



Ministry of Foreign Affairs
of the Czech Republic

I. CONFERENCE SPEAKERS

CEI HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT FORUM

**Higher Quality of Education and Training –
Better Employability**

21st November 2008



SPEAKERS IN ALPHABETIC ORDER

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Employment Service of Slovenia

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Professional career:

Ms. Mavricija Batič obtained her Diploma in Psychology at the University of Ljubljana in 1979. Since 1980 she has been working at the Employment Service of Slovenia with different responsibilities on local and regional levels and also at Central Office.

She was responsible for planning, implementing and follow-up activities related to Employment Department, Vocational Guidance and Active Labour Market Measures. She has experiences in designing and implementing different programmes for adults and young job seekers. Since 2007 she has been responsible for activities co-financed from European Social Fund for unemployed, employed and projects for modernisation of Employment Service of Slovenia.

Summary of the presentation:

Employability and Public Employment Services – Slovenian experiences

In Slovenia we have been faced with real reduction in unemployment in the last few years. This is related to the economic growth in the EU and other main economic partner countries. At the end of September 2008 the number of registered unemployed was 59.300 – this meaning less than 7 % of registered unemployment - and ILO around 4%.

The reduction in total number of unemployed meant also the reduction of unemployed younger than 26 and other groups of unemployed, except older than 50 years. Significant decrease of young unemployed and other groups in the last two years has indicated that the population has had more possibilities on the labour market. This is also due to providing different activities, services and measures of the active labour market policy which have been introduced by the Employment Service of Slovenia (ESS).

Due to the basic role of ESS to mediate between demand and supply on the labour market we developed different approaches for improving employability of job seekers. Some of them are for all groups, some of them have been developed on the basis of specific groups needs (e.g. young, older, disabled).

We are therefore trying hard to encourage and enable young people to make a new start as soon as possible or within the period of the first six months and other job seekers within nine months .

The Employment Service of Slovenia has a standard rule that the first employment plan for a young person should be made no later than 14 days after registration in the record of unemployed persons and for other job seekers as soon as possible but within two months after registration at the latest.

If obstacles are identified in terms of employment, unemployed are referred to more intensive counselling, most commonly to a career adviser. The active labour policy measures also offer additional support in raising the employability and more rapid employment.

We should mention just some of the substantive forms of individual help for unemployed provided by ESS counsellors:

- assistance in developing a professional career
- information on employment possibilities and motivation for employment
- educational orientation (important for young people intending to return to education)
- identifying obstacles, improving self-image, increasing the motivation and activities of the individual
- inclusion in ALMP
- EURES – information on the possibilities of work and education in EU countries

Individual counselling at the Employment Service of Slovenia is enhanced through various forms of group counselling. The ESS counsellors conduct group sessions in the form of learning workshops and similar methods of group approaches especially in the following areas:

- identifying career goals
- learning job-seeking skills
- providing information on education opportunities
- monitoring the individual's progress
- group counselling for young, older and disadvantaged job seekers

Combining individual and group forms of counselling and encouraging clients to seek information independently contributes to the higher efficiency of the Employment Service of Slovenia.

However, for the individual this means in particular more intensive support and increased personal responsibility in seeking solutions and realising goals.

In addition to the intensive attention given to unemployed by ESS counsellors, there are various active labour measure programmes (ALMP) available to them.

The success of job seekers on the labour market depends on different factors as motivation, appropriate skills, education and competences on one hand and demands of employers on other hand. The ESS has played an important role in improving employability of unemployed with providing suitable information on labour market needs, individual and group counselling and active labour market programmes connected to the employers needs.

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Professional career:

Tibor Bors Borbély-Pecze is an advisor of the Hungarian Public Employment Service – National Employment and Social Office, Directorate of Education and Employment. He got his undergraduate degree on employment and career counselling (1998), an MA from social policy (2001). Currently he is a doctorate student at the U. of ELTE, Budapest, Faculty of Psychology and Pedagogy. He is writing his thesis on teachers' preparedness for LLG. He started his career as an employment counsellor, the last five years he has been working at national and European policy levels. He is a member of the European Employment Observatory MISEP network (since 2004); also national correspondent of the European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network (2007). Founder of the Hungarian National LL Guidance Policy Council (January 2008). Since February 2008 he is the head of the SROP Measure 2.2.2. "Developing a national Lifelong Guidance Service" (appr. 8,1 millions EUR).

His most recent works:

- The concept of competence in vocational education and employment policy [Munkaügyi Szemle, Vol.2006. No.5. pp.22-26.]
- Coordination of 10 ESF financed research programme on demand and supply in the Hungarian labour market 2004-2008 [www.employmentpolicy.hu]

Summary of the presentation:

Ensuring employability in Hungary
Employment in Hungary

There was no essential change regarding the labour market situation between 2005 and 2007. Hungarian employment situation is characterized by low level of employment (57.3% in 2007), average level of unemployment (7.4%), and high level of inactivity when compared to the EU. Rate of employment is higher in case of men (64%) than women, which is in line with EU routine, at the same time this rate lags behind the EU average (72.5%) more than in case of women. Regarding the wage differences between men and women: according to EU statistics, gross average income of men was 11% higher than that of women in 2005-2006 in Hungary. With this 11% difference, Hungary is among those in favourable situation within EU member states, since the gross wage difference between men and women was 15% in 2006 in EU 27 countries.

Best practice

The Start+ and Start Extra programme is among the most innovative labour market measures currently in place in Hungary, aiming at the labour market integration of disadvantaged groups. The programmes focus on a problem at the heart of the low employment situation in Hungary, which could account for much of the 7.5 percentage point employment rate gap relative to the EU-25 average.

The project has been prepared and is managed solely by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour (hereafter, the Ministry). It is integrated into the Social Renewal Operative Programme, as a measure 1.2.1 under the priority 1. The Start+ and Start Extra programmes were put in place on 1 July 2007. The idea and organisation of the programme builds on experiences drawn from the general Start programme for labour market entrants (put in place in 2005). This proved to be attractive partly because of its streamlined and cost-effective administration (the burden on employees is almost non-existent), which the new programmes have inherited. The maximum amount of credit is the full waiver of the 29 % social security contributions payable by the employer, contribution base being capped at twice the minimum wage. The last card with the entitlement to participation will be given out on 31 December 2008, with 31 December 2010 being the end of the eligibility period. Even though the first phase runs out soon, the programme will restart thereafter and the second phase will follow automatically.

Start+ provides a 17 percentage point (first year; the cap was HUF 22 100, EUR 96, in 2007) to 7 % point (second year; cap was HUF 9 100, EUR 40, in 2007) contribution credit to employers, so they have to pay contributions of 15 % and 25 %, respectively. Individuals are eligible for the card if:

- they want to work one year after using up maternity benefits;
- they want to work after the first post-childbirth year, not having a workplace to return to;
- they are long-term unemployed
- Pension eligibility invalidates eligibility to the Start+ card, but appropriate changes in circumstances result in a transfer to the Start Extra card.

Start Extra programme provides a 32 percentage point (first year; the cap was HUF 41 600, EUR 182, in 2007) to 17 percentage point (second year; the cap was HUF 22 100, EUR 96, in 2007) contribution credit, therefore contributions are fully waived or are payable at the rate of 15 % respectively. Individuals are eligible if they are registered as long-term unemployed, are past the age of 50 or have, at most, primary education. The feasibility study underpinning the project identified around 94 000 and 86 000 individuals respectively as a target group of the two policies and anticipated that 18 000 out of those enrolling in one of the schemes will be newly employed by the end of 2008. Out of these new employees, 8 750 are expected to be employed for six months or more thereafter.

Valiantsina Dynich



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Professional career:

From September 2006

Institute of Lifelong Education of Belarusian State University,
director

Institute is responsible in BSU for the organization of:

- *Training process for international students;*
- *Additive professional programs for students and adult people;*
- *Business and education tourism programs.*

September 2002 – august 2008

Republic Institute of High Education,

1st Vice-rector

*(Duties: the law basis of 2-levels University education in Belarus;
system of training for professors, associate professors on science;
courses on modern conceptions of science)*

February 2001 – August 2002

Republic Institute of Knowledge Monitoring

1st Vice-rector

*(The principles of national system of knowledge testing; materials
for testing; the scale of evaluation)*

September 1999 – January 2001

National Institute of Education, ***coordinator, author of textbooks
on science and physics***

(The model and principles of physics education)

December 1988 – August 1999

Belarus State University, physics department

Associate Professor

*(Lectures on physics, history of physics for students of the
physics, geography and philosophy departments)*

August 1982 – October 1985

Secondary school

Teacher of physics

Scientific interests: Innovations in education, History of science,
Public understanding of science, pseudoscience, science literacy
of different groups of society in modern physics.

Summary of the presentation:

It is shown

1. The probability to get good work depends on education. But the function has complex character.
2. The probability is small, if there is no vocational training.
3. The graduates ended college are poorly claimed in the country.

4. Mass character of higher education in conditions of its spontaneous regulation in 90 years had led to decreasing of demand in specialists in some areas and to lack of others.

Measures that the Ministry of Education accepts are discussed:

1. Enhanced attention to filling technical schools
2. Reduction of entrance on a speciality on which the offer exceeds demand.
3. Stimulation of entrance on a speciality on which demand exceeds the offer.
4. The control over development of an education system by acceptance of the state programs

Maria Gutknecht-Gmeiner



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Professional career:

Dr. Maria Gutknecht-Gmeiner graduated in History and Latin and holds a teacher's degree from the University of Vienna. She also studied in the U.S.A. (1990-1992). In 2006 she completed her doctoral studies on Peer Review as external evaluation methodology in vocational education and training at the University of Klagenfurt, Institut für Erziehungswissenschaft und Bildungsforschung (IFEB), Abteilung für Erwachsenen- und Berufsbildung (Prof. Dr. Elke Gruber).

She is the deputy director at the Österreichisches Institut für Berufsbildungsforschung (Austrian Institute for Research on Vocational Training – *öibf*) and has extensive expertise in the coordination and evaluation of projects in education and training, in particular within the framework of European programmes. Key research topics are evaluation and quality management, adult education and continuing VET, labour market and research on qualifications (in particular qualifications and employment of women), gender mainstreaming and international cooperation.

She is/was the coordinator of the European Peer Review projects: "Peer Review in initial VET" (2004-2007), "Peer Review Extended"(2007) and "Peer Review Extended II"(2007-2009).

Summary of the presentation:

Ensuring Quality of Education and Training in Austria:

Status quo and new developments

The presentation will give an overview of education and training in Austria and describe quality assurance instruments used in the different educational sectors and their relationship to employability. Current projects and developments in initial VET and adult education/continuing VET will be discussed. This will include a short presentation of the VET Quality Initiative for vocational schools and colleges QIBB and the implementation the Peer Review initiative in Austria.

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Professional career:

Egbert Holthuis is Dutch and he has got his Masters degrees in Business Administration and Geography. Before joining the European Commission in 1993 he worked respectively in the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Dutch Organisation for Applied Scientific Research TNO. He started his career for the European Commission working in the Commission's Delegation in Chad as an economic counsellor. In DG Enterprise he worked respectively in the Steel and Chemicals Unit. Upon joining DG Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities in 2004 he was involved in various employment policy initiatives for example in the field of enlargement, mobility, migration, flexicurity, the position of young people in the labour market and active ageing policies. Egbert is currently the Deputy Head of Unit in the Employment Policy Unit and he is dealing with the Lisbon and the European Employment strategy.

Summary of the presentation:

Education, training and employment policies must focus on increasing and adapting skills and providing more learning opportunities at all levels to develop a high skilled workforce which responds to the needs of the economy. Providing high quality early-childhood and basic education for all, improving education attainment and preventing early school leaving are crucial to equip people with key competences, including the basic skills and learning that are pre-requisites for further updating of skills.

This is even more urgent in a context of technological changes, globalisation, ageing populations and the evolution of social structures that accelerate the pace of change in labour market and skills requirements, for new and current jobs alike. The ever-growing importance of the knowledge economy; ICTs, and the development of nano-technologies and the shift to a low-carbon economy offer great potential for the creation of new dynamic sectors of the economy and new jobs through structural change and transformation of existing jobs. To better use this potential we need to ensure a better long-term match between the supply of skills and labour market demand in particular through a better anticipation and forecasting of future skills needs.

Today, in the climate of uncertainty, it is even more essential to focus on the essential task of establishing adequate skills development strategies that respond to these challenges. If so this will have a positive impact on opportunities for future growth and productivity, for jobs and the capacity for economies to adapt to change, for equity and social cohesion.

Miroslava Kopicová



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Professional career:

PhDr. Miroslava Kopicová

Director of the National Training Fund, 1st Vice-Chairperson of the R&D Council

She graduated at Philosophical Faculty of Charles University in Prague, PhD degree in the field of adult education (1971 - 1976); UNDP training course in Project Management (Prague, 1990), European Commission research fellowship – Financial Audit (Brussels, 1991); European Commission research fellowship – Phare Programmes (Brussels, 1991); OECD and European Commission-sponsored training in the field of Development of Regional Labour Market Policy (1992); study trips to Denmark and Ireland focused on labour market policy management (1993); research fellowship in OECD (Paris, 1993); training in effective top management (Henley, United Kingdom, 1994); programme of employee training and development (ETF Turin, 1997); SPP – intensive training in issues relating to the European Social Fund (France, Netherlands, Germany, 1998); intensive training in EU policies and institutions in the European Centre for Public Affairs (2003); et al.

Member of the Board of Directors of the University of Economics in Prague; member of the Academic Board of the College of Finance and Administration (VŠFS); initiator of the establishment of the Government Council for Human Resource Development, its first Deputy Chairperson (NLO) for Study Visits Programme, EU CEDEFOP; Czech Republic's representative in the LEED Committee of OECD (in the 1990s); member of the Advisory Forum of the European Training Foundation (head of sub-group for integration); head of working group for human resources development and training of the Central European Initiative (CEI); member of the European Foundation for Management Development; member of the National Monitoring Committee for OP HRD, EQUAL; external evaluator for MBA – Sheffield Hallam University (in the 1990s). In 2006 she was the Minister of Education, Youth and Sports. She was responsible for the ESF negotiation with the EC in 2007. Most of her working life she is involved in the field of labour force qualification, employment, competitiveness, education and other aspects of human resources development.

She is full member of the R&D Council since 19th March, 2007 and the National Training Fund Director since 1994.

Slavena Radovanović



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Professional career:

Employed at the Central European Initiative Project Secretariat (CEI-PS) in Trieste, Italy since 1998.

Current position: Executive Officer

Main duties: Focal Point for WG on Human Resource Development & Training. Focal Point for Task Force on ICT. Focal Point for WG on Tourism. Organisation of the annual CEI Summit Economic Forum (SEF). Evaluation and monitoring of Cooperation Activities financed by the CEI-PS. CEI-PS finance management.

Adela Luminita Rogojinaru



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Professional career:

Adela-Luminita Rogojinaru holds a PhD degree in Philology, and she is professor in the University of Bucharest, Romania. She is the current Head of the Department of Communication and Public Relations Studies in the Faculty of Letters and Director of the Centre for Interdisciplinary Research in Communication Sciences and Public Relations.

In addition to her expertise in the field of communication and public relations, she has developed or worked in projects about educational reform process, academic and pre-university curriculum, teacher training, basic literacy, standards & qualifications, quality assurance. Since 1990, she has participated in various projects of educational reforms, she served as policy and curriculum expert in EU Phare funded VET reform projects in Romania, acted as a regional expert for various projects in the framework of European Training Foundation and took part in the quality assurance technical working group as well as in the network of ENQA-VET between 2005-2007.

During the current year she has concentrated her work on the academic level and on the European professional associations of communication sciences and public relations, acting as a member and project energizer in EUPRERA (European Public Relations Education and Research Association), and vice-president of the Organisational and Strategic Communication Section of ECREA (European Communication Research and Education Association).

Summary of the presentation:

Since Peter Senge launched the paradigm of the ‘learning organization’ in the early ‘90s, most organizations have struggled for reaching their optimal stage of adapting and learning and searched to capture the best solution to prevent dysfunctions and crises and to develop in a sustainable manner. Universities made no exceptions. But quality as a learning process is a recent institutional achievement. It is a peculiar aspect that education in both forms – institution and process - formally associates itself so late with quality management. In the European (Roman rooted) tradition we always considered that education should bring freedom, brightness, leadership capacity and moral superiority. In ancient times, the virtues of the citizen were appreciated in the public life and in the military service. The quality of the citizens was considered the basis of public trust. But evaluation of that

quality was implicit, encoded in the unwritten code of public virtues or transmitted through strict forms of private instructions.

The reconsideration of quality as a technical matter, compared to any other political or ideological implications is due to the (Western) industrial focus on both conformity of products, and the responsiveness to the customer by excellent services. Quality in education differs from the industrial quality as the customer models its own process and creates its own quality by actively responding to the curriculum. Quality assurance represents more than a simple normative approach (i.e. the degree of conformity); it is, on the contrary, a state of learning and (self) development and personal accomplishment.

In my presentation, I will focus on quality assurance in Higher education and highlight the following topics:

- Quality assurance and entrepreneurship; quality culture & entrepreneurial culture.
- Current controversies in quality assurance in higher education: assessment by students, self-assessment vs. external control, procedural vs. consensual.
- The role of peer review processes in asserting quality in higher education and research.
- Peer review and quality assurance during the accreditation process of study programmes at University level.
- Reporting on quality – a matter of corporate culture.

Juraj Vantuch



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Professional career:

Graduated from Comenius University, Bratislava, receiving Teacher of Mathematics Diploma (1974), and title RNDr (1978) in Probability and Statistics, followed by CSc (PhD) in Education from Charles University, Prague. After lecturing Mathematics at Comenius University left to the Institute of Experimental Pedagogy, Slovak Academy of Sciences (1979), followed by the position of the advisor to the minister at the Ministry of Education (1989 -1992). Returning to Comenius University active as an education policy analyst offering lectures in Education Policy, Vocational Education and Labour Market, Comparative Education, Research Methodology and Statistics. Simultaneously, since 1998 acting as the Head of Slovak National Observatory of VET cooperating with ETF and CEDEFOP, producing VET and LM related analyses and reports about education in Slovakia on the annual basis; currently predominantly within CEDEFOP-Refernet programme. Serving as a member of CEDEFOP

Governing Board, ETF Governing Board, Slovak Higher Education Council and Comenius University Senate.

Summary of the presentation:

Strengths and Weaknesses of Ensuring Quality of Education and Training
Slovak Example

In 2007, Slovak economy experienced its best year in the history with 10.4% GDP growth. A very healthy economy, from a macroeconomic point of view, fulfilled the Maastricht criteria qualifying for euro-zone entry on January 1, 2009. The current financial crisis hits indirectly also Slovakia. Very open economy of Slovakia might face harder times in 2009 due to expected slowdown in consumption of its export goods. Having a surplus of skilled workers from inherited (and collapsed in 1990s) industries, Slovakia focused on rebuilding traditional industries (machinery, electrotechnics, metallurgy) caused by the rapidly growing automotive industry, while restructuring the economy. Instead of counterbalancing traditional sectors by a stronger move towards production with higher value added, e.g., building more on (unfortunately already past) very good performance of Slovak students in mathematics and programming, it attracted foreign investors in dominant need of ISCED 3C trained workforce. Regardless any external shocks, the Slovak economy has a built-in weakness making its economic success in the long term vulnerable. The quality of education system has deteriorated in the wide span from primary to tertiary due to unprecedented period of under-financing of education and research and underestimation of importance of its reform. Now, all politicians are supporting reforms and investment in human resources, education and R&D. Nevertheless, how to invest in human resources, in order to secure the country's future in an environment pleading for short-term rather than long-term success? And what to address: quality of personal development, quality of workforce, quality of life, quality of institutions, quality of processes? A pen portrait of the country VET will not offer best practice solutions. Instead, complexity of "ensuring quality" will be re-examined, warnings expressed and recommendation for education policy proposed based on Slovak experience.

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Professional career:

Alena Zukersteinová is a project manager at the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop) since 2005. She is responsible for the project on future skill needs in Europe. She coordinates the international network on early identification of skill needs 'Skillsnet'.

She graduated in 2001 at the University of Economics in Prague, Faculty of Business Administration. Her main research activities are focused on human resource management and development, continuing training in enterprises and anticipation of future skill needs.

From 2001 to 2005, she worked at the National Observatory of Employment and Training within the National Training Fund in Prague.

Summary of the presentation:

Future skill needs in Europe Cedefop's medium-term forecast

The Lisbon agenda has emphasised the need for Europe to place more emphasis on anticipating changing skill needs. Globalisation, technological change and demographic developments (including ageing and migration) are posing huge challenges to the whole of Europe, offering both risks and threats to existing jobs, as well as many new opportunities. The need for regular forward looking assessments has been emphasised in the Employment Guidelines and other several recent EU policy documents. Such results can help to inform active labour market policies relating to training, migration and many other areas, as well as informing individuals about the developing situation. Of course it is not possible to predict the future precisely, but the need to make strategic plans and choices which can influence the future path taken by the economy and labour market is widely accepted. These plans and choices need to be guided by robust labour market information and intelligence based on regular, systematic and quantitative approaches to forecasting and scenario development. Skills are a key part of the infrastructure of the economy, and the choices made by both policy makers and individuals about investment in education and skills can help to determine the path the economy takes.

Many countries are already undertaking this kind of work. The Cedefop's medium-term forecast of occupational skill needs in Europe, offers for the first time a comprehensive Pan European

perspective, providing estimates on a consistent basis for all members of the EU. This opening session will provide an overview of the results from that project, summarising the key findings. These highlight that while many member states face particular problems there are many common features. Globalisation and technological change are expected to continue to have significant impacts on sectoral employment structure and the demands for different types of skills. The continuing shift towards services and the knowledge economy, the catching up process for many countries (shifting patterns of activity and people), implications for occupations and qualifications, including a general increase in the demand for skills with implications for continued investments in skills, education and training are highlighted. At the same time there are indications of polarization, with significant growth in employment in some less skilled areas with implications for Issues of exclusion and job quality.

The results presented represent the most comprehensive and consistent set of skill projections ever produced for Europe. Although there some data problems and questions outstanding, many of the trends identified are quite robust and not sensitive to the detailed data problems nor to the detailed specifications for models used to explain changing patterns of skill demands with industries. This suggests that such projections can provide valuable and robust information to a broad range of users, from individuals making career choices through to policy makers operating at the highest strategic level.

Contact list of Speakers

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