



EN RLMM Anthology 2018

DEVELOPING SKILLS IN A CHANGING WORLD OF WORK: Concepts, Measurement and Data Applied in Regional and Local Labour Market Monitoring Across Europe

Each year the EN RLMM publishes an Anthology of papers. The topic for the next call is “Changing Need for Qualifications, Soft Skills and Competencies: Assessment in Regional Labour Market Monitoring” and we are now looking for new contributions from labour market researchers and practitioners. A number of papers from the Anthology will be presented at the Annual Meeting of the EN RLMM taking place on 10 and 11 September 2018 in Exeter, UK.

Many firms are going through dynamic processes of change, which result from technological developments such as digitalisation, but also from the increasingly global orientation of firms and demographic changes. The interdependencies arising from these developments lead to the transformation of work and employment and can result in regional shortages of skilled labour. Consequently, different labour market groups such as the employed and the unemployed, but also young people entering the labour market for the first time need to have the right skills to master these changes. Furthermore, employability is not a condition which is reached once and for all – it needs to be continuously addressed so that it can be retained also in processes of change.

The development of suitable skills seems to be key to retaining employability. In European discourses and also at the regional level the term “skills” is used in a multi-faceted manner. For example, there is a differentiation between hard and soft skills or transferable skills. These are skills, which can be acquired mainly through training. In the past years, in many regions the term “competencies” has gained popularity over the term “skills”. It denotes attitudes and behaviours, which manifest themselves as motivation, interest, flexibility and responsibility. These are seen as essential preconditions for shaping change processes. However, it still needs to be considered how these competencies can be systematically imparted since the traditional learning forms and venues fall short. To meet the rising requirements of firms towards skills and competencies, VET providers need to specify the demand and complement their traditional offers ideally with individualised learning formats in work process.

Even though the growing importance of skills and competency development for retaining employability is undisputed, its specific implementation in the regions and localities in Europe needs to be explored. We are interested whether and how regional and local labour market observatories are involved in these processes.



Therefore, we would like to invite the members of the European Network on Regional Labour Market Monitoring to send in their contributions covering the following perspectives:

- **Skills and competency needs in different sectors, occupations, areas of work and types of firms:** How can they be measured? Which concepts are often used and what kind of quantitative and qualitative data are available?
- **Skills and competency needs of different target groups of labour market policies** (e.g. Generation Z, 50 plus, migrants, refugees, disabled, low qualified, part time, unemployed, students, ...): How can these needs be captured and how does the skills and competency development take place? Which qualitative and quantitative data can be used for depicting the situation?
- **Demand-oriented skills and competency development and the role of different regional and local actors:** How can the gap between firms and the providers of further education be bridged? How can these efforts be embedded in the regional and local economy? How can coalitions of regional actors be used for enhancing skills and competency development? How can skills paths be defined and implemented for important regional occupations? Which role could the regional and local observatories play in this?
- **Innovative firm-based and external formats for developing skills and competencies:** Which formats are suited for continuous learning? Which formats are suited for stimulating behaviours/motivation? Which role could the providers of further education and regional/local labour market observatories play?

Connected to the four thematic fields, the following questions should be addressed in particular:

- Which concepts or definitions of skills and competencies are used?
- How can these be operationalised and measured?
- Which quantitative and qualitative data sources relevant to this topic exist in regions and localities?

It is possible to introduce approaches, which are concerned with transferring informal knowledge and skills into formal structures and processes. The focus could be on the processes of competency measuring and their alignment with the formal structures and processes, for example in the VET system.

If you would like to submit a paper, please send the Network Manager Sigrud Rand the preliminary title of the contribution and a short abstract by **10 February 2018**. The papers should be submitted to Sigrud Rand latest by **30 April 2018**. If you have any further questions, please contact Sigrud Rand: s.rand@em.uni-frankfurt.de. We look forward to your contributions!