



**“Improving employability in the European
sugar sector
in the context of restructuring”
Qualification schemes and Forward
management of skills and jobs**

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Commerce in the EU

- Interface between industry and the 493 million consumers/citizens across Europe
- 11% of EU GDP; 6 million companies
- 31 million employees

“A thriving sector bringing wealth to the European economy”



EuroCommerce members



Commerce federations:

- 31 countries
- Small & large
- Sub sectors:
 - Clothing
 - DIY
 - Franchise
 - Traders, etc

Companies



EuroCommerce: "A single voice for commerce in Brussels"

Our mission

- Improve the value for consumers
- Improve labour relations
- Lobby, inform and educate EU decision makers
- Image of commerce
- Inform members
- Promote the value of CSR

80% of national legislation affecting businesses comes from Brussels



The commerce sector and its recent evolution

- 2 main sub-sectors: retail and wholesale trade: annual growing in the number of jobs around 2,5%
- Considerable changes in the role and structure of wholesale and retail during the last 20 years
- Development of internet, introduction of ICTs, globalisation, lifestyles changes, green retailing...are relevant challenges for the sector
- Service workers are the majority in the sector and the share of women is relatively high
- Share of low-educated workers is decreasing and this trend is scheduled to continue in the next years
- Majority of employees younger than 40, but ageing of staff could become a problem

Education, training & skill needs in the SSDC for commerce (1)

- EuroCommerce and Uni europa commerce followed up this issue since the beginning of their informal social dialogue
- In November 2006, they signed a letter of intent to support further dissemination of the so-called European Commerce Competence Training modules
- It is about innovative training modules aimed to provide various target people (young people, unemployed...) with basic skills for the commerce sector
- It allows to pass a certification allowing to work in the commerce sector throughout Europe
- It can be used as a self-learning tools or by schools: exists in EN, DE, will be translated in TR, RO, PL

Education, training & skill needs in the SSDC for commerce (2)

- Cooperation of SP for commerce with the ILO in this field since 2006 (global forum events in 2006 and 2008)
- In their work programme for 2009-2009, the SP have undertaken a joint work on:
 - The identification of increasing requests from consumers
 - The technological innovation in the distribution chain
 - The future skills needs resulting from these developments
 - They have organised in September 2008 a joint visit of the Metro future store

Education, training & skill needs in the SSDC for commerce (3)

- The SP for Commerce have followed with the greatest attention the recent initiatives of the European Commission in this field and in particular:
 - The sectoral study for commerce developed in the framework of the initiative undertaken by the Commission «Comprehensive sectoral analysis of emerging competences and economic activities in the European Union »
 - The publication of the Commission's Communication « New skills for new jobs» at the end of last year

The new project on « Anticipating skill needs »

- The above mentioned initiative of the Commission, as well as the Communication put the emphasis on the importance for the social partners to strengthen their capacity in anticipating skill needs
- The Communication also places at the centre of the EU strategy for growth and jobs « the need to upgrade skills of the EU population to ensure a better match with labour market needs, to address the immediate employment and social impacts of the crisis and contribute to the EU competitiveness & equity »
- The social partners have therefore decided to develop a joint project aimed to establish a European Network for the anticipation of skill needs

Objectives of the project

- Build a better cooperation between the relevant stakeholders (social partners, companies, training bodies)
- Gather experiences already existing in this field in as many EU countries as possible regarding the existing sectoral observatories, skill needs and similar bodies
- Bring together the representatives of such bodies to share knowledges regarding:
 - The evolution of companies and workers needs
 - The evolution of skills and jobs
 - Assessment of practices, tools and methodologies of anticipation
 - Gathering of comparable data

What kind of activities and partnerships to achieve these objectives?

- The SP think that sharing good practices and establishing a solid partnership with other stakeholders (such as specialised sectoral training bodies) will favour mutual learning in this field
- Therefore, this project aims to establish a network of experts (representatives of social partners in charge of education and HR, governmental experts, representatives of VET schools and other training bodies) by organising meetings at EU level aimed to:
 - Acquire reciprocal knowledge
 - Learn to cooperate with trust and efficiency
 - Target a closer cooperation

Provisional programme and expected results

- The project should run from end 2009 to end 2010
- After the preparation: 3 thematic meetings will take place on the following issues:
 - Functioning of anticipating skill needs bodies and improvement of the cooperation at EU level
 - Emerging profiles and professions becoming less relevant, requirements by professional profiles and in particular languages and IT
 - Comparability of the qualifications and certification rules
- Final conference: presentation of a report based on the collected data and the outcomes of the thematic meetings

Expected multiplier effects and added value

- The SP are willing to improve their cooperation in anticipating changes by the development of tools
- They are willing to support employees in acquiring better qualifications and therefore improving employability
- Establishment and strengthening of SP competences in anticipating skill needs for a better management of changes occurring in the commerce sector
- Help the social partners to assess the need of a specific European Body in response to the proposal of the Commission regarding the setting up of European Skills Councils



Thank you for your attention!

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