training indicated that the participation in the projects of the structural funds becomes very important part of their activities. These projects include the provision of the training in the different fields for a big variety of the target groups. For example, the training of the municipality officers in the field of ICT (ECDL certification), training of the National Post Service employees

in the ICT skills, foreign language training for the public and private enterprises and other types of training.

3.2. The most important factors influencing the co-operation between the providers of training and enterprises.

Analysing the mentioned most important factors of the co-operation, there can be indicated the following :

1. The ability to define the needs of the customer and to satisfy these needs. For example, one customer of the ICT training provider expressed the concern whether the investment of the company to the training if the employees in the field of ICT is effective. The ICT training provider responding to this concern developed and introduced special software tool – test helping to define the real ICT training needs. This tool was placed on the web (<http://www.testai.lt>) and subsequently increased the effectiveness of the ICT training in many enterprises.

2. Qualification and skills of the training personnel. This factor was mentioned as very important by the most of the interviewed suppliers.

3. Flexibility of the training contents, ability to respond to the changing conditions of the market and changing needs of the customers. This factor was indicated by the suppliers providing the training in the field of management and business.

„In cooperation with the customer for us the most important is to define the needs of the enterprise and to respond to the changing conditions of the professional and legal environment (new laws, innovations in the field of training, innovations in the field of professional activity).“

4. Ability to offer for the optimal quality training solution for the allocated training budget.

„We can discern the following priorities in cooperation with our customers: our customers have to receive the high quality training, we have to provide the wide range of the training products from the materials of the seminars to the training programmes. These priorities ensure the long-term relations with the customer and the effective and free publicity of our company to the other potential customers.“

3.3. Involvement of the social partners in the provision of training

Training suppliers indicated that in the most cases the provision of training services and the organization of training does not involve the social partners. There is a very limited cooperation with the Chambers of commerce and industry, organizations of the employers, trade

unions. One of the most important reasons of this situation is the relative weakness of these organizations. Some private training providers, especially those providing business management and consulting services co-operate with the universities, colleges, labour market training services. The Chamber of Industry, commerce and trade subcontract almost all the training services and hire the external trainers from the universities, colleges and employers organizations.

3.4. The best experience of training provision

There can be discerned the following best experiences in the field of training provision:

1. Successful training projects which resulted to the satisfaction of the customers or created the technical, technological or organizational basis for the provision of the training services.

Examples:

- ICT training provider: „Our most successful training provisions are related to the projects, for example, the project of the ICT training of 100 municipality employees providing ECDL license or the training of the state post company „Lietuvos pastas“ employees when we have to training the post operators in a rather short time. There customers were very satisfied with the results of training.“

- College: „Our project with the company Festo when the College prepared the training programme in mechatronics and Festo company provided the equipment for the workshop of practical training. This enabled to organize the training in mechatronics for the employees and the students as well as to promote the technology of the Festo company amongst the potential customers.“

- College: “ At the moment our college develop the network of the training centres in the region in order to ensure the better access of the continuing vocational training in the country side giving special attention to the training and consulting oriented to the development of the small and medium businesses in the countryside.

2. Training projects with the important and perspective customers – big enterprises :

- Management training provider: „One of the most successful training experiences is the training project with the biggest telecommunications company in Lithuania „Lietuvos Telekomas“. The aim of the training was to help this company to achieve better results of their activities through the management improvement. The co-operation with this customer now last for more than one year.“

3. Training cases which were difficult, interesting or resulted to some innovative training solutions:

- Management training provider: „We have recently organized the training in the field of teamworking where we used the climbing (alpinism) equipment to develop the confidence between the employees of one company. We have organized some exercises with this equipment creating the situations when one employee had to trust completely to the other.“

- Provider of the foreign languages training: „ One agricultural company ordered the training of its employees working in the filials of the company in the small towns of Lithuania. The preliminary organization of training and adopting to the needs and possibilities of the trainees was rather long and complicated, because the trainees did not know and understood their training needs and aims. We have to control completely all the training process and each training day to ensure the full feedback from the trainers and trainees by the surveys and questionnaires. Afterwards we tried to react operatively to their notes and suggestions. This project was a successful one.“

3.5. Changes in the relations between the continuing vocational training providers and customers

The providers of continuing vocational training indicated the following changes in the development of the relationships between the providers of the continuing vocational training and their customers:

1. Changes of the competition in the market of training. There was indicated, that the private enterprises become more and more interested in the quality of the training and the quality becomes their priority in the selection of the provider. Therefore the providers of the continuing vocational training move towards the competition on the quality and not on the price level. Those providers which prefer to compete on the low training prices are more oriented to the market of the public and state organizations which still give the priority to the competitive price.

2. The enterprises become more and more interested to buy the training services from the external suppliers than to organize the training of the employees themselves. This is noted in the field of the ICT and management training. The representative of the college indicated, that the enterprises mostly select the external providers of training for the managers, engineers and other white collar employees, while the workers in the most cases are trained at the workplace or by using the services of the external providers when the training is not the main purchased product (for example, in case of the purchase of the new equipment or technology).

3. Some suppliers note, that there are significant changes in the attitude of the companies towards the training of their employees and the growing awareness of the companies to estab-

lish the long term co-operation with the provider of the training. For example, the provider of the management training indicated:

„If some time ago we had to be more active in offering our services or in the publicity of our activities, now in more and more cases the customers find us themselves. We consider it as the result of our effective and high quality work. We try to keep the relations with our former customers and to make them to see the result of the training. Our relations with the customers become more and more intensive.“

College representative indicated: „The technological development is probably the most important factor forcing the employers to train their employees. There can be noticed the increasing interest of the customers in the training of their employees in the field of technologies.... Enterprises show more and more initiative in the selection of their training providers. Sometimes their needs and demands are very specific and it is very difficult to satisfy them.“

4. There was indicated the influence of the changing needs of the customers. The representative of a college indicated: „Some time ago the most popular training courses were in the field of the strategic management, business planning, etc. Now the biggest demand is for the training in the fields of innovative management methods and experiences. The market is oversaturated with the training services in the field of management. There can be noted the increasing demand for the training in the field of ICT. In general, there is increasing the need of the continuing vocational training which provide the national or especially the international certificates of the acquired competences (TOEFL, ECDL etc.)

How providers react to these changes ?

Most of the interviewed suppliers indicated that they try:

- to be more flexible in offering wider variety of the training forms, methods and types (distance training in the field of ICT training, open and closed seminars, etc.).
- to establish the constant and long-term relationships with the most perspective and important customers.

There can be discerned the following expectations of the continuing vocational training providers related to their relations with the customers:

1. The increasing demand for the training in the nearest future and the significant decrease of the demand in the long term perspective. This was noted by the supplier of the ICT training services. This supplier indicated, that the training volume in the field of ICT is growing and will grow in the nearest future due to the different European projects of the human resources development. However, in the perspective of 10 years the ICT training needs should decrease significantly because the training needs due to the software innovations will not be

able to compensate the impact of the increased level of the ICT literacy in the society. The general demand for the continuing training in the ICT should decrease on the quantitative level and should become more specialised on the quality level.

2. The similar tendencies were noticed in the field of the management training. The suppliers of the management training services indicated that the demand for the general management training courses is decreasing. Companies now become more interested in the training of special and innovative management techniques and methods. Contrary, the demand is increasing for the continuing training in the fields of technology and engineering.

3.6. How the suppliers of continuing vocational training analyse the training needs of the customers?

1. There can be noticed that all the inquired private suppliers of the continuing vocational training analyse the training needs of their customers and consider it as a very important activity.

For example, the provider of the ICT training services constantly discuss the training needs with the managers of the companies. They even developed the on-line test helping the company to evaluate the training needs of employee (<http://www.testai.it>).

2. Some suppliers besides the analysis of the training needs of the customers but also integrate the analysis of the needs with the quality assurance and create the demand of training themselves through the marketing activities:

The company of management training: „The most important thing in the co-operation with the customers is to define their needs and to analyse them in the context of the changing conditions of the business environment (changing legal basis, technological and organizational innovations etc.). When we define the training needs it remains only to provide the required service. After the completion of the training courses we make the survey of trainees and analyse the effectiveness of training as well as the new potential needs of the customer. Therefore about 50% of the training services are initiated by our side and other 50% are supplied according to the demand of the customer.“

3. Most suppliers receive the information about training needs from the human resources development of personnel management departments. Usually they formulate the needed profile of training and indicate the target price.

4. Some training providers apply special techniques for the analysis of the training needs. For example, the company, providing management training services make the internal audit of

the customer to define the problems and shortages of management and work organization and to select the training solutions which could help to solve these problems.

5. Sometimes the suppliers experience the contradiction between the need to satisfy the needs of the customer and the limited financial possibilities of the customer. For example, the foreign language training provider indicated: „We do not face problems with the analysis of the customers needs, because in the most cases they know what they need. If they do not know their training needs, we try to suggest them the best available option, because we are careful not to spill our reputation in the market. Sometimes it concerns the financial resources and possibilities of the customers. There are cases when the customer does not choose our offered services due to the high prices or shortage of the financial possibilities, but later about 15 percents of these customers come back to us and claim, that other provider provided low quality training for the lower price. We can not reduce the training costs, because it will influence the training quality which becomes more and more important top attract the customers.“

6. Public CVT providers usually do not analyse the training needs of their customers. Sometimes it is related to the fact, that the training supply is regulated by the national regulations and standards (for example, training in the field of the hygienic, healthcare and work safety regulations). The colleges at the beginning of their activity in the field of continuing vocational training of the employees analysed the training needs of the customers, because it was the part of their introduction to the market of the continuing vocational training services. Now they work only with the existing customers and just provide the training which they need.

3.7. Quality assurance policies of the continuing vocational training providers

There can be discerned the following aspects of the quality assurance policies of the interviewed continuing vocational training providers:

1. Providers usually have their own quality assurance policies or at least tools of quality control. For example, the provider of the ICT training services control the quality of the provided training services by surveying the trainees during the training and after it is finished. Other suppliers, like the supplier of the management training for the SME's indicated, that one of the most important quality control tools is the feedback from the customers, which sets the guidelines for the quality improvement. Other providers have developed their own quality assurance system referring to the specific requirements of the training sector. For example, training provider in the field of hygiene and healthcare regulations indicated: „We have our own quality assurance system and quality assurance reglementation because these tools require to provide the high quality training services and it is very important in our sector of

training. After the training we survey the trainees using questionnaires and in this way ensure their feedback.“ Some provider use rather complex quality assurance tools and mechanisms. The example of the management training provider: „After the training we have the 2 months period of the supervision and consulting of the customer. During this period we analyse, how the employees apply the acquired competences and skills in their work practices. Only after this analysis and assessment the employees can receive the certifications of the acquired competences. This supervision provides us with the information used in the adjustment and correction of the training services.“ Some providers apply something similar to the quality circles. For example, the provider of the language training services: „After the completion of the training course we make the survey of the trainees with the questionnaires. Besides, at the end of the each lecture the trainers discuss the achievements of the trainees and the quality of lecture in their circle. If there arise any problems or questions they are being solved immediately. For example, if one trainer informs, that there are difficulties with the achievement and progress of trainees in her group, there are analysed the possibilities to place these trainees in the other group where the training course is not so advanced in order to improve the training results.“

2. The certification of the training quality depends on the training sector. Public training providers usually have the quality certifications for their training programs. The foreign languages provider also indicated, that the licences and certifications of the training programs are important in their sector of training. The provider of the ICT training services has the special certification of the Microsoft and the certification for the provision of the ECDL license.

3. The recognition of the acquired competences and qualifications depends on the training program. Where the training is made according to the formally recognised training programmes the trainees receive the state recognised certificate. When the training is made according to the companies and independent third organizations (Microsoft, Autocad) the trainees receive their certifications. If the training programme is designed by the training provider and not accredited externally, then the trainee receive the certificate issued by the training provider.

3.8. Continuing vocational training innovations

There can be discerned the following innovations in the field of continuing vocational training provision:

1. The innovations in the training contents and methods, development of the new training tools. For example, the ICT training provider indicated, that their most important innovations are the on-line training needs assessment tool and the introduction of the distance training. The provider of the training in the field of the hygiene and healthcare regulations as the training innovation indicated the introduction of the project method, when the trainees accomplish the tasks in the indicated topic of theme. The management training provider indicated such innovations as the introduction of the fast sales training techniques and methods, as well as the "Situational Algorithmic Training" (S.A.T.) method, helping to acquire some skills in a rather short time. Another innovation is the application of the method of analysis of the behaviour indicators for the assessment of the training effectiveness.

2. Innovations in the cooperation with the enterprises and social partners. For example one college indicated that the most important innovation is the establishment of the practical training centre of mechatronics together with the Festo company.

3. All the interviewed providers indicated, that the most important limitation for the innovations in training is the shortage of the financial resources. Others indicated that the current demand of the training services also does not facilitate the introduction of the training innovations. The third mentioned reason was the lack of the co-operation between the training providers and the enterprises.

CONCLUSIONS

1. The forms of co-operation between the CVT suppliers and enterprises are influenced by the specificities of the field of training and the development of the continuing training provision through different national and international projects. Other important factors are the ability to define the needs of the customer and to satisfy these needs, qualification and skills of the training personnel, the flexibility of the training contents, ability to respond to the changing conditions of the market and changing needs of the customers.

2. Training suppliers indicated that in the most cases the provision of training services and the organization of training does not involve the social partners. Some private training providers, especially those providing business management and consulting services co-operate with the universities, colleges, labour market training services.

3. *The best experiences of training provision are related to the following cases of co-operation:* successful training projects which resulted to the satisfaction of the customers or created the technical, technological or organizational basis for the provision of the training services and the training projects with the important and perspective customers, training cases which were difficult, interesting or resulted to some innovative training solutions.

4. *The most important changes in the relations between the continuing vocational training providers and customers are the changes of the competition in the market of training, increasing awareness of the enterprises to buy the training services from the external suppliers, as well as increasing interest of the companies to the training of their employees and to establish the long term co-operation with the provider of the training.* There was also indicated the changing needs of the customers related to the contents of training.

5. The providers of the continuing vocational training have rather different expectations related to their relations with the customers: some expect the increasing demand for the training in the nearest future and the significant decrease of the demand in the long term perspective (ICT training), others wait for the more specialised needs and demands of the customers (management training).

6. All the interviewed private suppliers of the continuing vocational training analyse the training needs of their customers and consider it as a very important activity. Some training providers apply special techniques for the analysis of the training needs. Public CVT providers usually do not analyse the training needs of their customers.

7. Training providers usually have their own quality assurance policies or at least tools of quality control. The certification of the training quality depends on the training sector. Public training providers usually have the quality certifications for their training programs. The recognition of the acquired competences and qualifications depends on the status and accreditation of the training program.

8. There can be discerned the following innovations in the field of continuing vocational training provision: the innovations in the training contents and methods, development of the new training tools, innovations in the cooperation with the enterprises and social partners.

9. All the interviewed providers indicated that the most important limitation for the innovations in training is the shortage of the financial resources.

Annex 2: Guiding questions for the interviews (English version)

Guideline of questions for qualitative interviews

Preparation of the Interview

We recommend a short guideline for “interview preparation” – normally, one can find a first selection of information on the homepage or brochures of the training institutions/companies:

- Characteristics of the courses/offers (tailor-made courses, in-house courses, “other forms”, topics of the courses, length of the courses, etc.)
- information on the institution
 - number of employees
 - institutional background (academic, employers associations, labour movement, etc.)
 - kind of quality management system (usually one can find information on this fact on the homepage).
 - Number of courses directed directly to enterprises in comparison to other courses (e.g. labour office, individually financed)
- Information on certain main customers (references) (of course, this information can be handled only with caution – it can be used as a starting point, asking if the mentioned enterprises are the actual main customers ...)
- Information on the membership in networks and advisory bodies

For us, it seems ***crucial to collect some information before the interview*** and we recommend to refer to this kind of information during the interview. This data can later on be used for interpreting the results. Thus “framing” the results, which means that the results of the interviews can be connected to the characteristics of the training institutions. **If you do not get this information before the interview, you can ask for this information in the interview itself.**

A) Relations between training suppliers and enterprises

Core questions:

- Please describe how you co-operate with enterprises in the field of CVT? How does the typical form of co-operation between you and an enterprise look alike?
- What is in the co-operation with an enterprise most important for you?
- Who else is involved (employers' organisations, chamber of commerce, trade unions, etc.) and how? [make use of the collected information on membership in networks, boards etc.]
- What was your best experience when co-operating with an enterprise? Please describe in short your last successful project?
- Did you notice any changes in the relations between you and the enterprises within the last three years?
- Do you plan significant changes in your co-operation with enterprises for the near future? What are the reasons for these changes?
- What are your general expectations about future forms of co-operations with enterprises in CVT?

Background questions:

- With which enterprises do you interact (size , branch, etc.)? [make use of the information collected on main customers]
- How do you know what the needs of the enterprises are?
- Which kind of seminars do you offer? [make use of the information collected on offers of the provider]
- Are your seminars represented in online-databases? How important are for you online-databases in your co-operation with enterprises?
- What are your main competitive advantages in comparison to other training providers?
- Which groups of employees (occupations and/or functions) do your training programmes for enterprises attend?
- How do you deal with different expectations of the contracting enterprise and the employees participating in the training events?
- How do enterprises select a CVT supplier according to your experiences and insights?
- Which roles do prices (costs), functionality, transparency (clarity) and quality of the training programme play? To which factor do you pay a lot of attention?

B) Quality standards of the training suppliers

Core question

- Do you have a quality management? [make use of the collected information on quality management certificates] Is your organisation quality-certified? Is that important for the enterprises?
- Do you co-operate with enterprises in relation to questions of quality?
- What kind of qualifications does your teaching or training staff have? How do you assure the updating of qualifications by your teaching staff?
- Do you evaluate your training programmes for the enterprises? If yes, how do you evaluate it?

Background questions:

- Do your participants receive certificates at the end of a course? What do the participants have to do in order to receive a certificate (exams, tests, continuous participation, etc.)?
- Do you employ trainers who have been formerly employed within the enterprises? (Do you prefer trainers who has worked for enterprises and/or organisations and hold therefore a special professional experience?

C) Innovation capacity of the training suppliers**Core question**

- What has been your latest innovative offer to an enterprise? Please explain the main features of the offer? Please explain, how the development has been processed? Who was involved in the development? What was the outcome of the new offer?
- What do you think could be a real innovative offer in the field – not following the normal pathways, but really opening a completely new field?

Background questions:

- What is important when introducing an innovative offer for an enterprise?
- What are restrictions or constraints for innovations in the field of CVT?
- What happened with previous innovative training programmes up to now? Have they become regular programmes or have they been abandoned?

If not integrated in the course of the interview:

- How many employees do you have? (Please also describe roughly the type of employment?)
- Please describe our institutional background in short? (academic, employers associations,...; profit/non-profit).

Annex 3: Tables of the CVTS2rev survey of providers⁵⁹

A) Cooperation with enterprises

A1: Was your institution involved in CVT organisation and provision for the enterprises in 2005?									
Country		AT	CZ	DK	DE	FR	IT	LT	Total
Yes	n	26	72	31	34	30	30	30	253
	%	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
No	n	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	%	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

A2: How much of your total turnover came from the cooperation with enterprises in 2005?									
Country		AT	CZ	DK	DE	FR	IT	LT	Total
Less than 10%	n	4	12	11	13	3	6	1	50
	%	15	17	36	38	10	20	3	20
11-30%	n	4	8	6	3	10	12	6	49
	%	15	11	19	9	33	40	20	21
31-50%	n	5	7	2	2	4	6	4	30
	%	19	10	7	6	13	20	13	13
More than 50%	n	13	45	11	16	12	6	19	122
	%	50	63	36	47	40	20	63	46
No answer	n	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	2
	%	0	0	3	0	3	0	0	1

A3a: Did you realize tailor-made seminars⁶⁰ for enterprises in 2005?									
Country		AT	CZ	DK	DE	FR	IT	LT	Total
Yes	n	25	66	28	30	30	19	30	228
	%	96	92	90	88	100	63	100	90
No	n	1	6	3	3	0	11	0	24
	%	4	8	10	9	0	37	0	10
No answer	n	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
	%	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0

A3b: If yes, please indicate which percentage of your total turnover came from tailor-made seminars for enterprises?									
Country		AT	CZ	DK	DE	FR	IT	LT	Total
Less than 10%	n	6	13	13	15	9	7	5	68
	%	23	18	42	44	30	23	17	28
11-30%	n	6	13	7	5	8	9	19	67
	%	23	18	23	15	27	30	63	28
31-50%	n	1	15	2	6	1	2	4	31
	%	4	21	7	18	3	7	13	10
More than 50%	n	12	25	5	4	12	1	2	61
	%	46	35	16	12	40	3	7	23
Not applicable	n	1	6	3	3	0	11	0	24
	%	4	8	10	9	0	37	0	10
No answer	n	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	2
	%	0	0	3	3	0	0	0	1

⁵⁹ Column total (%): Average of the 7 countries

⁶⁰ Tailor-made seminars are non-standardized seminars which are arranged according to the specific needs of an individual enterprise or a group of enterprises.

A4a: Did you realize open seminars⁶¹ in 2005?									
Country		AT	CZ	DK	DE	FR	IT	LT	Total
Yes	n	14	66	26	30	16	21	28	201
	%	54	92	84	88	53	70	93	76
No	n	12	6	5	4	14	9	2	52
	%	46	8	16	12	47	30	7	24

A4b: If yes, please indicate which percentage of your total turnover came from open seminars?									
Country		AT	CZ	DK	DE	FR	IT	LT	Total
Less than 10%	n	5	19	11	7	4	9	9	64
	%	19	26	36	21	13	30	30	26
11-30%	n	3	18	5	7	7	8	10	58
	%	12	25	16	21	23	27	33	23
31-50%	n	3	12	5	3	3	3	7	36
	%	12	17	16	9	10	10	23	14
More than 50%	n	3	17	4	12	2	1	2	41
	%	12	24	13	35	7	3	7	14
Not applicable	n	12	6	5	4	14	9	2	52
	%	46	8	16	12	47	30	7	24
No answer	n	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	2
	%	0	0	3	3	0	0	0	1

A5a: Did you realize any form of counselling⁶² for enterprises in 2005?									
Country		AT	CZ	DK	DE	FR	IT	LT	Total
Yes	n	19	50	26	21	20	16	28	180
	%	73	69	84	62	67	53	93	72
No	n	7	21	5	13	10	14	2	72
	%	27	29	16	38	33	47	7	28
No answer	n	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
	%	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0

A5b: If yes, please indicate which percentage of your total turnover came from these counselling activities?									
Country		AT	CZ	DK	DE	FR	IT	LT	Total
Less than 10%	n	7	28	19	12	12	10	17	105
	%	27	39	61	35	40	33	57	42
11-30%	n	7	12	3	5	6	4	10	47
	%	27	17	10	15	20	13	33	19
31-50%	n	2	7	0	3	0	2	1	15
	%	8	10	0	9	0	7	3	5
More than 50%	n	2	3	0	1	2	0	0	8
	%	8	4	0	3	7	0	0	3
Not applicable	n	7	21	5	13	10	14	2	72
	%	27	29	16	38	33	47	7	28
No answer	n	1	1	4	0	0	0	0	6
	%	4	1	13	0	0	0	0	3

⁶¹ Open seminars are courses that are visited by participants of different origins/enterprises. The courses are often published in a programme or placed in a database, which can be accessed publicly.

⁶² Counselling comprises different forms of individual and group-oriented support by a coach or advisor for the solution of problems or decision-making in relation to the workplace.

A6a: Did you deliver services in the field of management and organisation and training⁶³ in 2005?									
Country		AT	CZ	DK	DE	FR	IT	LT	Total
Yes, as separate field	n	6	16	16	4	3	15	1	61
	%	23	22	52	12	10	50	3	25
Yes, as by-product	n	11	30	10	14	14	14	11	104
	%	42	42	32	41	47	47	37	41
No	n	9	26	5	16	13	1	18	88
	%	35	36	16	47	43	3	60	34

A6b: If yes, please quote which percentage of your total turnover came from this kind of activity?									
Country		AT	CZ	DK	DE	FR	IT	LT	Total ⁶⁴
Less than 10%	n	-	35	22	12	11	11	12	103
	%	-	49	71	35	37	37	40	52
11-30%	n	-	8	0	4	3	8	0	23
	%	-	11	0	12	10	27	0	12
31-50%	n	-	1	1	1	1	0	0	4
	%	-	1	3	3	3	0	0	2
More than 50%	n	-	0	0	0	1	1	0	2
	%	-	0	0	0	3	3	0	1
Not applicable	n	-	26	5	16	13	1	18	79
	%	-	36	16	47	43	3	60	41
No answer	n	-	2	3	1	1	9	0	16
	%	-	3	10	3	3	30	0	9
Question not asked	n	26	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	%	100	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

A7: Please give some impression about the typical turnover per customer project with enterprises.									
Country		AT	CZ	DK	DE	FR	IT	LT	Total
Project sums up to € 5.000	n	9	43	5	17	16	13	13	116
	%	35	60	16	50	53	43	43	43
€ 5.000 – 15.0000	n	13	17	9	9	9	11	17	85
	%	50	24	29	27	30	37	57	36
€ 15.000 – 50.000	n	4	5	2	5	4	5	0	25
	%	15	7	7	15	13	17	0	11
€ 50.000 and more	n	0	2	1	1	1	0	0	5
	%	0	3	3	3	3	0	0	2
No answer	n	0	5	14	2	0	1	0	22
	%	0	7	45	6	0	3	0	9

⁶³ For example assessing the training needs, developing training plans, developing concepts to measure the training outcome.

⁶⁴ Average of 6 countries (without Austria)

A8: How is your first contact to an enterprise typically established?									
Country		AT	CZ	DK	DE	FR	IT	LT	Total
Enterprises contact us	n	12	39	16	17	11	12	9	116
	%	46	54	52	50	37	40	30	44
We contact enterprises	n	13	30	14	17	15	17	21	127
	%	50	42	45	50	50	57	70	52
Both (only asked in France)	n	-	-	-	-	4	-	-	4
	%	-	-	-	-	13	-	-	-
No answer	n	1	3	1	0	0	1	0	6
	%	4	4	3	0	0	3	0	2

A9: Which means are mostly used for contacting? (Please tick the maximum of the three most important options.)⁶⁵									
Country		AT	CZ	DK	DE	FR	IT	LT	Total
Recommendations of other organisations	n	22	39	4	17	8	13	19	122
	%	85	54	13	50	27	43	63	48
Contacts with enterprises during congresses, fairs, etc.	n	10	11	13	7	5	12	18	76
	%	39	15	42	21	17	40	60	33
Written training catalogues or programmes of our organisation	n	10	27	28	22	13	14	12	126
	%	39	38	90	65	43	47	40	52
Continuous contacts with former participants in the enterprises	n	17	35	8	20	12	15	16	123
	%	65	49	26	59	40	50	53	49
The enterprises and our organisation belong to a network	n	4	2	8	7	5	11	10	47
	%	15	3	26	21	17	37	33	22
Search engines like <i>google</i> or <i>yahoo!</i> In the internet	n	5	60	4	11	6	13	4	103
	%	19	83	13	32	20	43	13	32
National or regional databases on continuing vocational training	n	2	5	1	11	12	10	1	42
	%	8	7	3	32	40	33	3	18
Advertisement (in magazines, newspapers, television, radio, etc.)	n	4	15	9	8	11	4	7	58
	%	15	21	29	24	37	13	23	23

⁶⁵ Percentage and number of providers which ticked the option. Denmark: 1 case with no answer (whole question). France: 1 case with no answer in option "Written training catalogues or programmes of our organisation.

A10a: Where are your contact persons in the enterprises situated:										
Country		In the human resources department or training department			At the level of general management / director of the enterprise			In thematic departments of the enterprise (e.g. sales, engineering, ICT)		
		Ticked	Not ticked	No answer	Ticked	Not ticked	No answer	Ticked	Not ticked	No answer
AT	n	22	3	1	22	3	1	11	14	1
	%	85	12	4	85	12	4	42	54	4
CZ	n	62	9	1	60	11	1	48	23	1
	%	86	13	1	83	15	1	67	32	1
DK	n	28	3	0	23	8	0	21	10	0
	%	90	10	0	74	26	0	68	32	0
DE	n	25	8	1	24	9	1	16	17	1
	%	74	24	3	71	27	3	47	50	3
FR	n	26	4	0	26	4	0	17	13	0
	%	87	13	0	87	13	0	57	43	0
IT	n	20	10	0	2	28	0	8	22	0
	%	67	33	0	7	93	0	27	73	0
LT	n	28	2	0	28	2	0	5	25	0
	%	93	7	0	93	7	0	17	83	0
Total	n	211	39	3	185	65	3	126	124	3
	%	83	16	1	71	28	1	46	52	1

A10b: In % of all contact persons											
Contact person situated ...	Frequency		AT	CZ	DK	DE	FR	IT ⁶⁶	LT	Total	
In the human resources department or training department	Less than 10%	n	0	2	1	3	0	-	0	6	
		%	0	3	3	9	0	-	0	2	
	11-30%	n	3	7	2	5	2	-	0	19	
		%	12	10	6	15	6	-	0	7	
	31-50%	n	7	21	11	4	6	-	3	52	
		%	27	29	36	12	20	-	10	19	
	More than 50%	n	7	31	9	8	17	20	25	117	
		%	27	43	29	24	57	67	83	47	
	No answer	n	5	2	5	5	1	-	0	18	
		%	19	3	16	15	3	-	0	8	
	Not applicable	n	4	9	3	9	4	10	2	41	
		%	15	13	10	26	13	33	7	17	
	At the level of general management / director of the enterprise	Less than 10%	n	1	7	5	4	5	-	2	24
			%	4	10	16	12	17	-	7	9
11-30%		n	8	29	3	3	8	-	13	64	
		%	31	40	10	9	27	-	43	23	
31-50%		n	4	17	6	7	8	-	12	54	
		%	15	24	19	21	27	-	40	21	
More than 50%		n	5	4	4	7	4	2	1	27	
		%	19	6	13	21	13	7	3	12	
No answer		n	4	4	5	3	1	-	0	17	
		%	15	6	16	9	3	-	0	7	
Not applicable		n	4	11	8	10	4	28	2	67	
		%	15	15	26	29	13	93	7	28	
In thematic departments of the enterprise (e.g. sales, engineering, ICT)		Less than 10%	n	2	9	2	6	3	-	1	23
			%	8	13	7	18	10	-	3	8
	11-30%	n	6	20	7	3	10	-	2	48	
		%	23	28	23	9	33	-	7	18	
	31-50%	n	2	14	6	3	3	-	1	29	
		%	8	19	19	9	10	-	3	10	
	More than 50%	n	0	3	1	3	1	8	1	17	
		%	0	4	3	9	3	27	3	7	
	No answer	n	1	3	5	1	0	-	0	10	
		%	4	4	16	3	0	-	0	4	
	Not applicable	n	15	23	10	18	13	22	25	126	
		%	58	32	32	53	43	73	83	53	

⁶⁶ Only one option ticked – therefore always 100 % in the chosen option.

A11: What are your organisation's advantages in relation to your competitors in the training market:										
Advantage	Importance		AT	CZ	DK	DE	FR	IT	LT	Total
Price	Very important	n	1	17	5	9	7	14	6	59
		%	4	24	16	27	23	47	20	23
	Important	n	17	47	18	16	19	16	23	156
		%	65	65	58	47	63	53	77	61
	Not important	n	5	5	7	6	4	0	1	28
		%	19	7	23	18	13	0	3	12
No answer	n	3	3	1	3	0	0	0	10	
	%	12	4	3	9	0	0	0	4	
Quality	Very important	n	21	67	28	31	23	26	28	224
		%	81	93	90	91	77	87	93	87
	Important	n	3	5	3	2	7	4	2	26
		%	12	7	10	6	23	13	7	11
	Not important	n	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
		%	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
No answer	n	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	3	
	%	8	0	0	3	0	0	0	2	
Expected benefit in the workplace	Very important	n	18	57	17	26	4	9	24	155
		%	69	79	55	77	13	30	80	58
	Important	n	6	13	12	6	8	9	6	60
		%	23	18	39	18	27	30	20	25
	Not important	n	0	0	0	0	9	11	0	20
		%	0	0	0	0	30	37	0	10
No answer	n	2	2	2	2	9	1	0	18	
	%	8	3	7	6	30	3	0	8	
Flexibility and quickness of the provision	Very important	n	12	40	12	23	27	11	18	143
		%	46	56	39	68	90	37	60	57
	Important	n	9	27	17	9	3	14	12	91
		%	35	38	55	27	10	47	40	36
	Not important	n	2	3	1	1	0	5	0	12
		%	8	4	3	3	0	17	0	5
No answer	n	3	2	1	1	0	0	0	7	
	%	12	3	3	3	0	0	0	3	
Development of tailor-made seminars	Very important	n	17	31	12	22	23	18	22	145
		%	65	43	39	65	77	60	73	60
	Important	n	7	33	15	9	6	7	8	85
		%	27	46	48	27	20	23	27	31
	Not important	n	0	5	2	1	1	5	0	14
		%	0	7	7	3	3	17	0	5
No answer	n	2	3	2	2	0	0	0	9	
	%	8	4	7	6	0	0	0	4	

Continuous and well-established personal contacts	Very important	n	12	27	18	15	20	14	15	121
		%	46	38	58	44	67	47	50	50
	Important	n	11	35	12	15	8	13	13	107
		%	42	49	39	44	27	43	43	41
	Not important	n	1	4	1	0	1	3	2	12
		%	4	6	3	0	3	10	7	5
No answer	n	2	6	0	4	1	0	0	13	
	%	8	8	0	12	3	0	0	4	
Belonging to networks	Very important	n	3	6	13	5	5	13	3	48
		%	12	8	42	15	17	43	10	21
	Important	n	11	27	8	12	6	9	7	80
		%	42	38	26	35	20	30	23	31
	Not important	n	9	34	7	13	16	7	20	106
		%	35	47	23	38	53	23	67	41
No answer	n	3	5	3	4	3	1	0	19	
	%	12	7	10	12	10	3	0	8	
Image of our organisation	Very important	n	14	41	22	18	16	19	17	147
		%	54	57	71	53	53	63	57	58
	Important	n	9	26	9	13	9	10	13	89
		%	35	36	29	38	30	33	43	35
	Not important	n	1	2	0	0	3	1	0	7
		%	4	3	0	0	10	3	0	3
No answer	n	2	3	0	3	2	0	0	10	
	%	8	4	0	9	7	0	0	4	
Location of our organisation	Very important	n	-	8	3	3	7	6	11	38
		%	-	11	10	9	23	20	37	18
	Important	n	-	27	18	16	14	19	19	113
		%	-	38	58	47	47	63	63	53
	Not important	n	-	31	9	11	7	4	0	62
		%	-	43	29	32	23	13	0	23
No answer	n	26	6	1	4	2	1	0	14	
	%	100 ⁶⁷	8	3	12	7	3	0	6 ⁶⁸	
Active in the field for a long time	Very important	n	8	40	12	13	17	10	24	124
		%	31	56	39	38	57	33	80	48
	Important	n	12	28	16	14	9	19	6	104
		%	46	39	52	41	30	63	20	42
	Not important	n	3	1	1	3	3	1	0	12
		%	12	1	3	9	10	3	0	5
No answer	n	3	3	2	4	1	0	0	13	
	%	12	4	7	12	3	0	0	5	

⁶⁷ Question not asked in Austria

⁶⁸ Average of 6 countries (without Austria)

A12: The know-how about training by the people responsible for training in enterprises has during the last years: (Please locate your answer between the extremes 'increase' and 'decrease')

Country		AT	CZ	DK	DE	FR	IT	LT	Total
Increase (box 1)	n	6	29	10	5	8	8	2	68
	%	23	40	32	15	27	27	7	24
Box 2	n	15	34	18	21	18	12	27	145
	%	58	47	58	62	60	40	90	59
Box 3	n	2	8	1	3	2	9	1	26
	%	8	11	3	9	7	30	3	10
Decrease (box 4)	n	0	0	0	5	1	1	0	7
	%	0	0	0	15	3	3	0	3
No answer	n	3	1	2	0	1	0	0	7
	%	12	1	7	0	3	0	0	3

A13: Can the training provided by the enterprises you cooperate with be considered as: (Please locate your answer between the extremes 'short-term reaction' and 'long-term strategy')

Country		AT	CZ	DK	DE	FR	IT	LT	Total
Short-term reaction (box 1)	n	2	7	6	9	4	6	1	35
	%	8	10	19	27	13	20	3	14
Box 2	n	9	16	7	13	9	11	24	89
	%	35	22	23	38	30	37	80	38
Box 3	n	10	29	11	9	13	11	5	88
	%	39	40	36	27	43	37	17	34
Long-term strategy (box 4)	n	3	19	6	3	3	2	0	36
	%	12	26	19	9	10	7	0	12
No answer	n	2	1	1	0	1	0	0	5
	%	8	1	3	0	3	0	0	2

A14: Enterprise-provided training will be for your organisation in future: (Please locate your answer between the extremes 'more important' and 'less important')

Country		AT	CZ	DK	DE	FR	IT	LT	Total
More important (box 1)	n	11	51	10	15	15	0	3	105
	%	42	71	32	44	50	0	10	36
Box 2	n	12	15	17	15	12	11	25	107
	%	46	21	55	44	40	37	83	47
Box 3	n	0	3	4	3	2	10	2	24
	%	0	4	13	9	7	33	7	10
Less important (box 4)	n	0	3	0	1	0	9	0	13
	%	0	4	0	3	0	30	0	5
No answer	n	3	0	0	0	1	0	0	4
	%	12	0	0	0	3	0	0	2

A15a: Do you offer certificates to employees of enterprises?

Country		AT	CZ	DK	DE	FR	IT	LT	Total
Yes	n	19	65	30	34	29	25	30	232
	%	73	90	97	100	97	83	100	91
No	n	4	7	1	0	1	5	0	18
	%	15	10	3	0	3	17	0	7
No answer	n	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
	%	12	0	0	0	0	0	0	2

A15b: If you answered yes, what types of certification do you use?											
Certificate	Option		AT	CZ	DK	DE	FR	IT	LT	Total	
Certificates about participation	Ticked	n	19	50	28	31	24	22	28	202	
		%	73	69	90	91	80	73	93	81	
	Not ticked	n	0	15	2	1	3	3	3	2	26
		%	0	21	7	3	10	10	10	7	8
	Not applicable	n	4	7	1	0	1	5	0	0	18
		%	15	10	3	0	3	17	0	0	7
	No answer	n	3	0	0	2	2	0	0	0	7
		%	12	0	0	6	7	0	0	0	4
Certificates based on written or oral examinations	Ticked	n	13	47	25	19	8	7	26	145	
		%	50	65	81	56	27	23	87	56	
	Not ticked	n	5	18	5	14	19	18	4	4	83
		%	19	25	16	41	63	60	13	13	34
	Not applicable	n	4	7	1	0	1	5	0	0	18
		%	15	10	3	0	3	17	0	0	7
	No answer	n	4	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	7
		%	15	0	0	3	7	0	0	0	4
Preparation of our participants for external examinations	Ticked	n	7	17	15	13	7	4	7	70	
		%	27	24	48	38	23	13	23	28	
	Not ticked	n	11	48	15	19	20	21	23	23	157
		%	42	67	48	56	67	70	77	77	61
	Not applicable	n	4	7	1	0	1	5	0	0	18
		%	15	10	3	0	3	17	0	0	7
	No answer	n	4	0	0	2	2	0	0	0	8
		%	15	0	0	6	7	0	0	0	4

A15c: In % of participants											
Type of certificate	Frequency		AT	CZ	DK	DE	FR	IT	LT	Total	
Certificates about participation	Less than 10%	n	0	6	0	1	0	0	0	7	
		%	0	8	0	3	0	0	0	2	
	11-30%	n	1	5	4	2	0	1	2	15	
		%	4	7	13	6	0	3	7	6	
	31-50%	n	2	7	4	2	0	3	4	22	
		%	8	10	13	6	0	10	13	9	
	More than 50%	n	12	30	16	24	20	18	22	142	
		%	46	42	52	71	67	60	73	59	
	No answer	n	7	2	4	4	6	0	0	23	
		%	27	3	13	12	20	0	0	11	
	Not applicable	n	4	22	3	1	4	8	2	44	
		%	15	31	10	3	13	27	7	15	
	Certificates based on written or oral examinations	Less than 10%	n	1	5	3	4	0	0	0	13
			%	4	7	10	12	0	0	0	5
11-30%		n	6	12	10	6	3	3	11	51	
		%	23	17	32	18	10	10	37	21	
31-50%		n	0	10	5	2	2	1	14	34	
		%	0	14	16	6	7	3	47	13	
More than 50%		n	1	18	3	5	2	3	1	33	
		%	4	25	10	15	7	10	3	11	
No answer		n	9	2	4	3	3	0	0	21	
		%	35	3	13	9	10	0	0	10	
Not applicable		n	9	25	6	14	20	23	4	101	
		%	35	35	19	41	67	77	13	41	
Preparation of our participants for external examinations		Less than 10%	n	3	3	4	7	3	0	1	21
			%	12	4	13	21	10	0	3	9
	11-30%	n	2	6	4	2	0	1	4	19	
		%	8	8	13	6	0	3	13	7	
	31-50%	n	0	4	3	1	1	2	1	12	
		%	0	6	10	3	3	7	3	5	
	More than 50%	n	1	3	0	2	0	1	1	8	
		%	4	4	0	6	0	3	3	3	
	No answer	n	5	1	4	3	5	0	0	18	
		%	19	1	13	9	17	0	0	8	
	Not applicable	n	15	55	16	19	21	26	23	175	
		%	58	76	52	56	70	87	77	68	

B) Questions on the quality management of your organisation

B16a: Is your organisation quality-certified?									
Country		AT	CZ	DK	DE	FR	IT	LT	Total
Yes	n	18	30	13	33	11	21	13	139
	%	69	42	42	97	37	70	43	57
No	n	4	40	17	1	19	9	17	107
	%	15	56	55	3	63	30	57	40
No answer	n	4	2	1	0	0	0	0	7
	%	15	3	3	0	0	0	0	3

B16b: If you answered yes, what types of certification do you use?⁶⁹										
Type	Option		AT	CZ	DK	DE	FR	IT	LT	Total
Self evaluation without external survey	Ticked	n	16	1	1	18	6	3	0	45
		%	62	1	3	53	20	10	0	21
	Not ticked	n	2	29	12	15	5	18	13	94
		%	8	40	39	44	17	60	43	36
	Not applicable	n	4	40	18	1	19	9	17	108
		%	15	56	58	3	63	30	57	40
	No answer	n	4	2	0	0	0	0	0	6
		%	15	3	0	0	0	0	0	3
Self evaluation with external survey	Ticked	n	2	5	3	8	4	3	0	25
		%	8	7	10	24	13	10	0	10
	Not ticked	n	16	25	10	25	7	18	13	114
		%	62	35	32	74	23	60	43	47
	Not applicable	n	4	40	18	1	19	9	17	108
		%	15	56	58	3	63	30	57	40
	No answer	n	4	2	0	0	0	0	0	6
		%	15	3	0	0	0	0	0	3
ISO 9001f	Ticked	n	3	17	6	13	5	12	2	58
		%	12	24	19	38	17	40	7	22
	Not ticked	n	15	13	7	20	6	9	11	81
		%	58	18	23	59	20	30	37	35
	Not applicable	n	4	40	18	1	19	9	17	108
		%	15	56	58	3	63	30	57	40
	No answer	n	4	2	0	0	0	0	0	6
		%	15	3	0	0	0	0	0	3
EFQM	Ticked	n	3	1	3	1	0	3	0	11
		%	12	1	10	3	0	10	0	5
	Not ticked	n	15	29	10	32	11	18	13	128
		%	58	40	32	94	37	60	43	52
	Not applicable	n	4	40	18	1	19	9	17	108
		%	15	56	58	3	63	30	57	40
	No answer	n	4	2	0	0	0	0	0	6
		%	15	3	0	0	0	0	0	3

⁶⁹ In Lithuania only one option was allowed, in the other countries every type used in the institution could be ticked.

LQW	Ticked	n	0	0	0	4	2	0	0	6
		%	0	0	0	12	7	0	0	3
	Not ticked	n	18	30	13	29	9	21	13	133
		%	69	42	42	85	30	70	43	54
	Not applicable	n	4	40	18	1	19	9	17	108
		%	15	56	58	3	63	30	57	40
	No answer	n	4	2	0	0	0	0	0	6
		%	15	3	0	0	0	0	0	3
Special quality management system for the training sector (e.g. EDU-QUA)	Ticked	n	1	0	0	2	2	0	8	13
		%	4	0	0	6	7	0	27	6
	Not ticked	n	17	30	13	31	9	21	5	126
		%	65	42	42	91	30	70	17	51
	Not applicable	n	4	40	18	1	19	9	17	108
		%	15	56	58	3	63	30	57	40
	No answer	n	4	2	0	0	0	0	0	6
		%	15	3	0	0	0	0	0	3
Other	Ticked	n	3	9	1	6	1	1	3	24
		%	12	13	3	18	3	3	10	9
	Not ticked	n	15	21	12	27	10	20	10	115
		%	58	29	39	79	33	67	33	48
	Not applicable	n	4	40	18	1	19	9	17	108
		%	15	56	58	3	63	30	57	40
	No answer	n	4	2	0	0	0	0	0	6
		%	15	3	0	0	0	0	0	3

B17: Please indicate, what elements of a quality management you use in your organisation?										
Element	Option		AT	CZ	DK	DE	FR	IT	LT	Total
Written documents about the organisational understanding of quality	Yes	n	17	44	18	24	11	21	18	153
		%	65	61	58	71	37	70	60	60
	No	n	5	17	11	10	11	7	6	67
		%	19	24	36	29	37	23	20	27
	No answer	n	4	11	2	0	8	2	6	33
		%	15	15	7	0	27	7	20	13
Written concepts for the educational programmes / courses	Yes	n	18	51	20	29	21	21	21	181
		%	69	71	65	85	70	70	70	71
	No	n	4	9	9	5	4	8	9	48
		%	15	13	29	15	13	27	30	20
	No answer	n	4	12	2	0	5	1	0	24
		%	15	17	7	0	17	3	0	8
Regular procedures for having a feedback by the participants	Yes	n	21	62	29	34	24	27	30	227
		%	81	86	94	100	80	90	100	90
	No	n	1	3	2	0	3	3	0	12
		%	4	4	7	0	10	10	0	5
	No answer	n	4	7	0	0	3	0	0	14
		%	15	10	0	0	10	0	0	5
Results of evaluations are systematically analysed and used for the following courses	Yes	n	17	47	28	32	23	11	28	186
		%	65	65	90	94	77	37	93	74
	No	n	5	13	3	2	2	19	2	46
		%	19	18	10	6	7	63	7	19
	No answer	n	4	12	0	0	5	0	0	21
		%	15	17	0	0	17	0	0	7
Training for our full-term employees	Yes	n	18	57	25	32	20	23	30	205
		%	69	79	81	94	67	77	100	81
	No	n	4	6	5	2	4	7	0	28
		%	15	8	16	6	13	23	0	12
	No answer	n	4	9	1	0	6	0	0	20
		%	15	13	3	0	20	0	0	7
Training for our free-lancers	Yes	n	16	56	7	14	9	7	28	137
		%	62	78	23	41	30	23	93	50
	No	n	5	7	23	20	12	23	2	92
		%	19	10	74	59	40	77	7	41
	No answer	n	5	9	1	0	9	0	0	24
		%	19	13	3	0	30	0	0	9
Written requirement profiles for the selection of employees	Yes	n	13	31	19	22	19	10	23	137
		%	50	43	61	65	63	33	77	56
	No	n	8	27	10	12	4	19	7	87
		%	31	38	32	35	13	63	23	34
	No answer	n	5	14	2	0	7	1	0	29
		%	19	19	7	0	23	3	0	10

Guidance and counselling for potential participants	Yes	n	17	46	30	28	13	12	30	176
		%	65	64	97	82	43	40	100	70
	No	n	5	12	1	6	6	16	0	46
		%	19	17	3	18	20	53	0	19
	No answer	n	4	14	0	0	11	2	0	31
		%	15	19	0	0	37	7	0	11
Need assessment for our offers	Yes	n	20	29	23	26	21	22	26	167
		%	77	40	74	77	70	73	87	71
	No	n	2	27	6	8	5	8	4	60
		%	8	38	19	24	17	27	13	21
	No answer	n	4	16	2	0	4	0	0	26
		%	15	22	7	0	13	0	0	8
Use of quality circles	Yes	n	10	46	14	10	10	5	14	109
		%	39	64	45	29	33	17	47	39
	No	n	12	14	17	24	9	25	16	117
		%	46	19	55	71	30	83	53	51
	No answer	n	4	12	0	0	11	0	0	27
		%	15	17	0	0	37	0	0	10
Special person in charge for quality	Yes	n	9	15	15	23	12	23	27	124
		%	35	21	48	68	40	77	90	54
	No	n	13	42	16	9	10	7	3	100
		%	50	58	52	27	33	23	10	36
	No answer	n	4	15	0	2	8	0	0	29
		%	15	21	0	6	27	0	0	10

B18: From your experience, do enterprises ask for a quality management certificate of your organisation?

Country		AT	CZ	DK	DE	FR	IT	LT	Total
Yes, very often	n	2	7	1	5	1	5	0	21
	%	8	10	3	15	3	17	0	8
Yes, but only rarely	n	6	21	11	15	10	10	3	76
	%	23	29	36	44	33	33	10	30
No	n	15	42	18	14	18	15	27	149
	%	58	58	58	41	60	50	90	59
No answer	n	3	2	1	0	1	0	0	7
	%	12	3	3	0	3	0	0	3

C) Questions on public co-financing schemes for company training

C19: Do you have an overview on existing public initiatives to co-finance company training?									
Country		AT	CZ	DK	DE	FR	IT	LT	Total
Yes, we have a very good overview	n	8	15	20	5	6	28	17	99
	%	31	21	65	15	20	93	57	43
Yes, but we are only informed about some examples	n	13	29	7	17	17	2	12	97
	%	50	40	23	50	57	7	40	38
No, we do not have an overview	n	3	26	4	12	7	0	1	53
	%	12	36	13	35	23	0	3	17
No answer	n	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	4
	%	8	3	0	0	0	0	0	2

C20: Do you inform enterprises on existing public co-funding schemes for training?									
Country		AT	CZ	DK	DE	FR	IT	LT	Total
Yes, we do that very often	n	8	13	18	5	8	22	7	81
	%	31	18	58	15	27	73	23	35
Yes, but we do that only occasionally	n	9	23	5	7	18	6	21	89
	%	35	32	16	21	60	20	70	36
No, we do not do that	n	7	34	8	22	4	2	2	79
	%	27	47	26	65	13	7	7	27
No answer	n	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	4
	%	8	3	0	0	0	0	0	3

C21: From your experience, what are the effects of public co-funding schemes for training?

Effects	Option		AT	CZ	DK	DE	FR	IT	LT	Total
They lead to more training	Yes	n	16	39	19	15	21	27	8	145
		%	62	54	61	44	70	90	27	58
	No	n	7	10	5	10	4	3	15	54
		%	27	14	16	29	13	10	50	23
	No answer	n	3	23	7	9	5	0	7	54
		%	12	32	23	27	17	0	23	19
They stimulate better access to training for special target groups (e.g. older employees, women, migrants)	Yes	n	19	35	17	18	19	15	8	131
		%	73	49	55	53	63	50	27	53
	No	n	4	13	4	7	9	15	13	65
		%	15	18	13	21	30	50	43	27
	No answer	n	3	24	10	9	2	0	9	57
		%	12	33	32	27	7	0	30	20
They stimulate more training about special topics (e.g. ICT, health and safety)	Yes	n	17	38	11	12	11	18	10	117
		%	65	53	36	35	37	60	33	46
	No	n	6	10	6	12	13	12	9	68
		%	23	14	19	35	43	40	30	29
	No answer	n	3	24	14	10	6	0	11	68
		%	12	33	45	29	20	0	37	25
They lead to a reduction of enterprises' share in the investment in training	Yes	n	17	33	21	13	20	20	1	125
		%	65	46	68	38	67	67	3	51
	No	n	6	18	4	11	6	10	27	82
		%	23	25	13	32	20	33	90	34
	No answer	n	3	21	6	10	4	0	2	46
		%	12	29	19	29	13	0	7	16
They lead to more training especially in SME	Yes	n	15	36	18	17	13	26	8	133
		%	58	50	58	50	43	87	27	53
	No	n	8	15	8	7	12	4	20	74
		%	31	21	26	21	40	13	67	31
	No answer	n	3	21	5	10	5	0	2	46
		%	12	29	16	29	17	0	7	16
They help training providers to cooperate with enterprises	Yes	n	17	35	16	9	15	17	4	113
		%	65	49	52	27	50	57	13	45
	No	n	6	13	6	15	11	13	23	87
		%	23	18	19	44	37	43	77	37
	No answer	n	3	24	9	10	4	0	3	53
		%	12	33	29	29	13	0	10	18

D) Questions on special forms of cooperation and innovation in the field of company training

D22: Do you cooperate in an established network in the field of company training?									
Country		AT	CZ	DK	DE	FR	IT	LT	Total
Yes	n	8	20	22	15	9	15	9	98
	%	31	28	71	44	30	50	30	41
No	n	16	51	9	18	21	15	21	151
	%	62	71	29	53	70	50	70	58
No answer	n	2	1	0	1	0	0	0	4
	%	8	1	0	3	0	0	0	2

D23: Who belongs to that network?⁷⁰									
Country		AT	CZ	DK	DE	FR	IT	LT	Total
Small enterprises (< 50 employees)	n	5	11	17	7	3	10	2	55
	%	19	15	55	21	10	33	7	23
Medium-sized enterprises 50 to 500 employees)	n	2	13	18	9	5	6	6	59
	%	8	18	58	27	17	20	20	24
Large enterprises (>500 employees)	n	2	6	15	6	4	4	1	38
	%	8	8	48	18	13	13	3	16
Research organisations or universities	n	2	6	3	6	2	6	0	25
	%	8	8	10	18	7	20	0	10
Consulting agencies	n	4	7	4	5	3	5	1	29
	%	15	10	13	15	10	17	3	12
Government organisations	n	0	5	4	3	2	3	1	18
	%	0	7	13	9	7	10	3	7
Labour office/ employment service ⁷¹	n	-	8	12	3	1	5	1	30
	%	-	11	39	9	3	17	3	12
Employers' organisations	n	2	4	5	4	3	9	1	28
	%	8	6	16	12	10	30	3	12
Chambers	n	1	7	7	4	2	4	1	26
	%	4	10	23	12	7	13	3	10
Trade unions	n	0	0	9	2	0	9	0	20
	%	0	0	29	6	0	30	0	9
Other training providers	n	5	8	10	11	3	5	1	43
	%	19	11	32	32	10	17	3	18
Free lance experts and trainers	n	6	15	0	8	3	5	0	37
	%	23	21	0	24	10	17	0	14
"Industriellenvereinigung" ⁷²	n	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	%	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

⁷⁰ Training providers which ticked that option. No answer: AT 2 (15 %); CZ 1 (1 %); DE 1 (3 %). Not applicable: AT 16 (62 %); CZ 51 (71 %); DK 9 (29 %); DE 18 (53 %); FR 21 (70 %); IT 15 (50 %); LT 21 (70 %).

⁷¹ Not asked in Austria. Total: Average of 6 countries (without Austria).

⁷² Only asked in Austria.

D24: How important is that network for your cooperation with enterprises? (Please locate your answer between the extremes 'very important' and 'not important')									
Country		AT	CZ	DK	DE	FR	IT	LT	Total
Very important (box 1)	n	2	9	7	8	4	5	6	41
	%	8	13	23	24	13	17	20	17
Box 2	n	4	7	13	3	3	6	3	39
	%	15	10	42	9	10	20	10	17
Box 3	n	2	4	1	3	2	3	0	15
	%	8	6	3	9	7	10	0	6
Not important (box 4)	n	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	3
	%	0	0	3	3	0	3	0	1
Not applicable	n	16	51	9	18	21	15	21	151
	%	62	71	29	53	70	50	70	58
No answer	n	2	1	0	1	0	0	0	4
	%	8	1	0	3	0	0	0	2

D25: What are the most important questions concerning innovations in the field of company training for you (please tick the maximum of the five most important options)?⁷³									
Country		AT	CZ	DK	DE	FR	IT	LT	Total
How to organise training in a more flexible way?	n	6	33	12	7	22	20	13	113
	%	23	46	39	21	73	67	43	45
How to secure the knowledge transfer to the workplace?	n	16	26	18	22	11	18	24	135
	%	62	36	58	65	37	60	80	57
How to offer more counselling around training?	n	8	16	3	14	13	6	8	68
	%	31	22	10	41	43	20	27	28
How to integrate new technological developments in the training?	n	3	16	5	12	11	9	17	73
	%	12	22	16	35	37	30	57	30
How to implement forms of blended learning? ⁷⁴	n	-	19	6	11	17	6	28	87
	%	-	26	19	32	57	20	93	35
How to adapt to new legislative requirements?	n	0	13	5	3	6	9	6	42
	%	0	18	16	9	20	30	20	16
How to customize to changing work organisations at the workplace?	n	12	12	10	15	7	7	2	65
	%	46	17	32	44	23	23	7	27
How to offer tailor-made offers?	n	13	31	15	19	27	11	11	127
	%	50	43	48	56	90	37	37	52
How to reduce costs?	n	11	21	4	11	9	12	6	74
	%	42	29	13	32	30	40	20	29
How to implement new methods in the training?	n	6	28	9	15	8	4	15	85
	%	23	39	29	44	27	13	50	32
How to measure the outcome of training?	n	17	29	3	17	13	16	2	97
	%	65	40	10	50	43	53	7	38
How to assess the needs for training?	n	7	42	9	17	19	13	15	122
	%	27	58	29	50	63	43	50	46
How to integrate new research results in training?	n	7	28	5	5	8	6	3	62
	%	27	39	16	15	27	20	10	22

⁷³ Training providers which ticked that option. No answer: CZ 2 (3 %); DK 1 (3 %).

⁷⁴ Not asked in Austria. Total: Average of 6 countries (without Austria).

E) Information about your organisation

E27: To which type of provider does your organisation belong?									
Country		AT	CZ	DK	DE	FR	IT	LT	Total
Private training companies	n	21	58	6	19	21	-	24	149
	%	81	81	19	56	70	-	80	55
Schools, colleges, universities and other higher educational institutions	n	0	1	3	2	1	-	0	7
	%	0	1	10	6	3	-	0	3
Public training institutions (financed or guided by the government, e.g. adult education centres)	n	0	2	16	3	1	-	5	27
	%	0	3	52	9	3	-	17	12
Employer's associations, chambers of commerce, sector bodies	n	1	2	3	2	2	-	1	11
	%	4	3	10	6	7	-	3	5
Unions	n	0	0	3	2	0	-	0	5
	%	0	0	10	6	0	-	0	2
Other training providers	n	1	9	0	6	5	-	0	21
	%	4	13	0	18	17	-	0	7
No answer	n	3	0	0	0	0	30	0	33
	%	12	0	0	0	0	100	0	16

E28a: Overall number of trainers in your organisation – Full-time employed									
Country		AT	CZ	DK	DE	FR	IT	LT	Total
No full-time employed	n	2	27	0	3	0	2	1	35
	%	8	38	0	9	0	7	3	9
Less than 20	n	12	36	8	13	22	23	18	132
	%	46	50	26	38	73	77	60	53
20 to 49	n	1	1	5	4	2	3	10	26
	%	4	3	16	12	7	10	33	12
50 to 249	n	1	5	13	5	2	2	1	29
	%	4	6	42	15	7	7	3	12
More than 250	n	1	0	5	1	0	0	0	7
	%	4	0	16	3	0	0	0	3
No answer	n	9	3	0	8	4	0	0	24
	%	35	4	0	24	13	0	0	11

E28b: Overall number of trainers in your organisation – Part-time employed									
Country		AT	CZ	DK	DE	FR	IT	LT	Total
No part-time employed	n	2	28	19	3	5	21	19	97
	%	8	39	61	9	17	70	63	38
Less than 20	n	5	28	10	12	15	8	6	84
	%	19	39	32	35	50	27	20	32
20 to 49	n	3	8	1	1	3	0	4	20
	%	12	11	3	3	10	0	13	7
50 to 249	n	0	2	0	1	1	1	1	6
	%	0	3	0	3	3	3	3	2
More than 250	n	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	3
	%	0	3	3	0	0	0	0	1
No answer	n	16	4	0	17	6	0	0	43
	%	62	6	0	50	20	0	0	20

E28c: Overall number of trainers in your organisation – Free lancer									
Country		AT	CZ	DK	DE	FR	IT	LT	Total
No free lancer	n	0	13	18	0	2	3	22	58
	%	0	18	58	0	7	10	73	24
Less than 20	n	10	28	7	9	13	9	6	82
	%	38	39	23	26	43	30	20	31
20 to 49	n	2	16	4	10	5	9	1	47
	%	8	22	13	29	17	30	3	17
50 to 249	n	1	9	2	6	2	9	1	30
	%	4	13	6	18	7	30	3	12
More than 250	n	2	1	0	7	1	0	0	11
	%	8	1	0	21	3	0	0	5
No answer	n	11	5	0	2	7	0	0	25
	%	42	7	0	6	23	0	0	11

E29: Overall number of participants in courses of your organisation in 2005:									
Country		AT	CZ	DK	DE	FR	IT	LT	Total
Less than 250	n	4	16	4	5	7	5	3	44
	%	15	22	13	15	23	17	10	16
250 to 499	n	5	16	5	4	3	8	6	47
	%	19	22	16	12	10	27	20	18
500 to 999	n	3	11	0	4	2	7	14	41
	%	12	15	0	12	7	23	47	17
1000 to 4999	n	4	17	7	6	3	5	4	46
	%	15	24	23	18	10	17	13	17
More than 5000	n	4	10	9	9	6	3	3	44
	%	15	14	29	26	20	10	10	18
No answer	n	6	2	6	6	9	2	0	31
	%	23	3	19	18	30	7	0	14

E30: Overall number of courses of your organisation that were realized in 2005:⁷⁵									
Country		AT	CZ	DK	DE	FR	IT	LT	Total
Less than 50	n	7	31	5	12	8	15	26	104
	%	27	43	16	35	27	50	87	41
50 to 249	n	3	22	1	8	4	8	4	50
	%	12	31	3	24	13	27	13	18
250 to 499	n	1	7	4	2	3	0	0	17
	%	4	10	13	6	10	0	0	6
More than 500	n	2	7	4	6	4	4	0	27
	%	8	10	13	18	13	13	0	11
No answer	n	13	5	17	6	11	3	0	55
	%	50	7	55	18	37	10	0	25

⁷⁵ France: Information not given as number of courses (e.g. hours of courses) are classified as “no answer”.

E31: Overall turnover of your organisation in 2005:									
Country		AT	CZ	DK	DE	FR	IT	LT	Total
Less than 100.000	n	3	15	1	1	2	1	2	25
	%	12	21	3	3	7	3	7	8
100.000 to 499.999	n	4	22	2	7	7	4	3	49
	%	15	31	6	21	23	13	10	17
500.000 to 999.999	n	3	6	1	0	5	4	1	20
	%	12	8	3	0	17	13	3	8
1 Mio. to 5 Mio.	n	5	8	9	10	7	6	0	45
	%	19	11	29	29	23	20	0	19
More than 5 Mio.	n	2	1	6	5	1	4	0	19
	%	8	1	19	15	3	13	0	8
No answer	n	9	20	12	11	8	11	24	95
	%	35	28	39	32	27	37	80	40

E32: Number of enterprises that were costumers of your organisation in 2005:									
Country		AT	CZ	DK	DE	FR	IT	LT	Total
Less than 10	n	3	9	0	7	2	2	0	23
	%	12	13	0	21	7	7	0	9
10 to 49	n	13	28	2	9	7	6	14	79
	%	50	39	6	26	23	20	47	30
50 to 249	n	2	23	2	5	6	15	12	65
	%	8	32	6	15	20	50	40	24
250 to 999	n	0	4	4	3	6	4	4	25
	%	0	6	13	9	20	13	13	11
More than 1000	n	0	2	2	0	1	0	0	5
	%	0	3	6	0	3	0	0	2
No answer	n	8	6	21	10	8	3	0	56
	%	31	8	68	29	27	10	0	25

E33: The enterprises you cooperated with in 2005 had the following number of employees?⁷⁶										
Enterprises with ...	Option		AT	CZ	DK	DE	FR	IT	LT	Total
0-9 employees	Ticked	n	6	5	25	21	16	20	0	93
		%	23	7	81	62	53	67	0	42
	Not ticked	n	14	65	6	13	13	8	30	149
		%	54	90	19	38	43	27	100	53
	No answer	n	6	2	0	0	1	2	0	11
		%	23	3	0	0	3	7	0	5
10-49 employees	Yes	n	11	23	28	26	22	19	9	138
		%	42	32	90	77	73	63	30	58
	No	n	9	47	3	8	7	9	21	104
		%	35	65	10	24	23	30	70	37
	No answer	n	6	2	0	0	1	2	0	11
		%	23	3	0	0	3	7	0	5
50-499 employees	Yes	n	17	41	28	24	23	8	13	154
		%	65	57	90	71	77	27	43	61
	No	n	3	29	3	10	6	20	17	88
		%	12	40	10	29	20	67	57	34
	No answer	n	6	2	0	0	1	2	0	11
		%	23	3	0	0	3	7	0	5
500 and more employees	Yes	n	11	8	21	17	19	4	8	88
		%	42	11	68	50	63	13	27	39
	No	n	9	62	10	17	10	24	22	154
		%	35	86	32	50	33	80	73	56
	No answer	n	6	2	0	0	1	2	0	11
		%	23	3	0	0	3	7	0	5

E34: The enterprises you cooperated with were located?									
Country		AT	CZ	DK	DE	FR	IT	LT	Total
In 1 branch	n	1	11	2	6	1	24	0	45
	%	4	15	7	18	3	80	0	18
In 2 to 3 branches	n	7	21	5	8	6	1	1	49
	%	27	29	16	24	20	3	3	17
In 4 and more branches	n	13	34	24	20	21	0	29	141
	%	50	47	77	59	70	0	97	57
No answer	n	5	6	0	0	2	5	0	18
	%	19	8	0	0	7	17	0	7

⁷⁶ In Lithuania only one category was allowed to tick, in the other countries every category where the providers had costumers.

Annex 4: Questionnaire of the CVTS2rev survey of providers (English version)

Questionnaire for training suppliers

A) Cooperation with enterprises

1. Was your institution involved in CVT organisation and provision for the enterprises in 2005?

- Yes No

If you ticked "NO", please do not fill in the questionnaire, but send us the questionnaire back.

2. How much of your total turnover came from the cooperation with enterprises in 2005?

- Less than 10%
 11-30%
 31-50%
 More than 50%

3. Did you realize tailor-made seminars⁷⁷ for enterprises in 2005?

- Yes No

If yes, please indicate which percentage of your total turnover came from tailor-made seminars for enterprises?

- Less than 10%
 11-30%
 31-50%
 More than 50%

4. Did you realize open seminars⁷⁸ in 2005?

- Yes No

If yes, please indicate which percentage of your total turnover came from open seminars?

- Less than 10%
 11-30%
 31-50%
 More than 50%

⁷⁷ Tailor-made seminars are non-standardized seminars which are arranged according to the specific needs of an individual enterprise or a group of enterprises.

⁷⁸ Open seminars are courses that are visited by participants of different origins/enterprises. The courses are often published in a programme or placed in a database, which can be accessed publicly.

5. Did you realize any form of counselling⁷⁹ for enterprises in 2005?

- Yes No

If yes, please indicate which percentage of your total turnover came from these counselling activities?

- Less than 10%
 11-30%
 31-50%
 More than 50%

6. Did you deliver services in the field of management and organisation and training⁸⁰ in 2005?

- Yes, as a separate field of activity
 Yes, but only as a by-product within our training projects
 No

If yes, please quote which percentage of your total turnover came from this kind of activity?

- Less than 10%
 11-30%
 31-50%
 More than 50%

7. Please give some impression about the typical turnover per customer project with enterprises (please tick only once)? **In the Czech Republic, Denmark and Lithuania the Euro has to be changed to national currency and converted by the research teams later on!**

- Project sums up to € 5.000
 € 5.000 – 15.0000
 € 15.000 –50.000
 € 50.000 and more

8. How is your first contact to an enterprise typically established (please tick only once)?

- Enterprises contact us
 We contact enterprises

⁷⁹ Counselling comprises different forms of individual and group-oriented support by a coach or advisor for the solution of problems or decision-making in relation to the workplace.

⁸⁰ For example assessing the training needs, developing training plans, developing concepts to measure the training outcome.

9. **Which means are mostly used for contacting?** (please tick the maximum of the three most important options)

- Recommendations of other organisations (state agencies, employer organisations, trade unions, etc.)
- Contacts with enterprises during congresses, fairs, etc.
- Written training catalogues or programmes of our organisation
- Continuous contacts with former participants in the enterprises
- The enterprises and our organisation belong to a network
- Search engines like *google or yahoo!* in the internet
- National or regional databases on continuing vocational training
- Advertisement (in magazines, newspapers, television, radio, etc)

10. **Where are your contact persons in the enterprises situated:**

**in % of
all con-
tact
persons**

- in the human resources department or training department
- _____
at the level of general management / director of the enterprise
- _____
in thematic departments of the enterprise (e.g. sales, engineering, ICT)
- _____

11. **What are your organisation's advantages in relation to your competitors in the training market:**

	<i>Very important</i>	<i>Important</i>	<i>Not Important</i>
Price	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Quality	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Expected benefit in the workplace	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Flexibility and quickness of the provision	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Development of tailor-made seminars	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Continuous and well-established personal contacts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Belonging to networks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Image of our organisation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Location of our organisation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Active in the field for a long time	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

12. **The know-how about training by the people responsible for training in enterprises has during the last years:** (Please locate your answer between the extremes 'increase' and 'decrease')

increase decrease

13. **Can the training provided by the enterprises you cooperate with be considered as:** (Please locate your answer between the extremes 'short-term reaction' and 'long-term strategy')

A short-term reaction A long-term strategy

14. **Enterprise-provided training will be for your organisation in future:** (Please locate your answer between the extremes 'more important' and 'less important')

More important Less important

15. **Do you offer certificates to employees of enterprises?**

- Yes
- No

If you answered yes, what types of certification do you use:

- | | |
|--|----------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Certificates about participation | in % of participants |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Certificates based on written or oral examinations | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Preparation of our participants for external examinations (e.g. exams by the chamber of commerce, microsoft certificates) | _____ |

B) Questions on the quality management of your organisation

16. **Is your organisation quality-certified:**

- Yes
- No

If you answered yes, what types of quality management do you use:

- Self evaluation without external survey
- Self evaluation with external survey
- ISO 9001f
- EFQM
- LQW
- Special quality management system for the training sector (e.g. EDUQUA)
- Other: _____

List has to be updated by partners with the names of their national *quality management systems*

17. Please indicate, what elements of a quality management you use in your organisation?

	Yes	No
Written documents about the organisational understanding of quality	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Written concepts for the educational programmes/courses	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Regular procedures for having a feedback by the participants	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Results of evaluations are systematically analysed and used for the following courses	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Training for our full-term employees	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Training for our free-lancers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Written requirement profiles for the selection of employees	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Guidance and counselling for potential participants	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Need assessment for our offers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Use of quality circles	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Special person in charge for quality	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

18. From your experience, do enterprises ask for a quality management certificate of your organisation?

- Yes, very often
- Yes, but only rarely
- No

C) Questions on public co-financing schemes for company training

19. Do you have an overview on existing public initiatives to co-finance company training?

- Yes, we have a very good overview
- Yes, but we are only informed about some examples
- No, we do not have an overview

20. Do you inform enterprises on existing public co-funding schemes for training?

- Yes, we do that very often
- Yes, but we do that only occasionally
- No, we do not do that

21. From your experience, what are the effects of public co-funding schemes for training?

	Yes	No
They lead to more training	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
They stimulate better access to training for special target groups (e.g. older employees, women, migrants)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
They stimulate more training about special topics (e.g. ICT, health and safety)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
They lead to a reduction of enterprises' share in the investment in training	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
They lead to more training especially in SME	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
They help training providers to cooperate with enterprises	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

D) Questions on special forms of cooperation and innovation in the field of company training

22. Do you cooperate in an established network in the field of company training?

Yes No

If you ticked "NO", please go directly to question 25!

23. Who belongs to that network?

- small enterprises (< 50 employees)
- medium-sized enterprises (50 to 500 employees)
- large enterprises (>500 employees)
- research organisations or universities
- consulting agencies
- government organisations
- labour office/ employment service
- employers' organisations
- chambers
- trade unions
- other training providers
- free lance experts and trainers

24. How important is that network for your cooperation with enterprises?

(Please locate your answer between the extremes 'very important' and 'not important')

Very important not important

25. What are the most important questions concerning innovations in the field of company training for you (please tick the maximum of the five most important options)?

- How to organise training in a more flexible way?
- How to secure the knowledge transfer to the work-place?
- How to offer more counselling around training?
- How to integrate new technological developments in the training?
- How to implement forms of blended learning?
- How to adapt to new legislative requirements?
- How to customize to changing work organisations at the workplace?
- How to offer tailor-made offers?
- How to reduce costs?
- How to implement new methods in the training?
- How to measure the outcome of training?
- How to assess the needs for training?
- How to integrate new research results in training?

26. Which important innovations did your organisation implement in the last two years in the field of company training?

E) Information about your organisation

Please give us some information about your organisation in general and not only on the company training.

27. To which type of provider does your organisation belong?

- Private training companies
- Schools, colleges, universities and other higher educational institutions
- Public training institutions (financed or guided by the government, e.g. adult education centres)
- Employer's associations, chambers of commerce, sector bodies
- Unions
- Other training providers

28. Overall number of trainers in your organisation:

- Full-time employed: _____
- Part-time employed: _____
- Free lancer: _____

29. Overall number of participants in courses of your organisation in 2005:

30. Overall number of courses of your organisation that were realized in 2005:

31. Overall turnover of your organisation in 2005:

_____ € **In the Czech Republic, Denmark and Lithuania the Euro has to be changed to national currency and converted by the research teams later on!**

32. Number of enterprises that were costumers of your organisation in 2005:

33. The enterprises you cooperated with in 2005 had the following number of employees?

- 0-9 employees
- 10-49 employees
- 50-499 employees
- 500 and more employees

34. The enterprises you cooperated with were located?

- in 1 branch
- in 2 to 3 branches
- in 4 and more branches