

## STUDY ON IT-EMPLOYABILITY IN THE BANKING SECTOR

### Social Partners Conclusions

1. The European Social Partners in the banking sector welcome the study of Professor Prosperetti, financed by the European Commission within the framework of the European Social Dialogue, as a positive contribution to the understanding of the correlation between IT, training and employability in European banking.
2. The banking industry has experienced important changes caused by the development of information technologies, which has led to the setting up of new distribution channels such as Internet and telephone banking. In particular, the development of information technologies led to important changes in the organisational models in European banks.
3. The European Social Partners observe the following trends concerning IT, training and employability in European banking.
4. A preliminary inquiry made by the social partners and confirmed by the study show the important role of governments in providing a basic level of IT skills.
5. It is noticeable that the increasing use of IT has induced the development of new organisational models in European banks.
6. IT is seen as a complement rather than a substitute to human resources. It will become increasingly important that all bank employees have some IT skills as it will enhance employability. It can be noticed that the increasing use of IT leads to growing intermediate skills amongst some employees in the banking sector. In addition, the study shows that the increasing use of IT has not per se a negative impact on employment. However, as the level of IT skills can have an impact on employability, special attention should be given to the part of the workforce that lacks the new skills required for their job.
7. As far as IT training is concerned, the report shows that banks provide IT training ranging from medium to high level training and that banks should continue to take into account new developments in IT. However, training policies are usually the result of the competitive strategy of banks. It is therefore difficult to draw general conclusions on training policies for all European banks.
8. One of the most important conclusions that can be drawn from the study is that the increasing development of IT in the European banking sector has induced new organisation of work, which require ever more qualified and trained employees. The public authorities, the banks and the employees all have to share responsibility of training. The share of responsibility means the use of an efficient educational system, the willingness of the employees to acquire skills inside and outside the company, and the banks offering or making accessible training opportunities, when appropriate within working hours.
9. The study indicated that there may be some correlation between age and the level of IT training received. In view of the demographic development, with less young people and

more older employees on the labour market, this is an aspect that the social partners may wish to consider further in national or company level discussions, for instance on special training initiatives.

10. The European social partners see IT training as a possible tool amongst others to attract people to the banking sector and to provide them with career development opportunities.

11. The European social partners would like to make reference to their 1998 Common Statement on the European Commission Green Paper on a Partnership for a New Organisation of Work which, in their opinion, can be transposed almost identically to the subject of IT-Employability in the Banking Sector:

- Public authorities should ensure that individuals acquire proper IT skills since an early age that should correspond to the fast growing needs of the labour market. They should also ensure that those IT skills enable individuals to improve their employability throughout their whole professional career
- The banks should continue to promote IT training
- The employees should take full advantage of the IT training opportunities that are available to them, both externally and within their bank.
- The banks and the employees should continue to cooperate in a trustful and responsible manner

12. The European Social Partners agree to disseminate the results and conclusions of the study to all interested parties, including the national social partners. They also agree to examine the possibility to conduct further initiatives on the subject of IT employability in the banking sector.