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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Croatia: How is the EU newest member performing on vocational education and training and lifelong learning?

To mark Croatia's accession to the European Union (EU) on 1 July 2013, Cedefop has prepared a statistical overview on vocational education and training (VET) and lifelong learning in the country. Selected for their policy relevance and importance to achieving the Europe 2020 strategy's objectives, the indicators quantify key aspects of VET and lifelong learning and relate Croatia's performance to the EU average.

Key findings for Croatia

- Initial VET is well represented at upper secondary level, accounting for more than 70 % of students enrolled at this level in 2011, well above the EU average of 50 %.
- Participation in continuing vocational training (CVT) and adult learning is low compared to other European countries. In 2010, around 23 % of employees participated in CVT courses, well below the EU average of 38 %. However, a relatively high number of Croatian enterprises, around 57 %, provided training in 2010.
- Participation by adults aged 24 to 64 in lifelong learning was at 2.4 % in 2012, well below the EU average of 9 %. The European target is an average of 15 % by 2020.
- In 2012, the percentage of 30 to 34 year-olds with a university-level or equivalent vocational qualification was close to the EU average of 9 %.
- In the same year, some 22 % of 18 to 24 year-olds were not in employment, education or training, compared to the EU average of 17 %.
- Latest data show that in Croatia some 24 % of people aged 30 to 34 have at least a tertiary-level qualification, compared to 36 % at the EU level. The trend, however, is clearly upward as the 24 % rate in 2012 compares to just 16 % ten years ago.

- In 2012, 55 % of adults aged 20 to 64 were employed in Croatia (the lowest level in Europe together with Greece), compared to the EU average of 68 %. However, fewer adults had low levels of education, around 21 % of people aged 20 to 64, compared to the EU average of 26 %.

Responsibility for reporting on Croatia has passed from the European Training Foundation (ETF) to Cedefop following the country's accession to the EU. At a knowledge-sharing seminar involving Cedefop and ETF in April, Vesna Hrvoj-Šić, Senior Adviser on VET at the Croatian Ministry of Science, Education and Sports, said: 'We expect Cedefop to support us in joining the club. Up to now, working with ETF, we were comparing [our practices to those in the EU]. Our main challenge is not education itself but the impact on the EU labour market. We've been looking at what's happening in our neighbourhood and we'll now find ourselves in a new situation.'

Cedefop's Loukas Zahilas, Senior Expert on qualifications and learning outcomes, noted: 'We are looking forward to cooperating with Croatia, the 28th member of our big European family and working together to develop European VET policy.'

Read the full statistical overview on Croatia here:

<http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/articles/21604.aspx>

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About Cedefop

The European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop), an agency of the European Union based in Thessaloniki, Greece, supports European policy-making in the field of vocational education and training. www.cedefop.europa.eu

