



European Year of Lifelong Learning

EUROPEANS AND THEIR ATTITUDES TO EDUCATION AND TRAINING

PART I - INTRODUCTION

Rapid changes currently taking place in Society and the workplace have led the European Union to designate 1996 as the *European Year of Lifelong Learning (EYLL)*. The European Year forms part of the Community's follow-up to the European Commission's 1993 White Paper on *Growth, Competitiveness, Employment* which proposed the organisation of such a Year. It is also providing scope for a global discussion on the Commission's White Paper "Learning and Training: Towards the Learning Society", which was published in November 1995.

Within the context of this European Year, the first ever Eurobarometer survey on Europeans' attitudes to education and training was undertaken during the last quarter of 1995. A total of 19,308 people throughout the 15 member states of the European Union participated in the Eurobarometer survey, and were asked to reply to 26 questions. In most countries 1000 people were involved, but in Germany and the UK a wider survey was organised with 1000 people each being interviewed in the eastern and western parts of Germany, 1000 participants in Great Britain and a further 300 in Northern Ireland.

This representative cross-section of the population was statistically selected to ensure that concrete results could be extrapolated from a wide range of relevant groupings including older people, young people, men, women, managers, manual workers, those with different levels of education, and people with differing political views.

The opinion poll included questions on:

- Qualities to be encouraged in young people
- Attitudes to education and training Systems
- Satisfaction with education systems
- Attitudes to lifelong learning
- The necessity of continual training
- Recent trainees and students
- Public support for continual training courses
- Financial considerations
- Education, training and the Information Society

This document is a summary of the Eurobarometer survey, and includes a review of the most important findings at a pan-European level, an illustration of some of these results in graph form, and notes with specific results on each country.

PART II - A REVIEW OF THE MAJOR FINDINGS

This section of the summary looks at the major pan-European findings which emerged from the Eurobarometer opinion poll.

Lifelong Learning

One of the most important results to emerge from the survey is the high level of interest among Europeans for the concept of lifelong learning. 70% of people questioned say they want to continue learning or training throughout their lives. Attitudes vary by country on this subject. 91% of Danes gave a positive response to this question, while in some other countries just around half those who participated in the opinion poll want to continue learning. However the fact that some countries have a lower level of interest in lifelong learning may reflect a generally higher level of satisfaction with the education people have already received.

Young people aged between 15 and 24 are slightly keener to continue learning throughout their lives with 72% of young Europeans wanting to do so. Young Danes are the most interested in lifelong learning at 92%, while the lowest level of interest among young people in a country was 49%.

Among the Europeans who would like to continue learning all their lives, the two main reasons cited were the desire to improve their general knowledge and the desire to maintain or improve their professional qualifications. Younger Europeans mainly want to continue learning to improve their qualifications (54%), while 45% of this category say that improving their general knowledge is also a priority.

Also apparent are differences in attitudes to education between the various socio-economic groupings interviewed. For example those who finished studying after the age of 20 say they want to learn to improve their professional qualifications (56%), while 35% of those who finished school before the age of 15 agree with this point. On the other hand women in the home (24%) are keener to continue learning to refresh their basic knowledge, or to intelligently occupy their leisure time (18%).

Over all more men than women are more keen to improve their professional qualifications (56% compared to 41%), while women want to improve their general knowledge (53% compared to 45% of men).

Of those who do not want to learn all their lives, the overriding reason given is that 47% simply do not see any reason to do so. Other reasons cited for not wanting to continue to

learn include not having the time to do so and not wanting to return to school (24% respectively). For young people the main reason given for not wanting to learn is that they do not want to return to school (38%), while 34% do not see a good reason to continue learning, and 23% do not have the time to do so.

Continual training is a necessity

Over half of all Europeans questioned (56%) are of the opinion that continual education and training has become a necessity, with younger people being even more convinced of this fact (68%). 39% of Europeans say that it is not a necessity, while 4% do not have an opinion. Some national differences are apparent with 72% of Germans in the eastern part of the country - the highest level in Europe - seeing a necessity for continual education and training, while the lowest level is around 35%.

Europeans have a definite opinion on the advantages of education and training and how it can enhance peoples lives. Eight out of 10 Europeans say that continual training could improve their working lives, and just over 7 out of 10 (72%) believe it will improve their personal lives. Men with higher qualifications, managers and people with higher salaries are particularly adamant on this point.

Overall 83% of men say that continual education and training will improve their working lives, and three quarters say it will improve their personal lives. The figures are slightly lower for women at 77% and 70% respectively.

Recent trainees and students

Two out of 10 Europeans questioned (22%) have taken a training course within the last 12 months. The north/south divide is particularly evident here with the highest level of participation in Denmark (45%), while in some southern countries as few as 10% of interviewees say they have undertaken some form of training in the last year. In general highly qualified people and managers are more likely to have undergone a training course recently.

Public Support

80% of respondents believe that public administrations should help those who want to take a training course. Once again the north/south divide is fairly marked, with southern countries and those falling within the objective 1 regional demarcations (i.e. areas with less than 50% of the average EU GDP) being particularly keen on public aid for training courses.

A large majority of Europeans (94%) say that organisations should allow trainees to work with them within the context of sandwich courses, and that these periods of training should lead to a widely- recognised certificate. Interviewees also believe that organisations should be

involved in putting together training courses which are well-adapted to Society's needs (93%) and in helping local associations to organise training courses (90%).

Financial considerations

Financial help for training courses from the state would be welcomed by at least two thirds of Europeans questioned (66%). However, 44% of those surveyed say that enterprises should pay, and 29% believe that the people taking the training courses should bear the burden of the costs. Regional and local council contribution to the cost of training courses is not particularly popular with only 22% and 13% respectively saying that financing should come from there. In general southern countries are more in favour of the state paying than northern countries, (apart from Finland where 83% agreed).

A new feature which emerges from this survey is the fact that Europeans have indicated the willingness to contribute to the costs of their training. 22% of the survey indicated that they would be willing to pay for part of the costs of their training programme.

Over half of all Europeans interviewed (53%) say that the EU should contribute to education and training by publicising best practice examples of training in other countries.

Education, training and the Information Society

Eight Europeans in 10 questioned (81%) believe that the effect of new communications technologies will be to change teaching methods. 76% believe that this technology will improve the quality of education, and two thirds (65%) say that schools prepare children for the new demands imposed on people by the development of the Information Society.

The younger the respondent, the more likely they are to believe that schools do not prepare students for the Information Society. However, younger people are adamant about the fact that new communications techniques will improve the quality of education.

Changes in Society

In the survey, four young people out of 10 say that the current changes in Society have played no part in their choice of career. 16% say that these changes led them to choose a basic general training, while 13% say that they chose a more in-depth type of training in one particular area. Less than half of those Europeans questioned (46%) said that school prepares a child well or very well for the rapid changes currently taking place in Society.

Attitudes To Education and Training Systems

Most Europeans have a holistic view of the role of schools. Only two respondents out of ten see schools as being a utilitarian institution designed to prepare pupils for a career or a job. and young people more or less share these views.

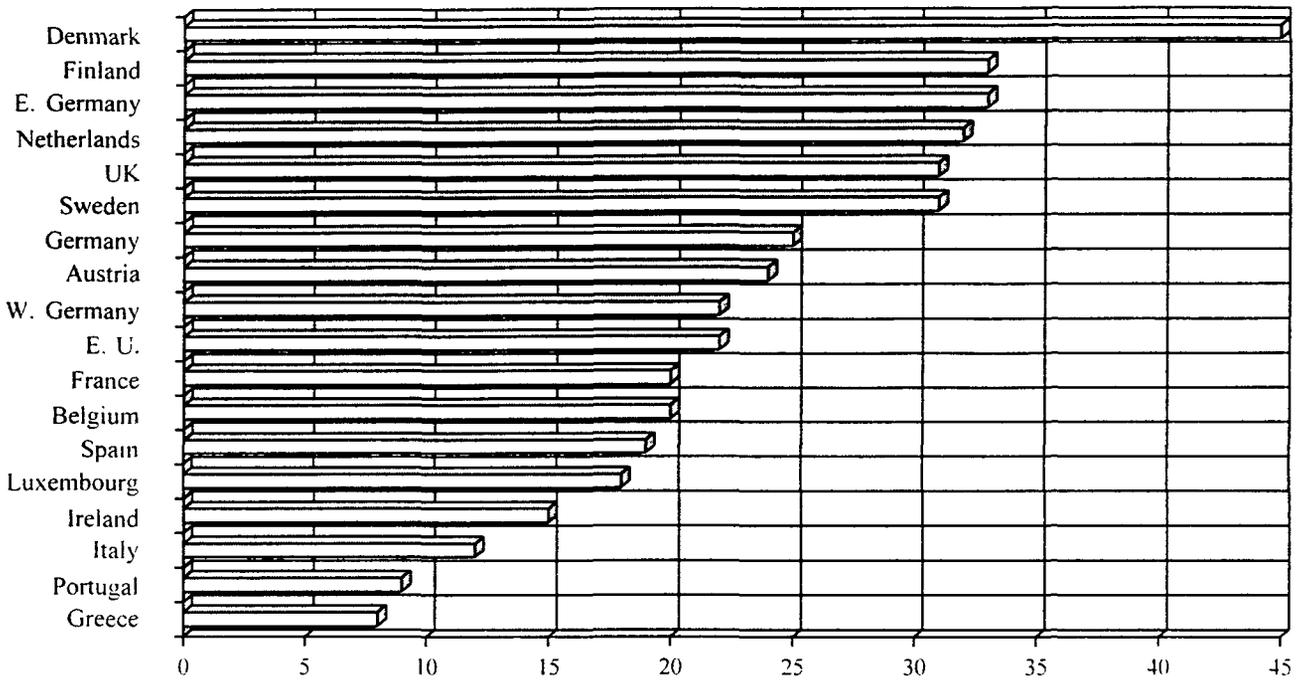
Business involvement in education and training is clearly considered an important factor in Europe. The interviewees feel that the main way in which business could be involved is in developing sandwich courses and providing information to young people on career opportunities (90% of positive responses).

More than three quarters of all Europeans state that the education they have received was either satisfactory or very satisfactory. The people who are most satisfied are those who are currently undertaking a course of study.

Coverage of the Survey

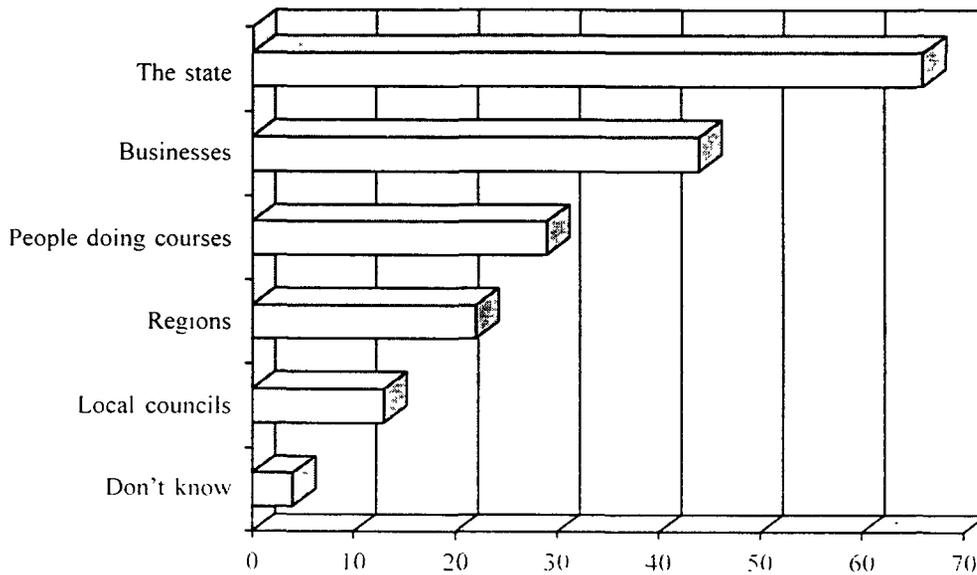
All 18 countries of the European Economic Area (EEA) are participating in the European Year, namely the 15 countries of the European Union (EU) along with Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein. However, the Eurobarometer survey is limited to the EU countries.

% BY COUNTRY WHO HAVE UNDERTAKEN A TRAINING COURSE IN THE LAST YEAR

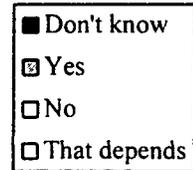
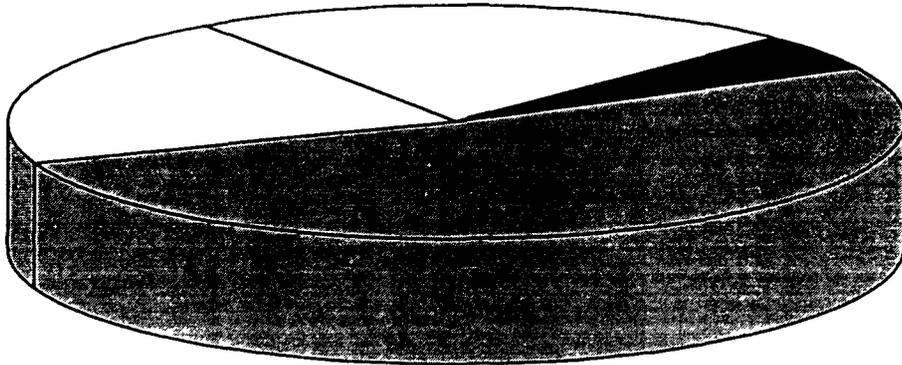


Including don't knows

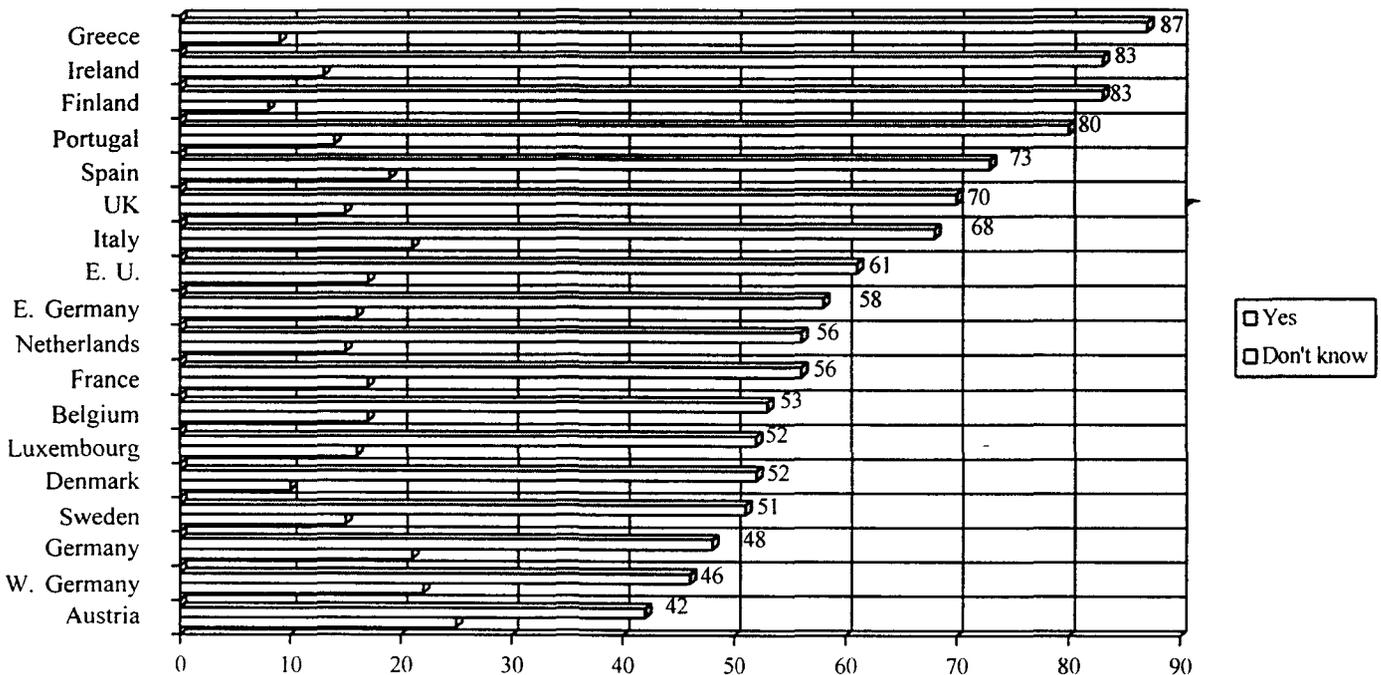
WHO SHOULD PAY FOR CONTINUAL TRAINING COURSES (% E. U.)?



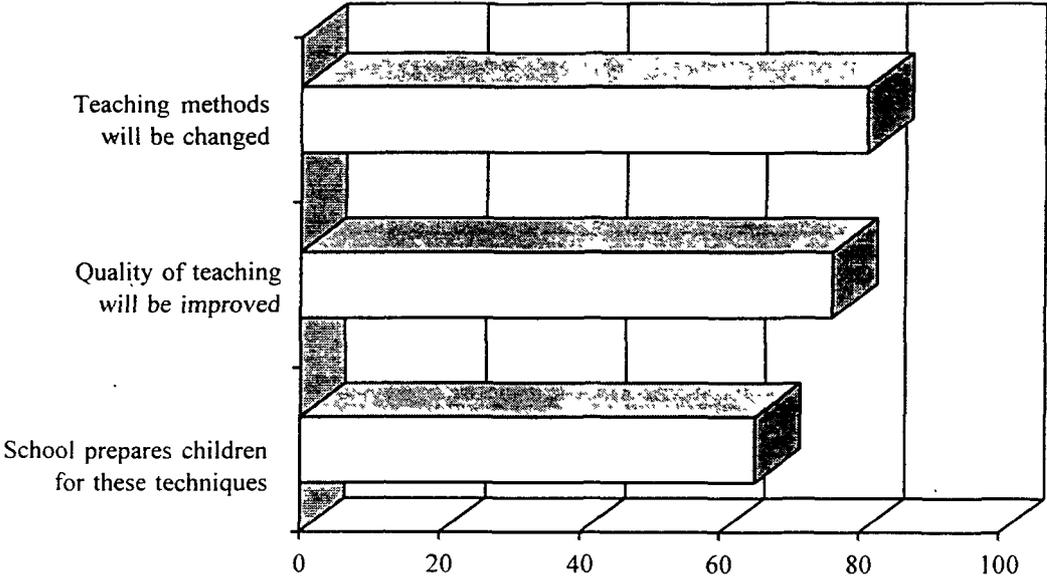
% IN EU WHO ARE PREPARED TO PAY FOR PART OF THE COST OF THE TRAINING COURSES



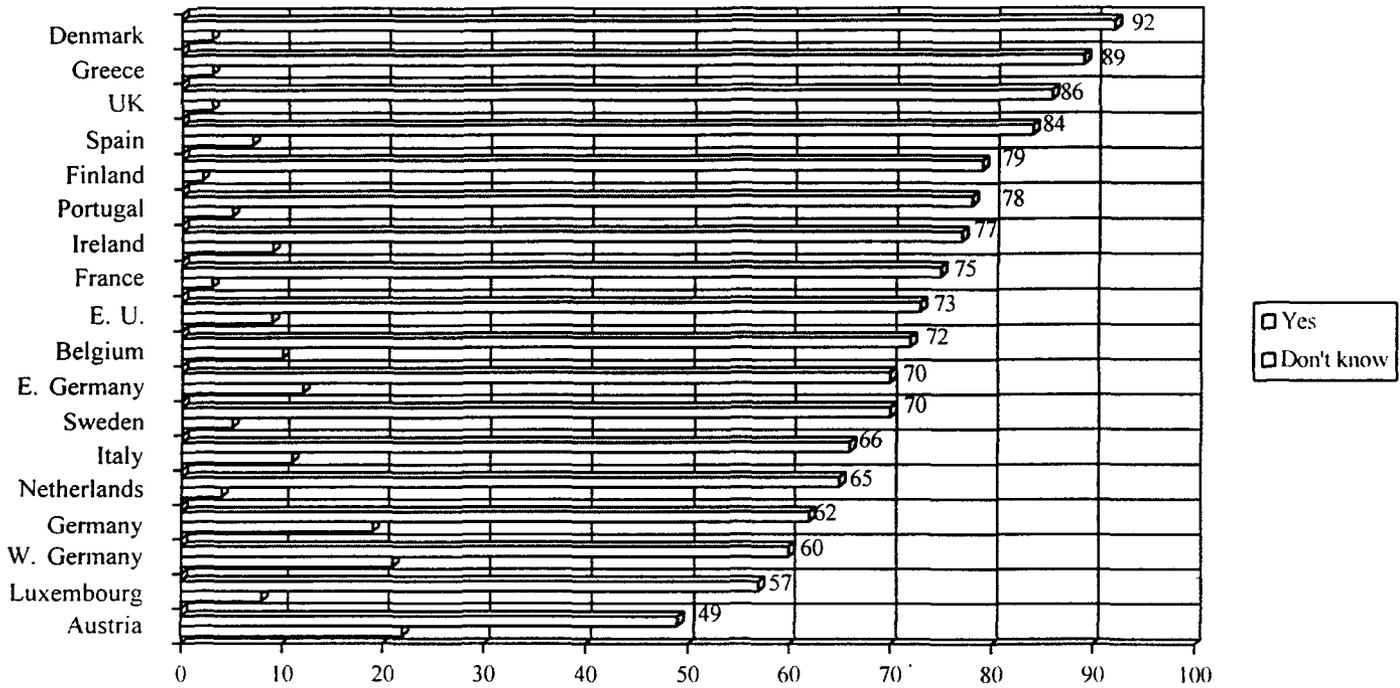
COULD THE EU PLAY A ROLE IN CONTINUAL TRAINING? (% BY COUNTRY WHICH AGREES)



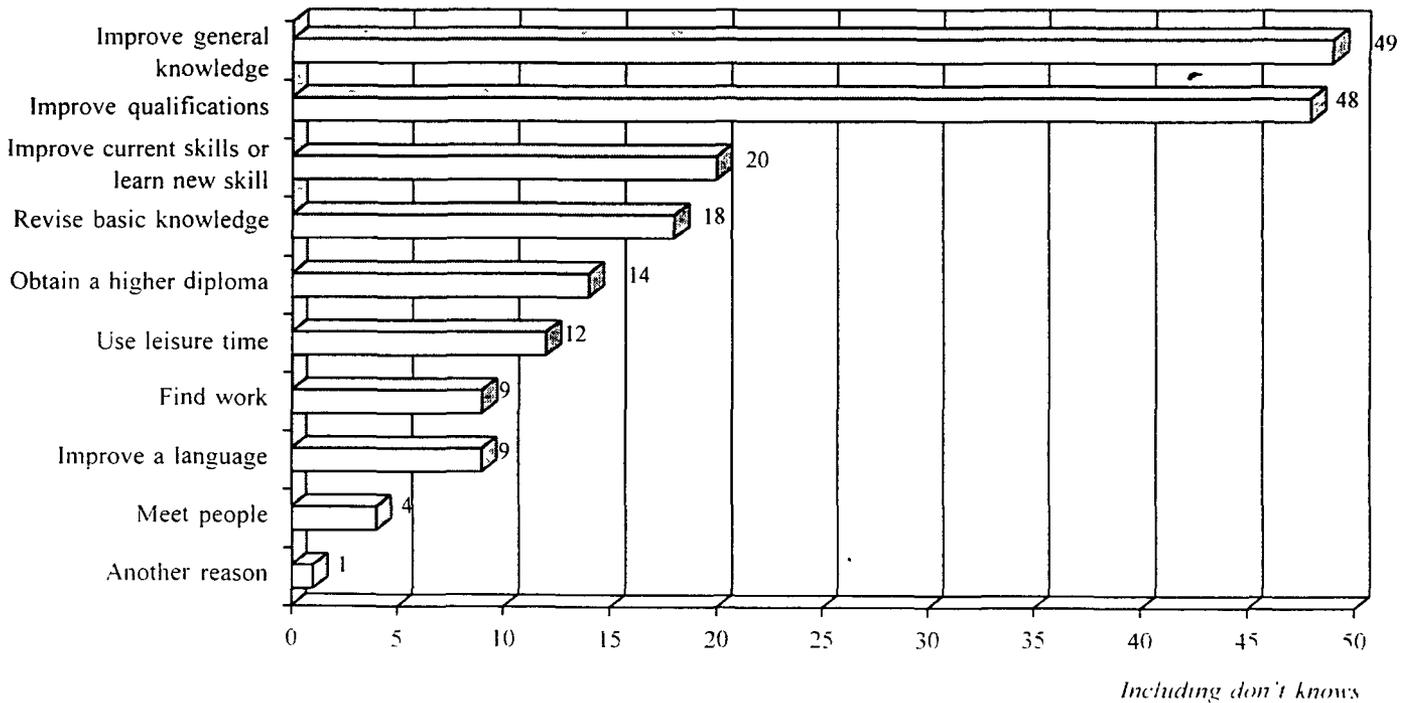
THE EFFECTS OF NEW COMMUNICATIONS TECHNIQUES (% E. U.)



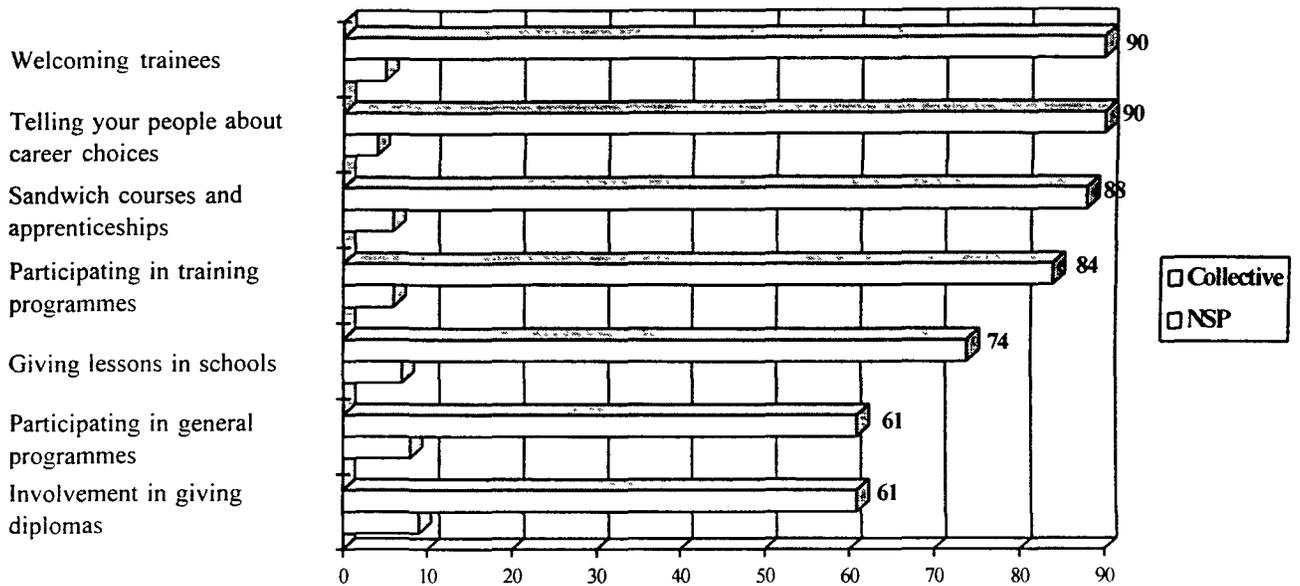
% OF PEOPLE BY COUNTRY WHO WANT TO KEEP ON LEARNING ALL THEIR LIVES



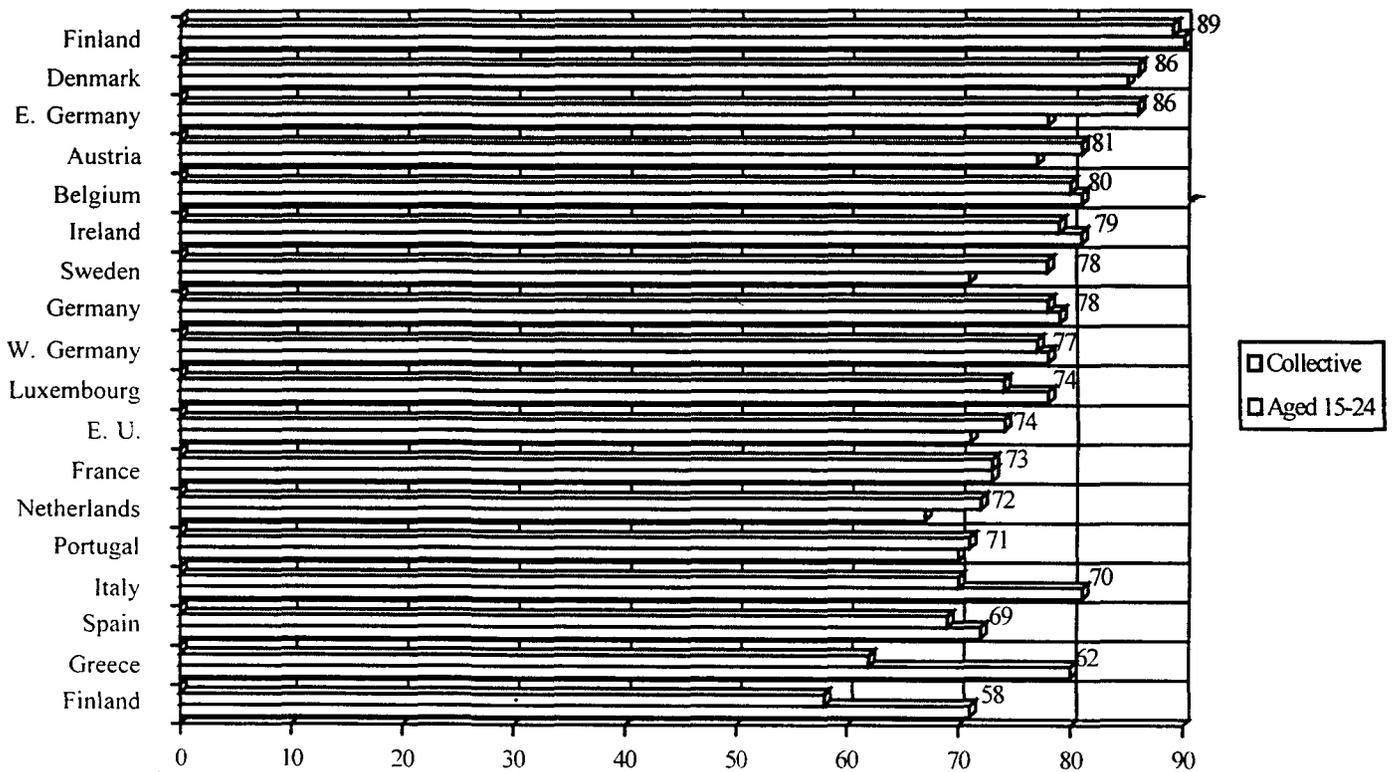
REASONS WHY PEOPLE WANT TO KEEP ON LEARNING (% E. U.)



THE ROLE OF BUSINESS IN VOCATIONAL TRAINING

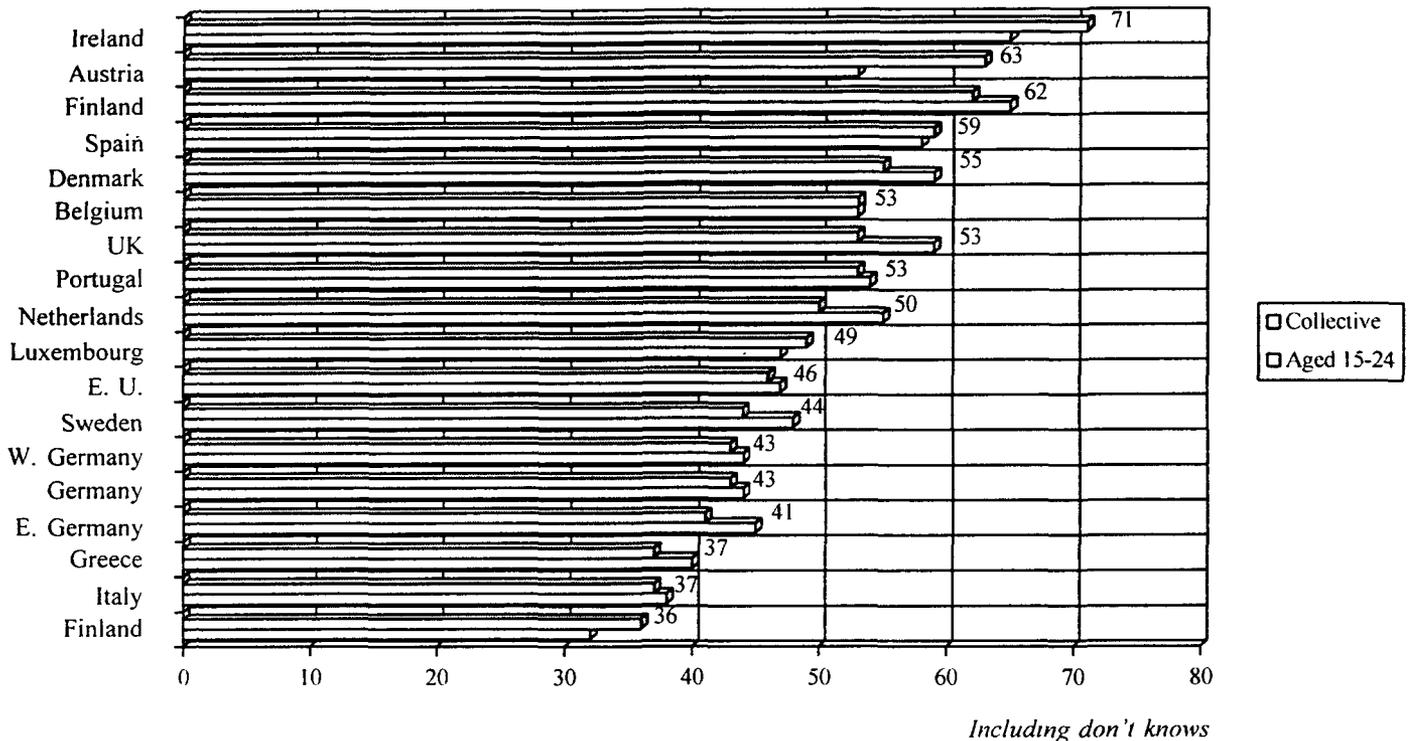


SATISFACTION WITH EDUCATION RECEIVED

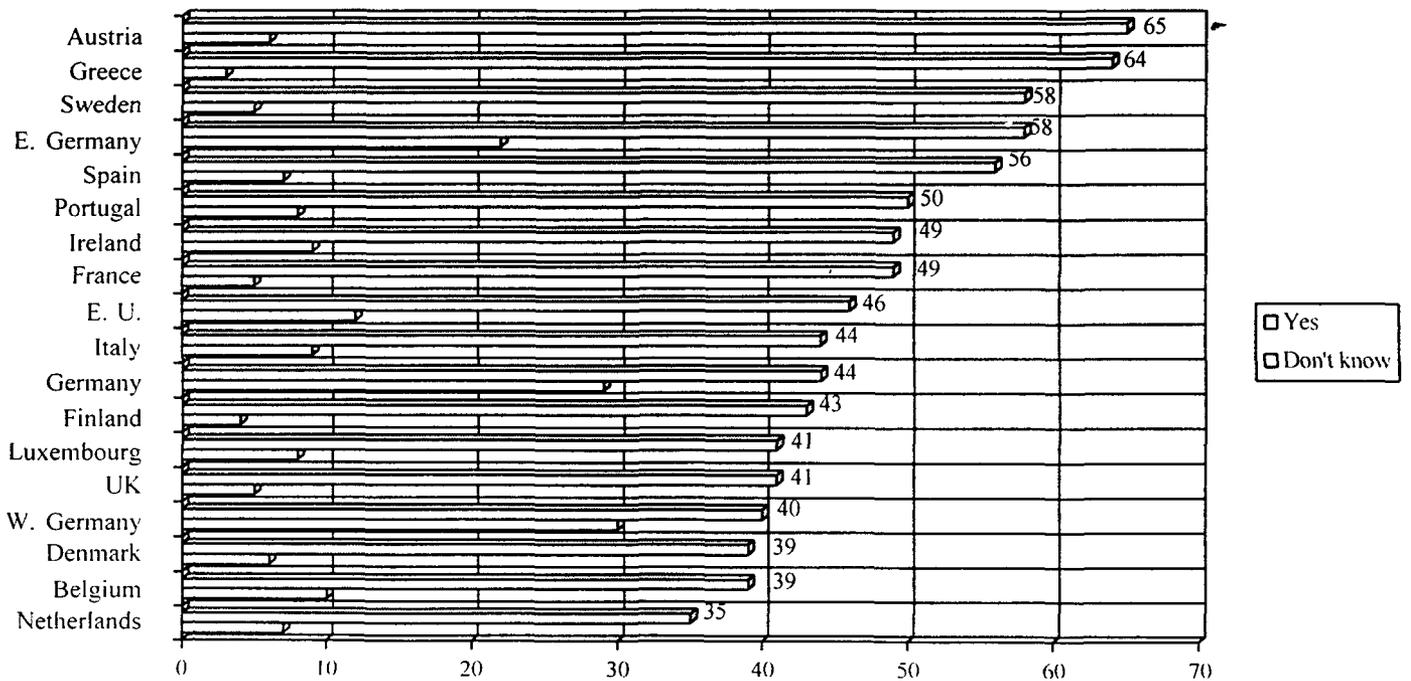


Including don't knows

SATISFACTION WITH THE WAY SCHOOL PREPARES STUDENTS FOR CHANGES IN SOCIETY (% BY COUNTRY)



% OF PEOPLE BY COUNTRY WHO SAY CHANGES IN SOCIETY HAVE INFLUENCED THEIR CAREER CHOICES



YOUNG AUSTRIANS SAY CONTINUAL LEARNING IS NECESSARY

The necessity for continual education and training is keenly felt with 68% saying it would be a necessity for them, and 79% of young people aged 15- 24 interviewed, agreeing. This is the third highest percentage in Europe.

The question of Austrians actually wanting to learn is another matter. 47% of those questioned said they wanted to keep on learning. This was the lowest percentage in Europe. and the only country where the results appeared to fall under 50% of the population. But this could be a reflection of the high percentage of people (81%) who are satisfied with the education they have already received. Of those who do not want to keep on learning. 28% said it was because they did not want to return to school, and a further 28% said that they were not convinced that it was necessary to do so.

The view that continual training is a necessity rather than a choice is borne out by the percentage of people who have undergone a training course in the last 12 months - 24%. This rates fairly high on the European scale compared with other European countries.

Continual education and training are seen as useful from a work rather than a personal point of view. 75% believe it is useful for their jobs, while 32% think it will improve their personal lives. Of those that want to continue training, most say it is because they want to improve their position at work (30%), compared to 15% who want to avoid unemployment and 18% who want to adapt to changes at work.

Young Austrians appear to be particularly conscious of changes in society, with 65% saying these changes have affected their career choices. This is the highest percentage in Europe.

Of those who are dissatisfied with their education most say it was because of a lack of teacher involvement (20%). Most other Europeans say they are dissatisfied because of a lack of career guidance.

Overall Austrians are satisfied with the way in which school prepares children for the current changes taking place in society. 63% cite their satisfaction with this.

Austria is the only country in Europe where more people think that those who take part in training courses should pay themselves (46%), rather than the state paying for continual training.

The Austrians interviewed in the survey appear not to be as interested as other member states in seeing EU participation in lifelong learning, with 42% agreeing with this point against a high of 87% in Greece.

MOST YOUNG BELGIANS WANT TO KEEP ON LEARNING

Compared to other European countries Belgians are reasonably keen to continue learning (63%). Improving their professional qualifications was cited as the main reason for wanting to continue learning (45%).

Belgians generally appear to be very satisfied with the education they receive, and with their schools. There is a wide difference in degrees of satisfaction regarding schools preparing children for the changes in Society. 71% of parents were satisfied on this count, while only 54% of non-parents agreed with this. Overall 80% said they are satisfied with their education - just slightly lower than the highest percentage (89%) in Finland.

The main reason Belgians cite for dissatisfaction with the education they have received is lack of opportunities available to continue learning.

More young Belgians want to continue learning than the overall population with 72% of younger people aged 15 - 25 showing their interest. Of those who do not want to keep on learning, most said it was because they are not convinced of a need to do so.

Interestingly, Belgians are less convinced about the necessity for personal improvement through continuous training than they are about continuing to learn throughout their lives. 54% of Belgians feel that continual training is necessary, but 78% say it will improve their working lives. Young Belgians are more convinced about the importance of continual training with 86% saying it will help their working lives.

The number of people who said they have undertaken a training course in the last 12 months is reasonably consistent with the number who showed an interest in continual education or training. Around 20% of Belgians have taken some form of course in the last 12 months. This is close to the European average.

Belgians appear to be reasonably keen to see the involvement of outside groups in education and training. 91% say that the best way enterprises can be involved in education and training is in advising young people on the choice of jobs available, and in welcoming trainees into organisations.

Just over half (53%) of Belgians say the EU should be involved in education and training in some way. This is somewhat lower than in other European countries.

Only 47% of Belgians are prepared to pay towards the cost of continual training courses. Most Belgians (66%) say that the state should pay for continual training.

MORE THAN 9 OUT OF 10 DANES WANT TO KEEP ON LEARNING

Denmark has the highest percentage of people in Europe who want to keep on learning throughout their lives (91%). Of those who say they did not want to keep on learning, 41% say they are not absolutely convinced that it is necessary.

The fact that the Danes have the highest percentage of respondents in Europe who have taken some form of training course in the last 12 months (45%) bears witness to their apparent interest in continual learning.

Interestingly, far fewer Danes say that continual training is an absolute necessity for them, with only 59% saying it is important to them. However, 91% say that continual training will improve their personal lives, compared to 88% who say it will improve their professional lives. Learning for learning's sake appears to be generally more important to Danes than specific training for work.

55% of Danes - a level well above the EU average of 46% - say that they are satisfied with the way in which schools help pupils prepare for changes in society.

However, young Danes appeared not to be particularly influenced by the changes in society when selecting their careers with only 39% saying that these changes had influenced their career choices. This was the second lowest level in Europe compared to 35% in the Netherlands and 65% in Austria.

European Union involvement in education is not particularly important to Danes. Only 64% want to see some form of EU involvement. This is lower than the EU average of 65%.

Danes are also well satisfied with the education they have received at school with 86% citing their satisfaction. For those who are dissatisfied, the main reason is a lack of career guidance (15%).

Danish parents are the most satisfied (72%) with the way schools help children adapt to changes in Society.

Young Danish parents (aged 15 - 24) were the most satisfied out of all young European parents interviewed with the way in which schooling helps the development of a child (74%).

59% of Danes think the state should fund continual training courses. This was the second highest level in Europe. Even more young Danes agree with this point (65%). Again overall, they are the second most willing nation in Europe to contribute to some of the cost of training courses (73%). However, only 69% of young people were willing to pay for part of the cost of courses.

GERMANS SAY LIFELONG LEARNING IS NECESSARY

Lifelong learning is deemed a necessity by a high percentage of Germans as 68% say it is vital for them. Germans in the east are the highest group of respondents in Europe to say that continual training is an absolute necessity at 72%. and the main reason for them to continue training is to avoid unemployment or to improve their work situation (24% respectively).

Overall, 58% of Germans actually want to continue learning throughout their lives. This is somewhat lower than other European countries. Here there is a wide difference in attitude between Germans in the eastern and western parts of the country. In the east 68% want to keep on learning throughout their lives. This is close to the EU average of 70%. while only 55% in the west want to keep learning.

Overall Germans are the least convinced of people that continual training will improve their lives. Only 66% of Germans think it will improve their working lives, while only 32% say it will improve their personal lives.

Germans are more interested in practice in continuing to learn than their attitudes may suggest, as a quarter say they have undertaken a training course in the last 12 months. This figure was close to the EU average. Overall Germans are near the bottom of the league in wanting EU involvement in education and training. Only 48% want EU involvement compared to 87% in Greece. The pattern was repeated among young Germans aged 15 - 24 - only 52% want some form of EU involvement in education and training.

Germans are clearly conscious of the changes in society taking place, with only 43% being satisfied with the way in which schools prepare young people for these changes. This is below the EU average of 46%.

There is a marked difference between young Germans in the east and west with regard to changes in society influencing their career choices. Germans in the east are among the highest in Europe to say that their career choices have been affected by these changes (58%), whereas in the west of the country only 40% said their career choices have been influenced by these changes.

86% of Germans in the east say they are satisfied with their education - second only to Finland on the European scale, while slightly less - just under three quarters of people surveyed (74%) in the west - are satisfied.

THE GREEKS WELCOME EU INVOLVEMENT IN EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Greeks - at 87% - are the most convinced in Europe that the EU should be involved in education and training. This compares with only 47% of Austrians who would welcome EU involvement.

People in Greece would very much like to continue learning, and have the second highest percentage in Europe (83%) expressing this wish. The main reasons they cite for wanting to continue learning are to improve their general knowledge (52%) and revise their basic knowledge (33%). And the main reason for not wanting to continue with their education is that they do not see a sufficiently important reason to do so (54%).

However, they are not so convinced about the actual necessity of continual education and training (50%). Despite this, a high percentage - 86% - say it will improve their working lives and 85% think it will improve their personal lives. Young Greeks are even more convinced about the importance of continual training for their working lives with 94% of respondents questioned agreeing.

Clearly, changes in society have had an effect as Greeks are the second lowest in Europe to agree that school has prepared them for these changes (37%). Only the French are less convinced in this category with 36% showing their satisfaction.

Young Greeks are affected by the changes in society - 64% say that their career choices have been affected by these changes. This is the second highest percentage in Europe after Austria where 65% of young peoples felt that their choices had been affected.

Young people aged 15-24 were particularly happy with the education they had received with 71% of those interviewed indicating their satisfaction. Overall, 58% of respondents in all age groups were pleased with their education.

The main reason for dissatisfaction with the education received is that people have not had the chance to continue their education. Young people are mainly dissatisfied because teaching methods have not been well-adapted to changes in Society. And 14% of young people feel that school has not prepared them well for working life.

Along with Finland, Greeks feel the most strongly (89%) that the state should fund continual training courses. And they have the second lowest percentage in Europe who are willing to bear some part of the cost of their training.

SPANISH YOUNG PEOPLE ARE ALL FOR LIFELONG LEARNING

84% of young people want to keep on learning, and the main reason for this is to improve their general knowledge - 56% cited this reason. With nearly three quarters of Spanish people surveyed overall (74%) wanting to keep on learning throughout their lives. Spain comes close to the European average. For those who do not want to keep on learning most people said they were not absolutely convinced of the need to do so. Spain has the highest group of respondents in Europe to cite this reason at 58%.

There is a comparatively low level of satisfaction among the Spanish for the education they have received - 62% are satisfied. This is the second lowest level in Europe compared to Finland which had the highest level of people satisfied (89%). For those who are dissatisfied 37% said that the main reason is because they did not have a chance to continue their education. More Spanish than any other country in Europe cited this reason for dissatisfaction.

A far lower percentage of people (51%) see continual training as a necessity, but 76% of young people would like to have on-going training. Young people also think that continual training will improve their lives and 96% - the highest level in Europe - think it will improve their working lives.

19% of Spanish people have actually committed themselves to some form of training in the last 12 months. This is around the EU average.

The involvement of the EU in education was considered reasonably important with 82% welcoming it. Those who do welcome EU support, say that this would be best used in highlighting best practice examples of education and training (48%).

Spain appears to place less emphasis on the role of schools in providing a basic education as only 26% of respondents say this is important. 25% of Spaniards think that the teaching of values in school is nearly as important - the highest percentage in Europe to think this.

Spain has among the highest percentage of people in Europe (86%) who think that the state should pay for continual training. Only 45% of Spaniards would be willing to contribute financially to a course of study themselves compared to a high 74% in Finland (highest in Europe).

Spain is particularly optimistic about the effect that new communications methods will have on improving teaching, with 85% agreeing that it will make a difference.

THREE QUARTERS OF THE FRENCH WANT TO CONTINUE LEARNING

79% of the French want to keep on learning, although fewer young people are keen on the idea of lifelong learning with 75% of those questioned aged between 15 and 24. expressing an interest. Most people want to continue learning simply to improve their general knowledge (57%).

The main reason cited by the French for not continuing to learn is that they are not convinced that there is a reason to do so (47%).

Less French are convinced of the absolute necessity of lifelong learning for themselves. Just over half (54%) see the necessity for it. and 56% of young people are convinced of this. This puts the French around the EU average. 20% of respondents say they had undertaken a course in the last 12 months - around the average compared to other member states.

This comparative lack of conviction about the need for continual education and training may be because the French are reasonably pleased with the education they receive, with 72% expressing their satisfaction compared to a high 89% in Finland.

Although 72% of French were satisfied with the way schooling helps a child develop, they were the least satisfied in Europe (36% compared to 71% in Luxembourg) with the way it helps children adapt to changes in society. 36% of young people were also dissatisfied with this.

Over half the respondents (56%) said they would welcome some form of EU participation in education and training. This was slightly below the EU average of 61%. The French placed particular emphasis on the EU encouraging language training (52%). They also felt that the EU should highlight examples of best practice in education and training (52%).

More French people than anywhere else in Europe (91%) feel that enterprises should help give information to young people on the choice of jobs available to them.

The involvement of public administrations in education and training is welcomed by the French - 87% of the population say this should happen.

According to most French respondents questioned, 72% agreed that the state should pay for continual training. But 41% said they would be prepared to contribute financially to their training.

The French are comparatively guarded in their view on the effects of new communications technologies on learning. 67% - the lowest level in Europe - said that these new techniques would improve teaching, while just under 8 out of 10 respondents (78%) said they would actually change teaching methods.

THE IRISH WANT TO LEARN - FOR PLEASURE

The non-utilitarian approach to learning in Ireland scored highly with 49% - a very high level - saying they want to continue learning in order to improve their general knowledge.

Young peoples' attitude to lifelong learning differs from the overall survey on this question. 65% of young people want to keep on learning throughout their lives while three quarters of people questioned in the overall survey said they want to keep on learning. Of those who do not want to keep learning, most said it was because they do not really see a reason to do so (44%).

Just over half of the respondents (53%) said that continual training is a necessity. Once again, a non-utilitarian approach to education and training was evident here with a very high percentage of Irish (91% - the highest level in Europe) believing that continual training would improve their personal lives.

Only 15% of Irish have taken a training course in the last 12 months which is well below the EU average of 22%. In general 71% of the Irish believe the state should pay for continual training, and 75% of young people interviewed agree with this.

Compared to other EU member states the Irish (81%) are comparatively interested in the EU contributing to education and training. EU contributions would be best made in the field of highlighting best practice in education and training (47%).

There appears to be a comparatively low level of satisfaction with the way in which schools prepare children for the changes in society (37% - the second lowest in the EU). Despite awareness of these changes, less than half of all young people agreed that these changes had affected their choice of career (49%).

There is a higher percentage of Irish non-parents (73%) who are satisfied about the way in which schools help a child develop, than parents who are satisfied (69%) - the only country in Europe where this is the case.

51% of Irish in the survey said that the ability to communicate was the most important quality for a person to have, compared to 43% who said that a sense of responsibility was the most important. Most other Europeans believe that a sense of responsibility is more important.

79% of the Irish interviewed are satisfied with the education they have received compared to 89% in Finland and 58% in Greece as the highest and lowest levels in Europe. More young Irish are satisfied with their education than the overall survey (82%) findings on this question.

The reasons for dissatisfaction with their education differed between age groups. In the overall survey it emerged that 49% of the dissatisfied group are unhappy with their education because of a lack of career guidance.

ITALIANS SAY SCHOOLS DON'T PREPARE PUPILS FOR THE INFORMATION SOCIETY

Italy is the least satisfied of all European countries with the way school currently prepares pupils for the information society. Less than half those interviewed (46%) expressed their satisfaction in this area. Clearly the Italians are aware of the importance of the Information Society, with 81% saying that new communications techniques would improve teaching methods.

Both the overall population and young people interviewed had the same attitudes to lifelong learning. Overall, 65% want to continue learning, while a similar percentage (66%) of young people are of the same opinion.

A slightly lower percentage of Italians (54%) believe that continual training is necessary for them, even though as many as 78% say that it would improve their working lives, and 75% say it would improve their personal lives. This shows a reasonably non-utilitarian approach to training as most Italians (62%) generally want to keep on learning in order to improve their general knowledge.

12% of Italians have actually undertaken some form of training course in the last 12 months compared to a high 45% in Denmark.

Italian parents are the least satisfied in Europe with the way in which school helps children to adapt to changes in society as only 44% thought that schools did help, compared to a high in the Netherlands where the percentage was 77%.

The Italians believe that EU participation in education and training would be most appropriate for highlighting examples of best practice in education and training (44%). Language learning was also considered to be an important area for EU participation (43%).

69% of Italians expressed their satisfaction with the education they have received compared to 89% in Finland. They are mainly dissatisfied because they have not had a chance to continue their education, and with 28% expressing this view, Italy has the highest percentage in Europe to cite this reason.

Only 38% of Italians interviewed think that schools should provide a basic education - the lowest percentage of people in Europe to think this. However more Italians believe schools should help children develop their personality (45%).

Public involvement and state financing are also reasonably high priorities for Italians with 82% and 63% in favour of these respectively. This favourability towards public involvement is reinforced by the lack of willingness to contribute financially towards their training. Only 45% - the second lowest percentage in Europe after Portugal (35%) - would be prepared to pay something towards their courses.

LIFELONG LEARNING IS A NECESSITY FOR LUXEMBOURGERS - NOT A DESIRE

Over half of all Luxembourgers (59%) want to keep on learning throughout their lives, this is slightly lower than in some other member states. The belief in the necessity of continual training is more positive, with 71% believing it is a necessity for them. 76% of all Luxembourgers believe that training would improve their working lives, while 64% say it would help their personal lives.

Although most Luxembourgers questioned wanted to keep on learning in order to improve their general knowledge (49%), nearly as many (45%) said they wanted to continue learning to improve their qualifications.

The survey indicates that Luxembourg is one of the seven countries in the EU where young people are slightly less satisfied with the education they have received than the respondents as a whole - 71% compared to 74% overall. The main reason given for dissatisfaction was that they could not continue their studies - hence the necessity for lifelong learning.

The percentage of Luxembourgers who have undertaken some form of training was slightly lower than the EU average at 18%.

This may be because so many Luxembourgers believe schools should train people for a career (49% - the highest level in the EU), and therefore once trained, there is less interest in continual learning, unless it becomes an absolute necessity. Also, having the lowest level of unemployment in Europe may be a contributory factor. 49% of young people interviewed aged 15-24 agreed with this point of view.

EU involvement in education and training would be slightly less welcome to Luxembourgers than to other nationalities. Just over half (52%) would like to see some EU involvement, while 47% of young Luxembourgers interviewed agreed with this

Luxembourg is one of only two member states where tolerance as a quality is considered more important to encourage in children (51%) than a sense of responsibility. 51% of young people interviewed agreed that tolerance is the most important quality.

The contribution of public administration and state financing to continual training was considered to be reasonably important by Luxembourgers. 80% - the same as the EU average - would welcome state involvement, while 78% said that the state should finance courses. Young Luxembourgers are less interested in seeing public authority involvement in training (73%). A comparatively high level of people would be prepared to contribute to the cost of their training courses (56%).

THE DUTCH ARE MOST KEEN TO PAY FOR THEIR CONTINUAL TRAINING

The Netherlands has the highest percentage of people in Europe who would be prepared to pay something towards their own on-going education and training (78%). Slightly less young people questioned aged 15-24 (74%) shared this view, but this is still high level. This is despite the fact that 17% of Dutch - the second highest level in Europe - cited the high cost of lifelong learning as a reason not to undertake a course of study.

67% of all Dutch would like to keep on learning throughout their lives. Fewer young people (65%) are interested in continuing to learn. For most people (56%) the main reason for continuing to learn is to improve their qualifications. Improving general knowledge was cited as the second most important reason (50%), and the Dutch have the highest percentage in Europe (28%) who want to improve in an activity they can already do, or would like to do.

Of those who do not want to keep learning, 47% said they could not see a reason to do so. Others said that they did not want to return to school (28%), and 25% said they did not have the time to continue learning.

The Dutch are less convinced about the necessity for continual education and training than other member states as only 37% said they believe this. This may be because they are already reasonably satisfied with the education and training they have already received.

About eighty per cent of people interviewed say continual education and training would improve their working lives. This is slightly less than the EU average, but still a high figure.

Despite the comparative lack of interest in training, a fairly high percentage of Dutch (32%) have actually undertaken some form of training within the last 12 months.

56% think that the EU should contribute to education and training, and the main area where this should occur is in highlighting examples of best practice (54%).

Unlike most other European countries, more Dutch think school should teach people to live in Society (51%) rather than just provide a basic education or train them for a job. Young people (51%) are also of this opinion.

Fewer Dutch (71%) than the EU average are satisfied with the education they have received. More people (31%) than in any other EU state said they were dissatisfied with their education because it was too theoretical rather than practical.

The Dutch are less convinced than other European countries that the state should pay for continual training courses. 59% believe the state should pay, while 54% say enterprises should cover the costs and 45% say those actually taking the training course should pay.

PORTUGUESE WANT EUROPEAN INVOLVEMENT IN EDUCATION AND TRAINING

80% of Portuguese questioned in the survey would welcome EU involvement in lifelong learning, and over half of them (53%) believe that the EU should support it with financial grants. Others cited the importance of the EU highlighting examples of best practice in education and training (51%). Portugal also had the second highest level in Europe of respondents questioned (38%) who said that the EU should explain the necessity of lifelong learning.

The overall survey among Portuguese shows that they are slightly less interested in lifelong learning than other European countries. 68% of people questioned say they wanted to carry on learning - just under the EU average of 70%. However, 78% of young people aged between 15 and 24 want to continue learning. This is above the EU average for this age group.

Most Portuguese say they want to keep on learning in order to improve their general knowledge (43%). However the Portuguese accounted for the highest percentage (35%) of people in Europe who wanted to continue to learn simply to refresh their basic knowledge. Of those who do not want to learn, 55% said they did not see a reason to do so.

The desire to continue learning to revise their basic knowledge is reflected in the fact that most of those dissatisfied with the education they had received (56%) said it was because they had not had the opportunity to continue learning.

Over half (54%) say continual training is a necessity for them compared to 71% in Luxembourg. The main reason given for the Portuguese to continue learning is to adapt to changes in society (20%). 7% of Portuguese, a high level among Europeans, also cite the avoidance of unemployment as a reason to continue training. Only 9% of respondents have taken a training course of some sort over the last 12 months.

The Portuguese place particular importance on enterprises being involved in education, and have the highest percentage in Europe (92%), along with Italy, who believe that businesses should welcome trainees in their organisations. They also place great importance on business being involved in training programmes (88%).

Changes in society with regard to education and training appear to be of medium concern to Portuguese. Just over half the respondents say they are satisfied with the way that school prepares children for changes in Society. 50% of all Portuguese say that changes in Society have affected their career decisions.

Public involvement in training is definitely welcomed by the Portuguese with 93% of respondents thinking that public authorities should be involved. Along with Greece the Portuguese have the highest percentage of people who want the state to fund courses (89%). 90% of young people, the highest level in Europe, would like to see state funding of courses.

FINNS WANT TO LEARN TO IMPROVE THEIR QUALIFICATIONS

The overriding reason cited for continuing to learn by the survey's respondents in Finland was a desire to improve qualifications (68%). Finland has the highest percentage in Europe to cite this reason compared to a low 16% in Ireland.

Three quarters of all Finns questioned (75%) said they would like to continue learning. This was slightly above the EU average of 70%. Slightly more young people questioned aged 15-24 (79%) agreed with this point. Of those who said they did not want to continue learning, the majority (57%) said they did not see a reason to do so - the second highest percentage in the EU to cite this reason after Spain (58%).

Finland has the highest percentage of people in the EU to believe that school prepares children for the information society at 82% compared to Italy at 46%. A large majority of Finns believe that new communication systems will change teaching methods (87%).

Finland has the second highest grouping in Europe which would welcome EU involvement in education and training at 83%. Possibly because of the inaccessibility of the language, most Finns think the EU can help by contributing to language learning (48%).

Interestingly, Finland has the lowest percentage of people in Europe who see a necessity for continual education at 35%. This may be because Finland is the most satisfied country in Europe with education received. In the overall survey, 89% of respondents expressed satisfaction and 90% of young people interviewed (aged between 15 and 24) agreed with this.

Despite not viewing continual training as a necessity, 33% of Finns, the second highest finding in Europe, have undertaken some form of training course in the last 12 months. 81% believe that training will improve their working lives, while 79% say it will improve their personal lives.

Like most Europeans, more Finns (91%) would like to see businesses involved in providing information about careers. But, this was closely followed by 90% wanting businesses involved in developing schoolwork programmes, and 88% looking for their involvement in vocational training programmes.

Changes in society do not appear to be as overriding a concern for Finns as other European nationalities. Even so, nearly two thirds of the respondents (62%) are satisfied with the way in which schools prepare children for these changes, and 66% young people interviewed are also satisfied. When it comes to choosing careers fewer young Finns (43%) interviewed than the EU average of 49% say their career choices have been affected by these changes.

OVER THREE QUARTERS OF SWEDISH PEOPLE WANT TO KEEP ON LEARNING

Over three quarters (76%) of people in Sweden want to keep on learning throughout their lives. However, a slightly lower percentage - 70% - of young people aged between 15 and 24 said they wanted to continue learning. This is unusual among Europeans where the norm is to see a higher percentage of young people than the overall survey being interested in lifelong learning.

The main reason for continuing to learn given by Swedish people is to improve their qualifications (53%). A comparatively high 12% of respondents also said they wanted to learn a language. With the UK this was the second highest percentage in the EU to cite this reason.

Of those who do not want to keep on learning, the main reason given is because they do not want to go back to school. Two more important reasons cited are not seeing a reason to return to learning, and not having the time to do so - 26% each.

Although 86% of Swedes believe that continual education and training would improve their working lives, and 72% think it would improve their personal lives, a lower percentage than the EU average (55%) view lifelong learning as a necessity.

A reasonably high percentage of people (31%) have undertaken a training course in the last 12 months. The most important reason for having studied in the last 12 months was a desire to do so (18%), and Sweden had the highest percentage of people in Europe (11%) who said they had done so because of a request from their employer.

Sweden has among the lowest percentage (44%) of people in Europe who are satisfied with the way in which school prepares young people for the changes in Society. However over three quarters (78%) of Swedes interviewed are satisfied with the education they have received. 58% of young people say that changes in Society have affected their career choices.

Just over half (51%) of those questioned felt a need for EU involvement. Young Swedes were slightly more positive on this point with 58% agreeing. Of these, most said that the EU should be involved in drawing attention to best practices in education and training (65%). Swedes were also the most keen in Europe (59%) to see the EU involved in encouraging language learning.

Most people (67%) feel that enterprises should pay for continual training, and a high percentage (68%) said they would be prepared to contribute financially to their training courses. Sweden has the lowest percentage of people who feel that the state should pay for continual training at 54%. More Swedes (68%) than the EU average indicated their willingness to pay at least part of the costs of their continual education and training.

SEVEN OUT OF 10 BRITS WOULD WELCOME E.U. INVOLVEMENT IN LIFELONG LEARNING

A surprising 70% of British people believe that the European Union should be involved in some way in lifelong learning, and 74% of young people agree with this opinion. This percentage is above the European Union average in the survey (65%).

Lifelong learning is important for the British as 82% of the overall population, the third highest group in Europe, want to keep on learning. The main reason for this is to improve their qualifications. Interestingly, the UK has the highest percentage of people in Europe (14%) who said they want to learn to fill their leisure time. It also has the second highest percentage, along with Sweden, who are keen on lifelong learning in order to learn a language (12%).

Of those who do not want to keep on learning, most said it was because they did not see a reason to do so. The UK has the highest percentage of people in the EU who said they 'did not know why they did not want to keep on learning' (20%).

94% of British people say that continual education and training will help improve their working lives. This was the highest percentage of people in Europe to make this comment. and 84% say training will help improve their personal lives.

Despite showing an interest in continual education and training and saying that it would improve their lives, only just over half (51%) of the British feel that this is an absolute necessity for them.

However a fairly high level of respondents (31%) have undertaken some form of training in the last 12 months - the third highest grouping in Europe to have done so. Most have done so because they wanted to study (19%), but the UK has the second highest percentage of people in Europe (10%) who had done a training course following a request from an employer.

Changes in Society do not appear to be an overriding concern for the British with regard to education. Just over half of those surveyed say they are satisfied with the way in which school prepares young people for changes in Society (53%). And only 41% of young people say that changes in Society have affected their career choice.

The British are reasonably open to public involvement in training. 86% say that public authorities should contribute in some way to continual training, and most of them (86%) say that this should be done by encouraging trainee schemes.

Although most British people believe the State should pay for continual education (76%), quite a large proportion (47%) also believe that enterprises should foot the bill. Most British people (69%) are also willing to contribute financially to the costs of training courses.