



Gearing Adult Education Towards Occupational Mobility (GATOM)

National Assessment Report Germany

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1 Introduction

The typical professional career of the European workforce has traditionally been characterised by working in the initially learned occupation until the end of the professional life. During the last decades, however, the European labour markets have experienced dynamic developments, caused by economic, political, technological, social and demographic changes. These developments imply that a growing number of persons do not find an employment in their initial occupation and need to take on occupations that can be classified as a second career. Furthermore, today's rising skill shortages require companies to rely more on re-qualified workers. Hence, **occupational mobility** can increasingly be observed on labour markets and is also fostered to some extent by national governments and Public Employment Services. At European level, the European Commission designated the year 2006 as the European Year of Workers' Mobility, and Guideline No. 20 of the Integrated Guidelines for Growth and Employment (2005 - 2008) calls upon Member States to remove obstacles to mobility for workers.

As there does not exist, however, a standardised and/or commonly applied understanding of "**occupational mobility/change**", a working definition has been elaborated for the analyses of the study on hand. An occupational change is thereby characterised by the change into a new field of professional activity. This includes a substantial alteration of the work contents related to the job before and after the occupational change. In the context of an occupational change significantly different core competences are necessary to fulfil the new job-related tasks and it is not only an enlargement of activities/responsibility in terms of career development. The occupational change may be conducted with or without geographic mobility as well as within the same company or in conjunction with a new employer.

For successfully mastering an occupational change it will, among other issues, in most of the cases be necessary to **acquire new or at least update/strengthen existing knowledge**. Data for Germany, for example, show that about one fifth to one third of the workforce experiences an occupational change (*Seibert, 2007* or *Isaoglu, 2006*), and half of them cannot use their existing competences for their new job (*Hofbauer/König, 1973*). In Italy, the share of people (with apprenticeship training) changing occupation is estimated to be as high as 35 % - 41 %, and for Austria this percentage lies between 15 % and 68 % (depending on the time horizon considered) (*Klicpera et al., no date*).

So, the question arises whether the existing VET/adult education systems provide effective (re-)qualification opportunities geared towards persons intending to change to a job not strictly corresponding to the occupation they have initially been trained for. National research studies have shown that there exist a wide range of (re-)qualification instruments for qualifying the workforce for a second career. However, these are rather targeted at unemployed and hardly ever suitable for persons preparing their occupational change while being employed (e.g. inflexible time schedules, no public support for training costs, no advice from the Public Employment Service concerning the most appropriate measures etc.). In terms of both, the intention to reduce unemployment/foster employment and increase the participation in lifelong learning – both pinpointed by the Lisbon strategy – actively supporting planned and strategic occupational changes to a higher extent would be advisable. This form of occupational change is on

average more successful than those conducted out of unemployment (*Mandl et al., 2006*).

So far, little is known, however, about the specific needs and requirements of persons strategically planning and preparing an occupational change while being in upright employment. Furthermore, no assessment has yet been made regarding the coherence of available (re-)training measures with the demand of the mobile workforce and their potential employers. Against this background, the project “Gearing Adult Education Towards Occupational Mobility – GATOM” which has been conducted with the support of the European Commission¹ follows the **objectives** to

- identify the demand of employees and employers with regard to (re-)qualification measures in the context of an occupational change planned/prepared during an upright employment
- investigate on the availability of VET/adult education measures being suitable for the (re-)qualification requirements of the mobile workforce
- analyse in how far the available VET/adult education system corresponds to the needs of people changing occupation
- eventually propose suggestions to gear the available education/training instruments towards occupational mobility

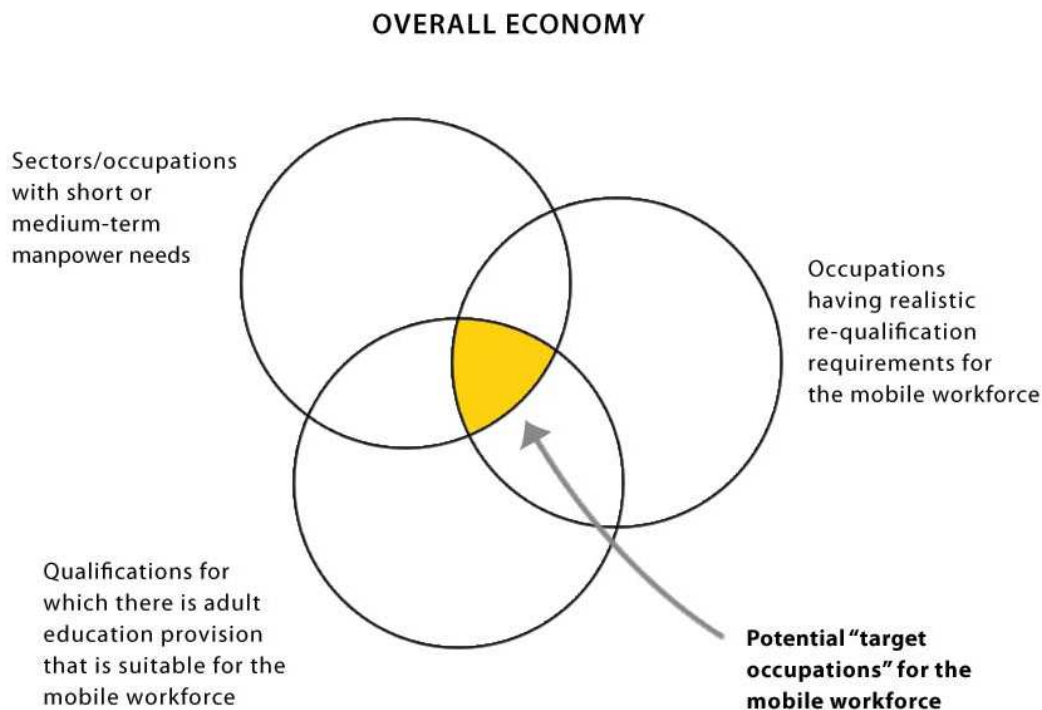
The project covers **eight European countries**. Research is conducted at national level under the co-ordination of the Austrian Institute for SME Research by the following partners:

- Austria: Austrian Institute for SME Research
- Finland: Turku School of Economics (TSE)
- Germany: Berufsbildungswerk Gemeinnützige Bildungseinrichtung des DGB GmbH (bfbw) – Competence Center EUROPA
- Ireland: Tom Martin & Associates (TMA)
- Poland: EEDRI Institute
- Romania: CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY OF ROMANIA (CCIR)
- Spain: Ikei Research and Consultancy
- Switzerland: Schweizerischer Verband für Weiterbildung (SVEB)

The report on hand constitutes the **National Assessment Report for Germany** providing a comparison between demand (i.e. employees’ and employers’ requirements) and supply of VET/adult education dealing with (re-)qualification for occupational change. Thereby, a focus has been set on **three professions** (plumbers, cooks, assistant nurses²) as target occupations for mobile workers. These jobs are deemed to be characterised by good job opportunities in the future as well as realistic qualification levels (see Graph 1).

¹ Lifelong Learning Programme by the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency

² ISCO Codes (International Standard Classification of Occupations) of the selected professions: plumbers – 7136, cooks – 5122, for assistant nurses: institution-based personal care workers – 5132 or nursing associate professionals – 3231

Graph 1 Selection Criteria for the “Target Occupations“ of the Mobile Workforce

Source: Austrian Institute for SME Research, Tom Martin & Associates/TMA

In Chapter 2, an overview of existing **VET/adult education measures** suitable for (re-) qualification in the framework of occupational change is given. The identification of respective education/training instruments in the investigated sectors was conducted on the basis of the following criteria:

- Location: decentralised offer or e-learning
- Duration: not more than approximately 1 year
- Time schedule: evening/weekend classes, few blocked seminars
- Costs: reasonable with respect to the average income in the target job
- Teaching method and contents covered: focus on practical orientation and no particular specialisation within an occupation (broad, basic qualification)
- Eligibility criteria: no or little previous subject-oriented knowledge/skills required and accessible for adults
- Status of the implementing organisation: private or public
- Preferably certification after the attendance of the training measure

The necessary information was gathered in the form of **desk research** in spring 2008, supplemented by **qualitative interviews** with representatives of the training providers.

To analyse whether the VET/adult education system is generally suitable for people changing occupation during an upright employment the requirements of the enterprises and the workforce have been investigated through **qualitative interviews with mobile workers and concerned enterprises**. On the basis of a semi-standardised

questionnaire 15 enterprise interviews in Germany were focussing on small and medium-sized enterprises in the construction sector, tourism and health/ elderly care and analysed their point of view on the qualification needs of the employees and the most suitable ways to acquire them. Similarly, 15 interviews with persons that have already experienced an occupational change (or were planning to do so in the near future) in Germany focussed on their experiences with (re-)qualification courses in terms of fostering and hindering factors, beneficial methods and support as well as potential improvement possibilities. All interviews were conducted prior to the economic crisis; potential effects on the career chances for occupational changers were therefore not considered in our analysis.

The tables below provide an overview of the 30 interviews.

Table 1 Profile of employees interviewed

| Interview number | Gender and age | Present occupation | Years of experience in present job | Educational and occupational history |
|------------------|----------------|--|------------------------------------|--|
| 1 | M, 23 | Plumber | 1 | VET degree and professional experience as motor mechanic |
| 2 | M, 44 | Plumber | 5 | Higher education degree and professional activity as electrician |
| 3 | M, 27 | Installer of central heating and ventilation | 9 | Lower secondary school degree; no VET degree; no prior professional experience |
| 4 | M, 59 | Installer for sanitary and heating systems | 17 | Various jobs outside the sector |
| 5 | M, 21 | Installer of central heating and ventilation | 3 | Lower secondary school degree; no VET degree; no prior professional experience |
| 6 | M, 45 | Cook (Traditional food system) | 10 years | Kitchen help |
| 7 | F, 36 | Cook assistant (Convenience food system) | 6 years | Salesperson |
| 8 | F, 34 | Cook (Convenience food system) | 3 years | VET degree in house-keeping |
| 9 | F, 28 | Cook assistant (Convenience food system) | 2 years | Various office jobs |
| 10 | M, 39 | Cook (Traditional food system) | 7 years | VET degree and professional experience as butcher |
| 11 | F, 43 | Assistant nurse | 3 | VET degree in early education; University studies in Pedagogy; years of work as trainer of parent-children courses |
| 12 | F, 45 | Assistant nurse | 9 | Lower secondary school education; no VET degree, no professional experience prior to the start of the job |
| 13 | F, 46 | Elderly care assistant | 1 | Mechanical engineer, then work in Mobile Social Service |
| 14 | F, 39 | Assistant nurse | 4 | VET degree and professional experience in the hotel sector |
| 15 | M, 28 | Elderly care assistant | 3 | Job in communication technology |

Table 2 Profile of the enterprises interviewed

| Interview number | Type of enterprise | Number of staff | Experience with hiring occupational changers |
|------------------|--|----------------------------|--|
| 1 | Sanitary and heating system | 3 employees | Yes |
| 2 | Plumbing | 5 | Yes |
| 3 | Heating, ventilation, air conditioning and refrigeration | 2 | Yes |
| 4 | Institute for water + solar energy | 3 | Yes |
| 5 | Heating, ventilation, air conditioning and refrigeration | 2 | Yes |
| 6 | Hotel / Convenience food system | 5 cook assistants | Yes |
| 7 | Hotel | 2 cooks | No |
| 8 | Restaurant /Traditional food system | 7 cooks | No |
| 9 | Restaurant /Traditional food system | 2 cooks | No |
| 10 | Hotel /Traditional food system | 6 cooks, 3 cook assistants | No |
| 11 | Elderly care institution | 51 | Yes |
| 12 | Care institution | 7 | Yes |
| 13 | Elderly care institution | Approx. 100 | Yes |
| 14 | Elderly care institution | 78 | Yes |
| 15 | Elderly care institution | 60 | Yes |

The results of these 30 interviews for Germany (i.e. 15 with entrepreneurs, 15 with the workforce) are summarised in Chapter 3 of the report on hand.³

Chapter 4 derives **conclusions** regarding the suitability of the existing VET/adult education measures for strategically conducted occupational change. Corresponding **recommendations** for relevant stakeholders (i.e. governments, Public Employment Services, training providers etc.) have been pinpointed to better gear adult education towards occupational mobility.

Next to the National Assessment Reports also a **European Assessment Report** has been elaborated, providing cross-national comparisons of the issues under consideration.

The main findings of both, the National and European Assessment Reports are summarised in **Policy Manuals** in the national languages of the countries covered by the project.

Furthermore, at national level **individual training inventories** for the three occupations under consideration have been elaborated in national language aiming to make the training markets more transparent for persons planning an occupational change.

All reports and outcomes of the project on hand may also be downloaded for free on www.mobility-training.eu.

³ Thereby, it is to be considered that the research on hand was conducted in summer 2008, i.e. before the economic and financial crises affecting demand and supply on the labour market.

2 Overview on available training and education measures suitable for supporting occupational change

2.1 Construction sector/Plumbers

The investigation of the available training measures for persons intending to access the profession as plumber or sanitary assistant in Germany demonstrates that there is a lack of adequate training measures that can be taken along the job. Some of the responsible professional bodies in Germany such as the Chamber of Skilled Crafts and Small Businesses (“Handwerkskammer”) in Hamburg, the Guild “Sanitary-Heating-Plumber” (“Innung Sanitär-Heizung-Klempner”) and the Central Office for Distance Learning (“Zentralstelle für Fernunterricht”) relate this to the high rate of professionalisation in the sector and the difficulty to qualify newcomers through short-term courses as this could undermine the German Dual System.

Against this background only one measure compatible with a parallel employment and requiring no prior experiences in the sector was found: the modular based pilot qualification funded by the European Social Fund (<http://www.esf-hamburg.de/projekte20002006/p044.php>). The status of the project is completed and the training is no longer offered though.

Other courses identified and requiring no prior occupational skills are rather long-term and full-time vocational education and training courses or vocational re-trainings (“Umschulungen”) with an average duration of 2-3 years. These courses are not relevant to the target group in question as persons employed in another job and intending to orient themselves towards the profession as plumber or sanitary assistant usually have limited time resources and cannot devote their time to a full-time course.

Other courses such as modular-based full-time training measures of several weeks or months are not directly addressed to the group in question as they cannot be taken along the job. An example is the 3-months training “Metal Ground and Roof Plumber Training” as well as the 4-weeks full-time trainings “Sheet Metal Forming” and “Sanitary and Water Installation” presented in the inventories of GATOM.

Persons intending to undertake an occupational change towards the position as plumber or sanitary engineers will have difficulties finding a suitable training measure. However, as the employer interviews have shown highly motivated, encouraged and technically skilled candidates who are interested in the job may have chances to access the profession even if they lack prior training experiences (please refer to the results of Chapter 3 of this report on the requirements of training and education measures in the context of occupational change). As the occupation suffers from skill shortages and as it is increasingly difficult to recruit high-qualified staff in the sector, a higher permeability through the acceptance of semi-skilled persons is visible now.

For persons with some sector-specific background knowledge and some relevant skills there are various continuing education and further education measures – including short-term measures with a duration of approximately 4 weeks (e.g. the full-time training as “Building Plumber” of AWU Bildungsgesellschaft mbH in Dessau, Köthen and Zschornowitz: <http://www.dvs-anhalt.de>).

All courses identified include both theoretical elements taught in classrooms as well as practical elements taught in garages or enterprises. The most relevant training providers for an occupational change in plumbing and sanitary systems are further training organisations specialised in the occupational sector (e.g. SHK-Handwerk e.V.) or supra-regional and multi-sector training providers (e.g. Berufsbildungswerk des DGB gGmbH, Berufsförderungszentrum e.V., Internationaler Bund e.V.) as well as occupational bodies such as the Chamber of Trade.

Unlike the initial vocational education and training by the German Dual System which is based on a formalised procedure, adult education measures in Germany are characterised by numerous training forms and offers as well as a pluralism of providers. A standardised recognition system for the acquired qualifications does not exist. When it comes to the validation of the training experiences a variety of procedures and instruments as a means of testing, assessing, acknowledging and documenting the learning outcomes can be identified. These encompass theoretical and practical examinations of the knowledge and competencies acquired. In case of modular qualifications the procedure is usually that each module is tested and assessed individually. Validation instruments include confirmations of participation, certificates as well as specifications of training activities.

2.2 Tourism/Cooks

In the German educational system only few courses relevant for the occupation as cook are explicitly addressed to the target group of occupational changers lacking prior professional experience in the gastronomy sector. Exceptions are the modular-based qualifications in the training kitchen of the Educational Center for Tourism and Gastronomy (“Bildungszentrum für Tourismus und Gastronomie”, BTG) of the Wirtschaftsakademie Schleswig-Holstein as well as the modular-based course “International Kitchen Licence” of the training academy “Akademie Überlingen Verwaltungs-GmbH”. These short-term adult training measures are explicitly addressed to newcomers in the sector as well as to job returnees. Participants of the course offered by the Educational Center for Tourism and Gastronomy in Schleswig-Holstein can choose whether they would like to participate on a full-time basis or in part-time, the full-time course has a duration of 2 months, the part-time course takes 4 months. This qualification is a good example for validation in a wider context; the qualification will be recognised as part of a supplementary vocational education and training course taken later.

There are also courses such as the distance learning course of the “Hotelfernschule Poppe & Neumann” offering basic knowledge in gastronomy. As participants can choose their individual working hours here the course is thus highly compatible with a parallel employment, even on a full-time basis. It has duration of 10 months and requires solely 12 training hours per weeks. The qualification is generally open to occupational changers – however, general knowledge of the gastronomic sector is obligatory.

Some courses can be taken along the job, others – due to the course length or the full-time form of the training – can only be taken during an occupational brake, in holidays or in case of unemployment (e.g. the 4 week training as cook offered by the DEKRA Akademie GmbH: <http://www.dekra-akademie.de/>).

Other courses are full-time based, too, but as they are arranged in modules, participants can theoretically combine them with a parallel employment as well. Generally, not all modules have to be taken in a row and individual choices based on the time schedule of the participants can be made, thus, breaks can potentially be taken between modules.

All analysed adult trainings measures of our project entail both theoretical elements that are taught in classrooms combined with practical elements, often offered in training kitchens or restaurants, sometimes with “real” guests.

The contents of the available adult training measures addressed to occupational changers cover elements such as:

- Hygiene and cleanliness
- Safety and health
- Customer orientation
- Quality control and quality insurance
- Preparation of food
- Procedures in the kitchen
- Technical equipments in modern kitchens
- Energy and environmental issues
- Teambuilding
- Coping with stress
- Conflict management
- Calculation
- Material and goods usage
- Current market trends and tendencies
- Gastronomic specialities of the region

Some of the training measures are divided into different competencies such as social competencies, methodological competencies, economic competencies, professional competencies and cultural competencies.

Against the background of the rise of chain restaurants such as McDonalds, Burger King and Subway and the increasing use of convenience food even in “traditional” restaurants and hotels, some of the identified short-term qualification measures offer modules that are specialised on the field of convenience food (“Systemgastronomie”). An example is the qualification “Expert in Convenience Food” offered by COMCAVE.COLLEGE GmbH. This course covers skills that go beyond the activities in the kitchen such as guest services, work at the reception, room service, standardised food concepts, marketing, workflow management, terminology and legislation – so persons with this qualification can also be deployed in other fields in the gastronomy, including in management.

Some courses that are modular-based use prior profiling and skill assessment in order to identify the training needs and the competencies of the candidates and to set up an individual training programme.

Just as in the training measures for the occupations as assistant nurse and plumber the certification and validation procedures and instruments vary considerably in the sector. Sometimes the skills are theoretically examined through repetitions and retrievals, in other cases practical tests are used to assess the knowledge and skills of the participants. Confirmations of participation and/or attestations based on assessment of the performance are the most common validation documents. Most courses are assessed by the further education institute itself, only one course – the distance learning course “Basic Knowledge in Gastronomy” of Hotelfernschule Poppe & Neumann – terminates with an examination by the Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

2.3 Health and elderly care/Assistant nurses

In the care sector there are various short-term adult training courses in Germany which are also addressed to the target group under consideration – persons preparing for a job as assistant nurse or elderly care assistant while being employed in another job and/or sector. Most courses can be combined with a parallel employment and are potentially open for newcomers in the field. The courses have an average duration of 6 weeks to 3 months – as they are part-time-based, are arranged as evening seminars or in weekend blocks all courses can be taken along a full-time job or in combination with a part-time job.

The following knowledge and skills are required for candidates aiming to participate in the training measures:

- Ability to understand and communicate in German
- (in some cases:) A lower secondary education degree
- Candidates must be older than 17 years of age

Of course persons that are participating in these courses must moreover demonstrate that they are encouraged to work in teams and in favour of sick or elderly people and to undertake care activities for this group.

In most courses the theoretical training covers contents such as:

- Basic care and body care and body basics
- Hygiene
- Prophylaxis
- Healthful eating
- Medication
- Assisting people with personal care; positioning and transferring people
- Providing restorative care
- Specific illnesses
- Medical Terminology

- Law and documentation

Some courses qualify for a care activity in elderly homes and include additional elements such as:

- Assisting dying patients
- Interaction with elderly people, with dying patients and with people suffering dementia
- Identification of disease patterns of the elderly; providing care for people with Alzheimer's Disease and related dementia
- Providing end-of-life care as well as
- Nutrition for elderly people

Besides theoretical elements all courses include practical elements which are realised in 2 to 3 weeks internships and in which trainees will gain hands-on practical experience working with patients in a real care setting. These are usually full-time based and are taken in a care institution, in an elderly home or in a hospital. In some training measures the educational providers will organise the internships for the trainee and will connect the participant with a contact person from the care institution, in other measures the participants themselves select and organise the internship.

Just like in the other two pilot occupations “cook” and “plumber” standardised and unified validation and certification procedures and instruments do not exist in the identified adult training measures. Every course terminates in a unique way and validates and documents the acquired competencies differently. Most courses test the job-related skills through practical examinations, in some cases a supplementary written and/or oral test is used to assess the knowledge. One of the identified courses of the German Red Cross terminates with a reflection day in which the participants together with the trainers of the course discuss and assess the quality of the training course. As to the validation instruments some courses use documents describing the knowledge and skills acquired, some present the results of the competence assessment on a certificate and some provide confirmations of participation; a mixture of several validation documents is also visible. The vocational training courses are either validated through special documents of the training organisations – usually based on their own quality standards – or they fulfil the requirements of accredited quality and certification bodies such as the Technical Control Board TÜV (“Technischer Überwachungsverein”).

3 Requirements of training and education measures in the context of occupational change

3.1 Construction sector/Plumbers

The five plumbing and sanitary enterprises interviewed in the context of the project GATOM are small enterprises employing 2 to 5 plumbers and sanitary assistants, respectively. According to the interviewed enterprise representatives the current development in the sector is that small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are challenged to survive on a highly competitive market. Big enterprises can often offer better prices and are more and more replacing SMEs. Many SMEs cannot offer attractive working conditions anymore. Employees have to be willing to work irregular hours (e.g. in the evenings or during weekends) and they also have to work overtime while payment is generally rather low. It is thus increasingly becoming difficult for SMEs in the sector to find motivated candidates with a solid educational background and with good technical skills. As prices are rising and the turnover decreases, more and more SMEs cannot afford to offer vocational education and training to youth anymore.⁴

As small and medium-sized enterprises are thus facing problems with finding suitable candidates to fill their vacancies for the positions of plumbers and sanitary assistants it does not astonish that the majority of the enterprises interviewed is currently open to recruit occupational changers. This seems to be the case for candidates lacking training or professional experiences in the sector. All interviewees are already experienced with employing staff that did not have a relevant vocational education and training degree or related professional background prior to starting their job as plumber and sanitary assistant, respectively.

However, not everybody seems to be suitable and ideally matches the job profile. Candidates must fulfil specific entry requirements which seem to be indispensable for the job:

- High intrinsic motivation and commitment to the work as plumber or sanitary assistant and its activities such as bricking, drilling and stemming holes
- Technical skills, interest in technical aspects
- Reliability and punctuality
- Social skills and customer service orientation
- Responsibility and willingness to take over tasks
- Some enterprises also appreciate the secondary school degree achieved, others find it important that the candidate has a vocational education and training degree and general professional experience – even if gained in another sector. These skills could also be relevant for the job as plumber/sanitary assistant, e.g. office experiences are seen as beneficial for documentation.

⁴ The investigation was carried out before the economic crisis starting in 2009, which is why the results have to be put into the perspective of a potential change ever since. Some effects (e.g. market competition) may have become stronger while others - e.g. opportunities for occupational changers to enter the job market - may have slightly decreased.

Most of these results correspond to the findings of the employee interviews according to which the following competencies and skills are required when aiming to access the profession:

- Manual skills, craftsmanship, professional experiences in using manuals, instruments and tools
- Social skills, experiences with clients and service orientation,
- Knowledge in maths and sciences.

Two of the five employees interviewed are currently working as plumber, two as installer of central heating and ventilation and one as installer for sanitary and heating systems. Four of the five interviewed employees are occupational changers which were lacking a vocational education and training degree as well as relevant professional experiences before accessing the job as plumber and installer, respectively.

This may be traced back to the following aspect. As has been shown above in most enterprises that are open to offering a job to occupational changers no training background is required; these candidates who are currently working in the enterprises got the job without having a relevant qualification. In some cases the fact that a person was acquainted with his future superior was the “door opener” to the job. In another case sector-specific background knowledge was most relevant for the future employer; the whole family worked as craftsmen and the knowledge was acquired informally. Here the profession as plumber was accessed without relevant professional experiences or a vocational education and training degree. Contacts to the professional network and informal skills were decisive.

One of the employees interviewed – a skilled electrical engineer technician from Russia – started his job as temporary employee substituting another plumber during his vacation. In his case, self-study along the job was an important element for the successful insertion into the job and for the compensation of the lack of practical and theoretical training.

As has been mentioned above, all interviewees find that the participation in a training or qualification measure could be a suitable way to supplement the acquired practical experience on-the-job and to gain and reflect additional know-how and techniques.

Good Practice examples mentioned by the interviewees are for instance the courses provided by the chambers of handicrafts and the guilds. According to some of the interviewees such courses are innovative in respect to the contents and methods chosen, the information provided corresponds to the requirements of the labour market and a transfer into practice is possible. Some of the courses are organised in blocks (e.g. weekend or evening courses) and the advantage then is also that they are compatible with the job. From what they know some training measures do not require prior knowledge in the field and the participation is thus also open to newcomers in the sector. Others find that the contents and methods delivered in these courses are rather backward as they do not meet the current labour market demands, though.

According to the enterprises and employees interviewed, a successful training measure specially addressed to the group of occupational changers aiming to work as plumber or sanitary assistant should fulfil the following requirements:

- Practice orientation: In fact, practical elements should constitute the main parts of the training. The trainees must be able to gain substantial experiences in a company or a training garage and must be able to acquire job-relevant competencies and techniques (e.g. in respect to unwinding, metal work, tiling and roofing but also as regards administrative procedures, conduct towards clients and service orientation). Practical experience is also fundamental, if aiming to find out whether the job is suitable for the person.
- Theoretical orientation: A successful training measure must also entail theoretical elements in relation to job-related competencies and skills such as in unwinding, metal work, tiling or roofing as well as mathematical and scientific background knowledge. Theoretical orientation also includes knowledge on administrative processes as well as on conduct towards clients and service orientation. It must be ensured that all theoretical elements meet the demands of the job and that they are related to the practical training.
- Knowledge transfer and network structures: As colleagues and superiors are often the most important knowledge transferors for new employees it must be ensured that the trainees are in regular contact with experienced staff and real experts and are able to use existing network structures on which they can build later.

3.2 Tourism/Cooks

The interviews with enterprises in the gastronomy sector have revealed that there seem to be two types of food systems according to which the findings of the interviews can be related:

1. The traditional food system
2. The convenience food system

A strict division of gastronomic enterprises into these two types of food systems is not always possible; some enterprises lie somewhere in between but all seem to tend towards one or the other system.

Traditional food system

The traditional food system is composed of restaurants, hotels and canteens preparing their food on the basis of individual food elements. As opposed to the use of convenience food, the process of cooking has a longer duration and requires more know-how and experience of the cooking staff. As a result, the knowledge, skills and qualifications needed for the job as cook are higher than in the convenience food system. The activities are more complex and demanding.

Table 3 Requirements for the job as cook and cook assistant, respectively, related to type of food system (traditional, convenience)

| | Traditional food system | | Convenience food system | |
|--|-------------------------|----------------|-------------------------|----------------|
| | Cook | Cook assistant | Cook | Cook assistant |
| Knowledge in science of nutrition and ability to apply knowledge | X | | | |
| Knowledge of hygiene regulations and ability to follow them | X | | | |
| Knowledge of and work experience in the gastronomy sector | X | | | |
| Knowledge in food preparation and ability to design and/or use recipes | X | | | |
| Knowledge of safety regulations and ability to apply knowledge | X | | | |
| Vocational education and training or long-term further training ("Umschulung") as cook | X | | | |
| Knowledge of the sector | X | | | |
| High interest and intrinsic motivation to carry out the job as cook/cook assistant | X | X | X | X |
| Social skills, customer orientation, team spirit | X | X | X | X |
| Ability to work quickly and under pressure | X | X | X | X |
| Ability to cope with stress | X | X | X | X |
| Service orientation, good conduct towards guests, friendliness | X | X | X | X |
| Ability to work efficiently, systematically and thoroughly | X | X | X | X |
| Cleanliness and tidiness | X | X | X | X |

In Table 3 the skill requirements that are needed when applying for a job as cook under the traditional food system are listed. These encompass both soft skills as well as professional knowledge.

All representatives from the interviewed enterprises find that it is almost impossible for a person from outside the sector to acquire all the complex knowledge in a short-term training of only several weeks or months. Compared to a "real" cook who is experienced in the occupation through a classical three-year vocational education and training degree or a long-term further education measure of two years he or she is most probably not able to demonstrate the same cooking abilities and to produce the same results.

Short-term adult education measures do not seem to have a good reputation in the sector. In the enterprises under investigation affiliated to the traditional food system (two hotels, two restaurants) there seem to be low or no chances for occupational changers aiming to access the position as cook, if they cannot demonstrate an employment history in the sector. In half of the interviewed hotels and restaurants a successful way of accessing the position without a vocational education and training degree could be to make a long-term internship or to carry out a long-term job in a restaurant, hotel or canteen, e.g. in the position as kitchen help or cook assistant. One of the interviewees accessed his current position as cook exactly this way, he was a kitchen help before his current job.

The interviews revealed that the remuneration of a cook with a vocational education and training degree is not considerably higher than that of a semi-skilled person. An employer looking for a good cook will then most probably prefer the qualified and certified cook over someone who has only completed a short-term training programme and lacks wider knowledge and experience in the sector.

Table 3 shows that while the interviews revealed that sector-related knowledge and experience is often a prerequisite for the work as cook, the requirements for cook assistants are much lower. The two interviews with cook assistants and some of the enterprise interviews brought about that knowledge of the gastronomy sector were not required before starting the job. Soft skills such as a general interest and a high intrinsic motivation to carry out the job as well as social skills and a sense of team spirit were however prerequisites as well. For a cook assistant whose activities are less demanding, the entry requirements are much lower than those of a cook.

In the restaurants and hotels we considered for the interviews, no vocational education and training degree was required for the position as cook assistant. Instead, the staff learned the relevant skills and know-how through on-the-job training.

Convenience food

The tendency in recent years is that in order to facilitate and reduce time for food preparation more and more restaurants, hotels, canteens and other workplaces of cooks and cook assistants are using pre-prepared food components such as “ready to cook food” (e.g. brushed vegetables, fish fingers) or “ready-to-serve food” (e.g. ice-cream, sandwiches). The advantage of convenience food over home-made food is that it requires minimal preparation and comparably little know-how. In the interviewed enterprises falling under this food system the entry requirements for the positions as cook and cook assistant are quite similar to those of cook assistants under the traditional food system (see Table 3):

- High interest and intrinsic motivation to carry out the tasks as cook assistant
- Social skills, team spirit
- The ability to work quickly and under pressure
- Ability to cope with stress
- In some restaurants/hotels: Service orientation, good conduct towards guests, friendliness
- The ability to work efficiently, systematically and thoroughly
- Cleanliness and tidiness

Occupational changers who are interested in working as cook or cook assistant and aim to apply in a restaurant, hotel or canteen predominantly using convenience food should have high chances of finding a job. Training experience from a short-term adult education measure will most probably be highly welcomed and acknowledged as this means that the candidate has at least some sector-specific background – however, this is not mandatory. Just like for cook assistants working under the traditional food system no specific educational qualifications are needed. Sectoral background knowledge is not required but will probably be a benefit.

The interviews demonstrated that as more and more restaurants use pre-prepared food and are orientated towards fast food products and convenience food the restaurants do not feel the necessity to hire persons with a vocational education and training degree anymore; basically anyone can prepare pre-cooked food. The fact that occupational changers can easily enter the market also with no prior training or professional experience must be seen against the background of the transformation in form of a casualisation of the market, reflected by a deterioration of working conditions (e.g. a lower salary) and a decrease of status of the occupation as cook. For ongoing discussions of this issue please refer to the occupational online forums listed in the appendix of this report.

Interestingly, none of the ten interviewees named a concrete short-term educational measure or Good Practice example for adults aiming to qualify for the job as cook or cook assistant while still working in another job and/or sector. The interviewees do not know of someone who has followed such a short-term course, neither have the enterprises recruited someone having completed such a measure. Generally they think that someone who has a vocational education and training degree and thus long-standing professional experience in the job will have higher career chances than someone having followed solely a short-term training as cook. The remuneration of the classically skilled and trained staff is also higher than for external candidates lacking the sector-specific background.

3.3 Health and elderly care/Assistant nurses

According to the interviewed enterprises and employees in care institutions and elderly homes (for an overview of the profiles, please refer to tables 1 and 2) the entry requirements of persons aiming to work as assistant nurses are:

- Social skills: friendly and helpful conduct towards patients, team skills
- Aptitude to work with sick or elderly persons and to take over care activities
- Ability to recognise the personal care needs of patients and to involve patients in the care activities and decisions – if possible
- To develop effective communication skills with patients and their family members, to enhance the quality of life for the patients
- Demonstrated prior care and household experiences
- At least 17 years of age
- Ability to understand and speak German

Most interviewees find that social skills as well as high intrinsic motivation and interest to work with patients are among the most important skills relevant for the position as assistant nurse; most of the skills needed cannot be acquired in training courses. All additional requirements such as theoretical background knowledge can be trained and improved in training and qualification measures.

These include:

- Knowledge of hygienic regulations as well as the ability to implement basic hygiene (e.g. infection control and safe disposal) and to establish and maintain a safe and hygienic environment for the clients
- Practical skills in giving and assisting with care of patients

- The ability to define healthy ageing, to identify phenomena that are symptomatic for ageing and to define the issues usually associated with these phenomena
- Knowledge of demographic trends and its societal consequences
- Knowledge of the social needs and impacts of diseases and – in case of elderly care – of ageing on older people
- Reporting and documenting incidents, work processes and results

All interviewees find that the participation in training and qualification courses is less important than a general affinity and aptitude in undertaking care, a motivation and interest in helping people and in dealing with different personalities. All find that informally acquired knowledge, such as through family and elderly care at home, is decisively a benefit when applying for the post as assistant nurse and elderly care assistant, respectively. The interviewees maintain that these experiences are more important than the participation in short-term training measures. For them, most of the required background knowledge can be gained on-the-job.

Most employers make their new staff familiar with job related requirements through initial skill adaptation trainings. In-house training measures which are offered to all staff is provided also to the semi-skilled and the newly recruited. In some cases, the employees are obliged to participate in these training measures in order to regularly update and deepen their knowledge and as a means of maintaining high organisational quality standards. These courses focus on contents such as first-aid, hygienic measures, care documentation, prophylaxis or encompass psychologically oriented trainings and training of soft skills.

All interviewees find that a training background as assistant nurse and elderly care assistant respectively, such as offered by charity organisations or adult training centres (e.g. the non-profit making further training organisation “Volkshochschule” which is accessible for all people, partly state-funded, partly financed through participant fees and partly through third-party funds) can clearly be a benefit when applying for the post.

Most institutions have gained positive experience with the target group of occupational changers. In some cases though – for instance when the initiative comes from the Labour Office rather than from the individual himself/herself – they were disappointed with the new candidate due to a lack of intrinsic motivation.

The interviewees identified the following courses as Good Practice examples. They have a high reputation in the care sector, optimally seem to combine theoretical and practical elements e.g. as regards the transfer of knowledge on issues such as basic care, nursing, ambulant care, hygiene and cleaning as well as the provision of classroom-based training together with internships) and have a fair cost-value ratio; the courses also end with a solid and acknowledged validation:

- The „assistant nurse“ training courses provided by the Malteser Humanitarian Aid (“Malteser Hilfswerk”) and the German Red Cross (“Deutsches Rotes Kreuz”) with a theoretical qualification combined with practical training.
- The 1-year training as „Care Assistant“ at the Association for Elderly Care and Handicapped Aid in Germany (“Verband Deutscher Alten- und Behindertenhilfe e.V.”) in Essen, which is acknowledged as certified educational training.

- Also educational organisations and training centres, non-profit-making associations in the field of elderly care offer high-quality training measures for care assistants and elderly care assistants.

According to the employees an optimal course offered by the educational system would:

- provide knowledge and skills in basic care, in conduct towards different kinds of clients and personalities, in the identification of disease patterns, in hygiene as well as in reporting and documentation
- combine theoretical and practical elements. One interviewee maintains that a theory-practice combination should be offered even on a day-to-day basis. Besides practical skills theoretical knowledge is also important as it helps to gain self-confidence when communicating with the patients and to understand and use the medical terminology
- ideally have a duration of several weeks
- be recognised in the context of a supplementary adult education programme in the field of (elderly) care taken later on (e.g. if the person decides to upgrade his/her qualification through a classical vocational education and training degree or a higher education degree)
- be modularised in order for the participants to attend the complete training or specific modules
- As the quality of the training courses also depends on the quality of the internship and the tasks and responsibilities the candidate has, the communication between the trainers providing the theoretical training and the contact persons in the care institutions where the internship is carried out must be ensured.

Some of the interviewees had a job or did an internship in the field of health care or social care as medical secretary, in the field of mobile social services and as intern in the field of rehabilitation (for an overview of the interviewees' profiles please refer to Table 1). Others gained experience in the position of kindergarten teacher or as instructor of parent-child courses. Only two worked in non-related sectors (gastronomy, communication technology). Most interviewees completed a non-related vocational education and training programme, one woman attended university studies in pedagogy. With this training and professional background the candidates interviewed in the context of this project fulfil the rather low qualification requirements and expectations of the enterprises in this sector to a maximum degree.

All find that their prior practical experience was a door-opener to their current job as assistant nurse and elderly care assistant, respectively.

Only one interviewee knew about concrete courses directed towards persons aiming to access the profession as assistant nurse or elderly care assistant and could name a Good Practice example of a short-term adult education measure: the courses offered by the German Red Cross which correspond well to the demands of the job.

4 Conclusions and recommendations

4.1 Assessment on the suitability of the available VET/adult education measures for supporting occupational change

Plumbers and sanitary assistants:

While the plumbing and sanitary systems sector is currently suffering of a considerable skill shortage, many small and medium-sized enterprises face the problem of high wages and costs of fringe benefits which they find increasingly difficult to cover (please refer to Chapter 3.1 on the requirements of training and education measures in the context of occupational change). Some of the interviewed enterprises are reluctant to hire persons having participated in certified training courses as they could be obliged to pay them a higher salary based on the collective agreement, they therefore prefer semi-skilled workers instead.

However, as has been shown in Chapter 2.1 “Overview of the available training and education measures suitable for supporting occupational change” most adult training courses offered by further training organisations in the field of plumbing and sanitary installations in Germany are addressed to experts with some knowledge and experience in the sector. There are no measures specially addressed to newcomers.

It seems to be common practice in the enterprises to recruit persons who either have a traditional vocational education and training background or newcomers who approached the job in a non-standardised way (e.g. through personal contacts, with another vocational education and training degree or through past labour experiences in the field). Accordingly, most of the institutions interviewed are generally open to recruit persons aiming to undergo an occupational change. However, they find that not all persons are suitable to carry out the tasks as plumber and sanitary assistants. Special entry requirements must be fulfilled such as a high intrinsic motivation to carry out the job, a technical affinity, social skills and reliability.

An interesting finding corresponding to the results of our analysis of the adult training measures is that none of the interviewed enterprises could name a Good Practice example for a training especially targeted to occupational changers. Adult training courses offered by the chambers of skilled crafts and small businesses, by the guilds and by educational and training providers that are specialised on the sector have a high reputation among the investigated enterprises. However, they are mostly addressed to experienced staff and not especially directed to persons unfamiliar with the job. As to courses for newcomers, the enterprises criticise course offers by the Labour Offices that are aiming to introduce the techniques and skills of plumbers and sanitary assistants to the unemployed. According to the interviewees these courses are too theoretical, they are not demand-oriented and thus not directly applicable to the job.

As has been described in the previous chapter, there is no typical or standardised training path for occupational changers. Interested newcomers in the occupation can participate in the specialised training for plumbers or sanitary assistants if they like. The benefit of the participation could be the opportunity to establish potentially useful network contacts, to test and demonstrate the acquired skills and to find out whether the activity as plumber or sanitary assistant is suitable.

Cook:

The interviews brought about that there are currently two parallel processes identifiable in the sector:

1. A casualisation of the occupation cook which is characterised by the expansion of restaurant chains, fast food and convenience food and by the related polarisation of the sector into convenience food on the one hand and traditional or exclusive restaurants and niches on the other hand,
2. The permeability of the occupation to persons from outside the gastronomical sector and thus the rise of access chances for occupational changers.

Besides the ten interviews conducted with the enterprises and employees, ongoing discussions in internet-based cook forums give authentic testimony of these current processes and of the acknowledgement of labour experiences and training outcomes (please refer for example to the discussions on the online forums “Köche-Treff” and “Das Köcheforem”).

So, when the sector can be divided into two food systems (traditional food system, convenience food system), as Chapter 3.3 on the requirements of training and education measures in the context of occupational change has described, the difference of acceptance and acknowledgement of short-term training courses by potential future employers is considerably high.

As Table 8 illustrates hotels, restaurants, canteens etc. that are rather affiliated to the system of traditional food do not seem to accept short-term educational measures as a successful way of accessing the position as cook. Candidates must demonstrate longer sector-specific knowledge instead; they must either have a vocational education and training degree or must have worked in the sector and in a kitchen for years.

However, in hotels, restaurants and canteens etc. that are predominantly using convenience food the entry requirements for candidates are lower: basically anyone can prepare the food (Table 4). While sector-specific experiences are not mandatory, additional relevant skills and know-how are highly welcome, including a completed short-term programme as cook or cook assistant.

Such courses should cover elements such as science of nutrition, hygienic regulations, food preparation, invention and use of recipes, conduct towards clients and guests as well as safety regulations, which were identified as important for carrying out the job as cook.

Table 4 Suitability of short-term adult education programmes for occupational changers aiming to work as cook or cook assistant related to type of cooking (traditional, convenience)

| | Suitable: Short-term training is useful and provides relevant skills | Not suitable: required skills cannot be gained through short-term training |
|------------------------------|--|--|
| Cook | | |
| Traditional food preparation | | X |
| Convenience food preparation | X | |
| Cook assistant | | |
| Traditional food preparation | X | |
| Convenience food preparation | X | |

To sum up, short-term trainings still do not have the same reputation in the sector than traditional training patterns, which are: classical vocational education and training programmes under the dual system or long-term re-qualifications or further training measures as cook with an average duration of two years.

Assistant nurse:

According to most care institutions contacted in the context of this project the participation in a training course is not mandatory for accessing the position as assistant nurse. In many cases, individuals had no prior training experiences and were trained on-the-job. However, before starting the job, relevant care experience was often gained informally such as through the care of relatives or an internship in a care institution. These non-formal or informally acquired job-related experiences are regarded as a clear benefit and are common practice in the interviewed care institutions. As to the demand side, most interviewees successfully having mastered an occupational change as assistant nurse do not see the need of participating in a related training measure before starting the job; they were offered the opportunity to be trained on-the-job, which they regard as a sufficient and efficient way to carry out their job later on. However, some persons are interested in theoretical background knowledge which they miss in their daily practice. This knowledge can be gained along the job as in care institutions in Germany it is common to offer further training to their staff.

Even if short-term training measures as assistant nurse or elderly care assistant is not indispensable for the jobs in this sector they are nevertheless identified as good examples for useful and practical qualifications for newcomers in the sector. These courses seem to combine theoretical with practical on-the-job training in a solid way and due to their 2-3 weeks internship as a substantial and integral element of the training they seem to respond ideally to the demands of the labour market.

There is an ongoing debate in Germany on the quality and acceptance of short-term courses in the care sector. In summer 2008, the public health care institutions agreed on a policy to open care positions in elderly and nursery homes for the long-term unemployed. A training measure with a duration of altogether 160 hours can be provided in this context. The course is then divided into a basic course of care activity skills (100 hrs.), a 2-week internship and an advanced training of 60 hours to reflect and deepen the acquired skills. With respect to the contents, the duration and the aims, the course is similar to the analysed qualification measures of our project. However, especially charity institutions such as the Paritätischer Wohlfahrtsverband and the Arbeiter-samariterbund criticise this new policy. They think that it is irresponsible to offer such a short-term training to people with no prior social or care experiences. They are

demanding courses with a duration of approximately 800 to 900 hours instead. For further information on the issue, please refer to an article of the weekly journal “Der Spiegel” of 19 August 2008⁵. Some of these doubts can be confirmed through our interviews in the care sector, others cannot. The majority of the interviewed care institutions are currently already working with semi-skilled staff, some of them are even less qualified than after the completion of a short-term training measure. However, some care institutions mention negative experiences with long-term unemployed and low motivated persons that were sent by the Labour Office.

4.2 Recommendations

Especially in the plumbing and sanitary systems field it was difficult to identify suitable education and qualification measures for newcomers in the sector. As this occupational field is suffering of a skill shortage it is important that the educational system will quickly fill the current qualification gaps and design new training measures. Also, as the number of persons entering a new occupation is constantly rising – across sectors – it must be ensured that special training measures for the group of occupational changers with usually limited time resources are created in order to fill the gap in the existing training systems.

Recommendations for the government

Providing systematic information on existing (re)qualification measures

Persons who are interested in a particular profession but are lacking relevant network contacts can currently contact experienced staff and find out more about individual course offers for instance through online forums (please refer for example to the discussions in occupational forums such as “Köchertreff”, “Das Köcheforum”, “Pflegeforum”). However, an overview of training measures and conditions for occupational changers is not available. So far, individual vocational training and qualification measures can be found only on the websites of individual educational providers or can be searched via vocational training search engines such as the site of the German Labour Office: <http://www.kursnet.arbeitsagentur.de/kurs/index.html> (though, the training offers presented here are mainly concentrated on the unemployed and not on the target group of the mobile workforce in question).

An exhaustive list with a well-structured overview of all relevant training and qualification offers for persons aiming to acquire new occupational skills is still lacking. For this target group it is extremely difficult and time-intensive to identify all of relevant training and qualification measures, to find out if the courses are suitable in terms of entry requirements, time schedule, duration and costs and whether the information is still valid. This fragmented and intransparent presentation of training offers seems to be characteristic for the whole system of adult education in Germany (please refer to a recent study of the German Institute for Adult Education DIE in Dietrich and Widany 2008, p. 50).

⁵ Please refer to the internet site: <http://www.spiegel.de/wirtschaft/0,1518,573107,00.html>

The inventories developed by the project GATOM are a good starting point by offering some orientation for persons intending to undergo a short-term re-qualification on the current training and qualification offers. However, as mentioned above these lists should be supplemented by more training offers and should be further enlarged by more occupations. The lists with the descriptions of the measures and their characteristics (target group, method, duration, validation, costs, location, contact details) are useful criteria for the selection of suitable training measures and substantially support the target group in identifying and selecting a (re-)qualification.

However, there are still significant barriers in the educational system related to the provision of data for such an overview of training offers in Germany. The investigation of the German Institute for Adult Education (Dietrich and Widany 2008, p. 50) has shown that in the system of adult training in Germany – which is unlike the German vocational education and training system characterised by a diversified and intransparent structure – the backflow of organisations willing to provide updated information on their training offers lies at only 10% to 30%. The relevant policy actors must ensure that these barriers will be overcome.

Recognition of training measures

In order for the mobile workforce to benefit from the participation in training measures it is essential that these measures are recognised by enterprises and potential future employers, ideally these trainings are state-approved. Trainees will also benefit from the classification of the courses according to the European Qualification Framework (EQF) as well as the application of the European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET) as this will facilitate workers' mobility. In the first place, employers and employees must become familiar with the European and national qualification frameworks and the credit point system ECVET however.

For the recognition of training measures, a close cooperation between government representatives, training providers, occupational chambers, social partners, enterprises and other key stakeholders in the field of VET is needed. Sectoral working groups devoted to the provision of short-term training measures targeted at the mobile workforce should be installed at national level, with sub-groups at regional level and regular meetings for knowledge transfer and exchange of Good Practices at European level.

Ensuring network opportunities and information sources, e.g. through occupational forums

Occupational forums already exist for the sectors investigated (for a list of online forums please refer to the Appendix of the present report). These forums are useful as they provide a platform on which newcomers in the sector can communicate with experienced persons. A forum explicitly addressed to the target group in question is lacking though. In order to fill this gap a website should be established providing a forum for the target group. Here, a list of all suitable training offers should also be published as well as useful background information on the sector, on the prerequisites for successfully mastering an occupational change as well as a list with all relevant actors and institutions in the sector.

Recommendations for training providers

Ensuring network contacts and knowledge transfer, e.g. through mentor programmes

The study has demonstrated that network contacts and sector-specific knowledge are highly significant when entering the job market. On-the-job training must be a core element of qualifications addressed to newcomers in the sector, not only because practical experiences are indispensable but also because personal contacts could become an important door opener to the job of interest. A coach or mentor familiar with the occupation and its characteristics will additionally establish trust and could introduce the trainees to the market and its particular way of functioning.

Ensuring practical relevance and transferability of adult training measures

An interesting result of the analysis is that in some sectors relevant labour market experiences and practical skills seem to be more – or at least as – important than/as prior vocational education and training experience and theoretical knowledge. In two of the three occupations under investigation (cook, assistant nurse) this was considered as indispensable. This is in line with the findings of a recent study conducted by the Institute for Employment Research according to which especially small scale training programmes involving a strong on-the-job component show positive employment effects (Fitzenberger et al 2008, p. 1).

Surprisingly, the interviews demonstrated that in all three occupational fields under investigation (assistant nurse, cook, plumber) there is only little knowledge on Good Practice examples of training and qualification measures in the educational system. In the care sector knowledge of related training measures can be found mostly. This may be related to the fact that the trainings are targeted to the demands of the labour market and have a high degree of practical elements. Also, the knowledge provided is directly relevant and transferable to the job.

Training measures targeted to the group of occupational changers should enable participants to find out quickly whether they can imagine carrying out the job or not. Besides learning in the classroom, practical training should be a core element of such training measures. In order to prevent problems related to the employability of the candidates and of allocation and potential re-allocation later, the change of training courses in case of unsuitability should be enabled.

The enterprise interviews demonstrated that the educational system sometimes offers trainings that do not correspond to the current labour market demands. Enterprises need fast and suitable training solutions. However, the demands of the labour market are not always met by the educational system. A considerable part of the existing training offers is not flexible enough, not directly applicable to the job or depends on bureaucratic processes. A person with such a training background is not always accepted by the enterprises and the direct positive effect of participation is not always acknowledged. At the same time, the training measures do not always meet the demands of the target group of occupational changers who need fast and flexible solutions combinable with their present employment.

It is thus essential that persons aiming to access the profession must be able to participate in vocational training measures with a considerable practical component, with a high acceptance rate within companies and with direct transferability to the job. It must be ensured that the training measures keep pace with the current challenges and requirements of the labour market. As has been shown in our analysis an ongoing alternation of theoretical and practical training elements would allow for immediate transfer effects. Continuous communication between enterprise representatives – with their wide and solid sector-specific knowledge – and the staff in charge of content and curricula development on behalf of the educational system must be guaranteed. The practice-related experience and competencies acquired must be continuously reflected, discussed and theoretically well-founded in these training measures.

The courses must also consider – e.g. in terms of course form and duration – the specific training needs and prerequisites of the participants – otherwise the group of occupational changers with usually limited time resources risks to fall out. Modular-based trainings with an option for candidates to take all modules in a row or to alternatively interrupt the training, as well as part-time and block (e.g. weekend) trainings are successful examples for the target group in question as they do not hinder the parallel employment of the participants.

Regular market analysis and continuously updated training concepts, contents and curricula are indispensable in order to deliver relevant and suitable trainings in the sector. Our investigation has brought about that – apart from the provision of hard facts – soft skills are equally important for successfully carrying out the job as assistant nurse, cook or sanitary assistant. Training measures must therefore ensure that soft skills training e.g. with respect to service orientation, conduct towards clients, friendliness and the ability to work as team member, is a core element of the curriculum.

Facilitating European and sectoral mobility

Also, the qualifications should be described in terms of learning outcomes in order to become able to relate the courses to the European credit system ECVET. As workers' mobility is especially high in some sectors such as in gastronomy, this may become an incentive to facilitate and encourage workers' mobility. For the same reason courses should also be classified according to the European Qualification Framework and the National Qualification Framework so that the training can be recognised more easily if the individual decides to upgrade his/her qualification through a further training measure. It is important that the short-term training measures terminate with the provision of a certificate recognised by potential future employers (please refer to "Recommendations to the government").

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Der Spiegel (weekly political journal in Germany) (2008), *Kassen beschließen Richtlinie für Einsatz von Hilfskräften* (article on the current reform in the care sector, published at 19 August 2008 (<http://www.spiegel.de/wirtschaft/0,1518,573107,00.html>)).

5.2 Relevant internet sites

Berufsbildungswerk des DGB gGmbH (Further Training Organisation of the Confederation of German Trade Unions): www.bfw.EU.com

Bildungszentrum für Tourismus und Gastronomie der Wirtschaftsakademie Schleswig-Holstein (BTG, Educational Center for Tourism and Gastronomy of the Academy for Economy in Schleswig Holstein): www.btg-sh.de

COMCAVE.COLLEGE: www.college.comcave-group.de

Das Köcheforum: A forum for cooks and everyone who would like to be a cook in the future <http://www.koecheforum.de>

DEKRA Akademie (DEKRA Academy): www.dekra-akademie.de

Deutsches Rotes Kreuz: German Red Cross: www.drk.de/

Die Pflege in Deutschland: A forum on care in Germany. The forum provides useful background information on the German care system and offers a forum for interested professionals and persons. <http://www.pflege-deutschland.de/pflege-forum/>

Hotelfernschule Poppe & Neumann (Distance Learning Hotel School Poppe & Neumann): www.poppe-neumann.com/

Klempnerzukunft: A forum for plumbers and everyone who would like to work as plumber in the future: <http://www.klempnerzukunft.de/FORUM/forum.html>

Kursnet - Das Portal für berufliche Aus- und Weiterbildung (Online portal for vocational training and further training of the German Labour Office): <http://www.kursnet.arbeitsagentur.de/kurs/index.html>

Malteser Hilfswerk (Malteser Humanitarian Aid): <http://www.malteser.de/default.asp>

Pflegeforum: A forum for trainees in the field of care: <http://www.pflege-forum.com/>

The German Institute for Adult Education (DIE) is a central forum for the fields of science and practice in the area of continuing education in Germany: www.die-bonn.de

Technischer Überwachungsverein (TÜV, Technical Control Board): <http://www.tuv.com/de/index.html>

Verband Deutscher Alten- und Behindertenhilfe e.V. – Gemeinnütziger Verein mit Sitz in Essen (Association for Elderly Care and Handicapped Aid in Germany – Non-profit making association located in Essen): <http://www.vdab.de/>

Zentralverband des Deutschen Handwerks (German Confederation of Skilled Crafts): www.zdh.de

Appendix

I. Statistical data on the three target occupations

In 2007, 177 127 persons were employed as plumber or sanitary installer/assistant, respectively. Women were almost absent in these occupations, with 0.5% the female share was very low. Only 1% of the staff was working part-time. Most of the persons employed in the occupations (84.4%) had a vocational education and training degree, only 3,8% did not (for 11.5% the data is not available). 20.3% of the persons in the occupations were unemployed. Further statistical information on plumber, sanitary installer and assistant, respectively, can be found at: http://www.abis.iab.de/bisds/data/seite_262_BO_a.htm.

383 701 persons were employed as cook or cook assistant in 2007. With a female share of 56.4% the proportion of men and women working in the occupation was rather balanced. Almost one in three persons worked part-time. While only 42.6% of the employees had a vocational education and training degree, 22% did not (for 35% the degree is unknown). Among the unemployed cooks and cook assistants the share of persons without a degree is much higher (60.8%) than among the employed (22%). Further statistical data on the occupations cook and cook assistant can be found at: http://www.abis.iab.de/bisds/data/seite_411_BO_a.htm.

The data available for the number of persons employed as assistant nurse and elderly care assistants include also persons employed as social worker, family carer, educational council, and youth and elderly carer. In 2007 399 905 persons were employed in these occupations. The majority of the staff working in these fields were women (80%). With 42% the part-time share was considerably high. 66.7% of the employees had a vocational degree (a vocational education and training degree or a higher education degree), 8.9% did not (for 11.2% the degree was unknown). Further statistical data on the above mentioned occupations can be found at: http://www.abis.iab.de/bisds/data/seite_861_BO_a.htm.

II. Overview of the job profiles and the VET/further training characteristics of the three occupations under consideration

| Sector | Occupation | Activities and required competencies | Typical work places | Vocational education and training; validation | Further education | Information sources |
|---|---------------------------------------|--|--|---|--|---|
| Construction sector: here based on the example of plumber and sanitary assistant | Plumber and sanitary installer | <p>Plumbers and installers create sheet and plastic materials for roofs and frontages and install them on-site. Moreover, they plan, install, maintain and repair supply grids and systems. They also repair pipelines.</p> <p>Basic competencies include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Metal work • Roof and frontage work and techniques • Pipeline installations • Sanitary installations <p>Further competencies which can be relevant include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unwinding, isometrical skills • Work preparation • Tank and apparatus construction • Locksmithery • Montage Sanitary • Sanitary engineering | Plumbers and installers work in plumberies and other enterprises, which are responsible for gas, water, heating and airing installations as well as for tiling, roofing and construction plumbing. Bigger enterprises undertaking plumbing activities are also employing plumbers and sanitary installers. | In order to work as plumber or sanitary installer the participation in a 3-years vocational education and training measure or a relevant degree in sheet metal forming or supply engineering is usually required. Further information on the requirements can be obtained at berufsneta.arbeitsagentur.de (please see "Information sources"). | <p>The spectrum for further education courses is wide and includes rebate technology, sanitary technology and solar technology.</p> <p>Further training measures include issues on gas firing, gas equipment technology, tank construction, apparatus construction, airing, climate technology as well as measurement, steering and control engineering.</p> <p>Career advancement trainings include the training master plumber, master sanitary installer, master heating installer as well as master metalworker.</p> | <p>Information on the occupation: http://berufenet.arbeitsagentur.de/berufe/resultList.do?searchString=%27+Klempner*+%27&resultListItemsValues=2225&suchweg=begriff&doNext=forwardToResultShort</p> <p>Skills catalogue: http://infobub.arbeitsagentur.de/download/public/dkz_daten/kompetenzen/Kompetenzenkatalog.xls</p> <p>Information on training and further training: http://berufenet.arbeitsagentur.de/berufe/berufid.do?_pgnt_pn=0&_pgnt_act=goToAnyPage&_pgnt_id=resultShort&statu=T11</p> <p>List with information sources on the occupation: http://berufenet.arbeitsagentur.de/berufe/berufid.do?_pgnt_pn=0&_pgnt_act=goToAnyPage&_pgnt_id=resultShort&statu=M</p> |

| Sector | Occupation | Activities and required competencies | Typical work places | Vocational education and training; validation | Further education | Information sources |
|--------|---------------------------|--|---------------------|--|---|---|
| | Sanitary assistant | <p>Sanitary assistants in the field of accommodation and installation ("Versorgung und Installation") carry out mostly basic and helping activities in plumbing and other production enterprises as well as in accommodation enterprises. Their competencies include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Metal work • Roof and frontage work and techniques • Pipeline installation • Sanitary installations <p>Further skills which can be relevant include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unwinding, isometrical skills • Work preparation • Tank and apparatus construction • Locksmithery • Montage Sanitary • Sanitary engineering | | <p>A vocational education and training is not required. Assistants in the field of accommodation and installation are usually trained on-the-job. Sometimes relevant practical experience is desired, e.g. in steel and pipeline construction.</p> | <p>There is a wide spectrum of further education courses including topics such as new technologies e.g. in the production of pipelines, in repairing, maintaining, brasing, welding as well as electro installation technologies.</p> <p>Career advancement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Persons with several years of experience in the occupation can acquire a vocational education and training degree as plumber, systems mechanic with a specialisation on sanitary, heating and climate technology as well as water supply technology. <p>Even without a regular training it is possible to obtain a degree in a recognised occupation. The prerequisite is several years of professional experience. There are courses in which participants are prepared for the theoretical topics and the practical skills tested in the external examination. Also modular-based courses that can be taken along the job prepare for this examination.</p> <p>Furthermore, a person with several years of experience as sanitary assistant can take part at the examination "master industry" in the specialisation pipeline installation or as master plumber.</p> | <p>Information on the occupation: http://berufenet.arbeitsagentur.de/berufe/start?dest=profession&prof-id=58534</p> <p>Skills catalogue: http://infobub.arbeitsagentur.de/download/public/dkz_daten/kompetenzen/Kompetenzenkatalog.xls</p> <p>Information on training and further training: http://berufenet.arbeitsagentur.de/berufe/berufld.do?_pgnt_pn=0&_pgnt_act=goToAnyPage&_pgnt_id=resultShort&status=T11</p> <p>List with information sources on the occupation: http://berufenet.arbeitsagentur.de/berufe/berufld.do?_pgnt_pn=0&_pgnt_act=goToAnyPage&_pgnt_id=resultShort&status=M</p> |

| Sector | Occupation | Activities and required competencies | Typical work places | Vocational education and training | Further education measures | Information sources |
|--|------------|---|--|--|--|--|
| Tourism: here based on the example of cook and cook assistant | Cook | <p>Cooks organise all working procedures in the kitchen: they design the menus, buy the ingredients and store them appropriately. Finally, they prepare and arrange menus. The following competencies are required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Work on recipes; preparation of Horsd'oeuvre, trimmings, roasts, vegetables, salads, patisserie, desserts, sauces and marinades, soups, ● Purchase and acquisition ● Garnishing ● Vegetables ● Kalkulation ● Arranging menus and designing menue plans ● Preparing and arranging food ● receipt and controll of goods ● A-la-carte-kitchen ● Work preparation ● Baking ● Bankett-kitchen ● Health pass and attestation ● Beverages ● Hygiene ● Partyservice ● Quality measurement and controll ● Restaurant service ● Making doughs ● Strorage | Cooks mainly work in the kitchens of restaurants, hotels, canteens, hospitals, care institutions. Furthermore, they work in the nutrition industry for producers of convenience products and frozen foods. | <p>Cook is a recognised occupation according to the German Vocational Education and Training Law (Berufsbildungsgesetz, BBiG). The training is regulated by the state and usually provided through a dual training (in the training enterprise and at the vocational school). It has a duration of 3 years. A solely school-based training is also possible. The final examination is composed of a practical and a written test. In the practical test a 3-course menu for 6 persons has to be prepared and presented. In the written test the trainee is tested on the topics technology, goods economy and economy and social economy. The examination takes place at the Chamber of Commerce and Industry.</p> | <p>Persons aiming at working abroad can improve their foreign language skills. Furthermore, there are adaptation further training courses such as vegetarian cuisine, management of large-scale catering establishments, bar and beverageology. Also specialisation courses on individual menu elements exist (soups, meat dishes, fish dishes, sausses, vegetables and side dishes, desserts). Career advancement: Cook can advance in their career through participating in a course "master kitchen". Some of the courses are offered in the e-learning or blended-learning form.</p> | <p>Information on the occupation: http://berufenet.arbeitsagentur.de/berufe/start?dest=profession&prof-id=3726</p> <p>Skills catalogue: http://infobub.arbeitsagentur.de/download/public/dkz_daten/kompetenzen/Kompetenzen_katalog.xls</p> <p>Regulation of the vocational education and training as cook: http://berufenet.arbeitsagentur.de/berufe/docroot/r2/blobs/pdf/recht/r_01316.pdf</p> <p>Framework curriculum for the vocational education and training as cook http://berufenet.arbeitsagentur.de/berufe/docroot/r2/blobs/pdf/recht/r_00335.pdf</p> <p>Information on further education: http://berufenet.arbeitsagentur.de/berufe/berufld.do?_pgnt_pn=0&_pgnt_act=goToAnyPage&_pgnt_id=resultShort&status=M</p> <p>List with information sources on the occupation cook: http://berufenet.arbeitsagentur.de/berufe/berufld.do?_pgnt_pn=0&_pgnt_act=goToAnyPage&_pgnt_id=resultShort&status=M</p> |

| Sector | Occupation | Activities and required competencies | Typical work places | Vocational education and training | Further education measures | Information sources |
|--------|-----------------------------------|---|--|--|--|---|
| | Cook assistant ("Beikoch") | <p>Cook assistants support the work of cooks. For instance, they prepare salads and menu components or organise preparation work. In some cases they also help in purchasing goods and rinsing. The following competencies are required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work based on recipes • Preparation of Hors d'oeuvre, trimmings, roasts, vegetables, salads, patisserie, desserts, sauces and marinades, soups, • Purchase, acquisition • Garnishing • Vegetables • Kalkulation • Arranging menus and designing menu plans • Preparing and arranging food • receipt and control of goods • A-la-carte-kitchen • Work preparation • Baking • Banquet-kitchen • Health pass and attestation • Beverages • Hygiene • Party service • Quality measurement and control • Restaurant service • Making doughs • Storage | <p>Just like cooks, cook assistants mainly work in the kitchens of restaurants, hotels, canteens, hospitals, care institutions. Furthermore, they work in the nutrition industry for producers of convenience products and frozen foods.</p> | <p>Cook assistant is a vocational training, which is regulated by internal regulations of the vocational training providers. The duration of the courses generally has a duration of 3 years. The participants of the courses follow the training in classrooms (theoretical training: hygiene regulations,) as well as in training kitchens (practical training: handling of machines, of knives). The training ends with a final examination based on the internal regulations of the training providers.</p> | <p>The spectrum of further courses for cook assistants is wide. There are measures on kitchen management, safety of work and food hygiene. Career advancement: Cook assistants can participate in a career advancement measure and obtain a degree e.g. as cook.</p> | <p>Information on the occupation: http://berufenet.arbeitsagentur.de/berufe/start?dest=profession&prof-id=35289</p> <p>Skills catalogue: http://infobub.arbeitsagentur.de/download/public/dkz_daten/kompetenzen/Kompetenzkatalog.xls</p> <p>Information on training and further training: http://berufenet.arbeitsagentur.de/berufe/berufld.do?_pgnt_pn=0&_pgnt_act=goToAnyPage&_pgnt_id=resultShort&status=T11</p> <p>List with information sources on the occupation: http://berufenet.arbeitsagentur.de/berufe/berufld.do?_pgnt_pn=0&_pgnt_act=goToAnyPage&_pgnt_id=resultShort&status=M</p> |

| Sector | Occupation | Activities and required competencies | Typical work places | Vocational education and training | Further education measures | Information sources |
|---|-----------------|---|--|--|--|--|
| Health care: here based on the example of nurse assistant and elderly care assistant | Assistant nurse | <p>Assistant nurses foster, feed and support persons who cannot cope with their everyday life alone (e.g. at home, in hospitals, in care institutions). The following skills are required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Basic care; care and aid (elderly care, nursing, Care of the disabled); Ambulant/mobile care ● Hygiene, cleaning ● Buffet ● General medicine ● Moving of sick persons ● Recovery measures, First Aid ● Ward duty | Assistant nurses most often work in hospitals, in elderly care institutions, in the ambulant social services as well as in private households. | In order to work as nurse assistant, a relevant further training course in the field of health care is an advantage e.g. a course as nurse assistant ("Schwesternhelfer/in") or care assistant (Pflegediensthelfer/in). For further information of the course offers, please refer to the inventory of the project GATOM (www.mobility-training.eu/). | The spectrum of further training courses is wide, there are for instance courses on ambulant care, elderly care, domestic economics as well as First Aid and hospital hygiene. Career advancement: There are various courses to advance ones career. Depending on the educational background candidates can participate in the further training measures "elderly carer" and "nurse". | <p>Description of activities and skills: http://berufenet.arbeitsagentur.de/berufe/start?dest=profession&prof-id=8866</p> <p>Skills catalogue: http://infobub.arbeitsagentur.de/download/public/dkz_datan/kompetenzen/Kompetenzenkatalog.xls</p> <p>Information on training and further training: http://berufenet.arbeitsagentur.de/berufe/berufld.do?_pgnt_pn=0&_pgnt_act=goToAnyPage&_pgnt_id=resultShort&status=T11</p> <p>List with information sources on the occupation: http://berufenet.arbeitsagentur.de/berufe/berufld.do?_pgnt_pn=0&_pgnt_act=goToAnyPage&_pgnt_id=resultShort&status=M</p> |

| Sector | Occupation | Activities and required competencies | Typical work places | Vocational education and training | Further education measures | Information sources |
|--------|-------------------------------|---|--|--|--|---|
| | Elderly care assistant | <p>Elderly care assistants support elderly carers in all of their tasks in respect to the care and the support of elderly persons. Their competencies include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic care, care aid (elderly care, nursing, care of the disabled), elderly care • Mobile care • Recreational activities • Geriatrics, gerontology (care, assistance) • Health protection and prevention • Domestic economy • Rehabilitation (care, assistance), First Aid | <p>Elderly homes, geriatric and gerontological departments of hospitals and rehabilitation centres, homes for disabled persons, consulting organisations for the elderly, associations, care services, private households.</p> | <p>The vocational education of the occupation elderly care assistant is regulated by the Länder laws and is provided at vocational schools and colleges as well as in further training centres. The training has a duration of 1-3 years. The examination and validation is based on own regulations of the training providers. The theoretical training is provided in classrooms. The learning spectrum is wide: from medical and care knowledge to domestic economy, psychology and communication techniques. The practical training takes place in one of the work locations of elderly care assistants. The aim is to get to know the future day to day work and the cooperation with colleagues and superiors. The trainees are guided by examined care personnel.</p> | <p>The spectrum of further training and specialisation courses is wide (recreational activities, ambulant elderly care, short-term care, gerontological care as well as care of the elderly disabled). Career advancement and university studies: Candidates can undertake an examination as elderly carer. Furthermore, there are further training measures targeted on medium management posts such as the diploma in elderly care and nursing ("Fachwirt/in in der Alten- und Krankenpflege"). Some of the courses are offered in the e-learning or blended-learning form. Candidates who are qualified for higher education can acquire a relevant Bachelor degree, e.g. in "Gerontology".</p> | <p>Description of activities and skills: http://berufenet.arbeitsagentur.de/berufe/start?dest=profession&prof-id=9063 Skills catalogue: http://infobub.arbeitsagentur.de/download/public/dkz_daten/kompetenzen/Kompetenzenkatalog.xls Information on training and further training: http://berufenet.arbeitsagentur.de/berufe/berufld.do?_pgnt_pn=0&_pgnt_act=goToAnyPage&_pgnt_id=resultShort&status=A01 http://berufenet.arbeitsagentur.de/berufe/berufld.do?_pgnt_pn=0&_pgnt_act=goToAnyPage&_pgnt_id=resultShort&status=T11 List with information sources on the occupation: http://berufenet.arbeitsagentur.de/berufe/berufld.do?_pgnt_pn=0&_pgnt_act=goToAnyPage&_pgnt_id=resultShort&status=M</p> |

III. The VET and further training system in Germany

In Germany, most 15 to 19 year old youth take up vocational training in a recognised training occupation i.e. one of about 350 occupations recognised by the Vocational Training Act (Berufsbildungsgesetz - BBiG). This training takes place in the dual system which is based on the existence of two independent places of learning: the vocational school and the enterprise. The task of the vocational school is to provide systematic teaching, thereby giving a theoretical basis to the practical skills and knowledge. By contrast, the task of the enterprise is to provide all of the practical knowledge and skills required in a comprehensive professional training programme, in accordance with the training regulation. The curriculum for vocational schools is stipulated by the Ministry of Education. The federal Act applies to in-company training while the Länder (German Federal States) are responsible for the colleges. Training successfully followed under the dual system leads to the award of a diploma. Employers and employees are represented in committees organised at different levels. They take part in planning the training, designing and specifying the content of programmes, fixing the length of training and organising the courses.

Continuous training courses for vocational adaptation, occupational advancement and re-skilling are offered by public bodies and private institutes. Course content and the duration and organisation of courses are coordinated at regional or federal level. Continuing training activities offered by public or private training institutes usually result in the issue of certificates.