



Reykjavik, 30 April 2009

On behalf of the Keeping On Track partnership of Lifelong Learning Programme National Agencies in 12 European countries, and the Nordic Network for Adult Learners (NVL), I would like to invite you to the conference

KEEPING ON TRACK **upgrading the skills of migrants, older workers and women in** **healthcare, service and social sectors in Europe**

in **Prague on 4-5 June 2009**

The knowledge, skills and competences Europe needs to compete successfully in a global labour market is a major question on the European Union policy agenda today and the re-launched Lisbon strategy and other policy documents stress the need for Europe to do more to anticipate changing skill needs. The EU and other stakeholders have played an important role in the last decade in stimulating discussion and action about upgrading the skills of workers in Europe in relation to the overall goal set out in the Lisbon Agenda in 2000. However, despite substantial progress, the vision of a Europe with highly-skilled people, a flexible and adaptable workforce with a high degree of social inclusion, is still far from reality.

While technological change and innovation have raised demand for higher-skilled people across all occupations, demographic change in Europe also raises concern for Europe's labour market. Around 2009, there will be fewer 15 to 24 year olds than those aged 55 to 64 and European labour markets will have to rely increasingly on *migrants*, *older workers* and *women* returning to work. More people from a wider range of groups will thus need to participate in education and training. This also means matching skills demand and supply more accurately as the number of low-skilled people in Europe is high.

Focusing on these challenges the **Keeping On Track** conference will bring together labour market representatives, policy-makers, educators, experts and other stakeholders to look at how the skills of migrants, older workers and women who work in the *healthcare*, *service* and *social* sectors, which are all important future sectors in the European labour market, can be upgraded to allow Europe to compete successfully in a global labour market. A focus will also be placed on what role EU programmes such as the Lifelong Learning Programme and the Social Funds can play in helping meet future demands for skilled labour.

We would be happy if you could attend the conference and kindly ask you to pass on this information to others who may be interested in attending.

We look forward to hearing from you and seeing you in Prague!

Ágúst H. Ingþórsson
Director, LLP National Agency Iceland





BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The **Keeping On Track** conference is organised under the auspices of a Lifelong Learning Programme grant and is organised by partners in 13 European countries; LLP National Agencies in Austria, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Finland, Hungary, Iceland, Latvia, Norway, Poland, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, and the Nordic Network for Adult Learning (NVL). We are expecting more than one hundred participants from these and other European countries.

Since 2000, there has been progress on several issues set out in the Lisbon Agenda in regards to the upgrading of Europe's labour force. Despite substantial progress, the vision of a Europe with highly-skilled people, a flexible and adaptable workforce with a high degree of social inclusion, is still far from reality. A 2007 Council Resolution, "*New skills for new jobs*",¹ stressed the need to anticipate the skill needs and skill gaps emerging in the European labour market and the 2008 Spring Council called for a comprehensive assessment of skill requirements in Europe up to the year 2020. As a follow-up to this request, the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop) has carryout out analysis and a forecast of employment and skill needs across Europe until 2020 and identified labour market trends publishing a skill supply forecast analysing possible future labour market imbalances.²

The **Keeping On Track** conference will focus on how the European education system, European enterprises and EU's Lifelong Learning Programme and Social Funds can help meet the future skill needs of the European labour market in order for Europe to compete successfully in a global labour market. Particular focus will be placed on how labour market representatives, educational institutes, labour offices and policy-makers can collaborate on the up-skilling of migrants, older workers and migrants working in the healthcare, service and social sectors which will continue to be very important sectors in the future European labour market. Due to demographic changes the European labour market will in the next years change profoundly. Thus better inclusion of a wider range of groups into the labour market and participation in continuing education and training in order to meet the skills needs are required. Labour shortages in the healthcare, service and social sectors have also been identified in several European countries. The Cedefop analyses referred to above stress that the direct commitment of all stakeholders is essential in attracting these target groups to education and training.

The conference will consist of a *marketplace* where "best practices" from the Grundtvig, Leonardo and Social Fund programmes will be presented and the best ones receive an award, key note presentations on the theme, national best practices and roundtables with key stakeholders. The goal of the presentations is to set the context for the discussion about up-skilling the European labour force and give an overview of current developments and main challenges in the area. In the three roundtable sessions which are divided along the three different target groups, experts will provide views on core challenges for the respective target groups and "best practice" projects will be highlighted.

¹ See the Council Resolution (15/11/07) *New skills for new jobs* at <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2007:290:0001:0003:EN:PDF>

² See the full Cedefop report (14/07/08) *Skill needs in Europe – focus on 2020* at http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/etv/Upload/Information_resources/Bookshop/498/5191_en.pdf





PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Date and Conference venue

From Thursday 4 June 2009, starting at 16:00 and ending on Friday 5 June 2009 at 17:00.

Hotel Mövenpick, Mozartova 1, 150 00 Prague, www.moevenpick-hotels.com

Registration

Participants are requested to register as soon as possible using the „registration online form“ available at the following URL address: http://www.keepingontrack.net/page/kot_conference

The deadline for registration is **8 May 2009**. A confirmation letter will be sent to all participants registered by this deadline.

Programme

For further information about the content of the conference and the latest updates of the programme, please consult regularly the conference website at www.keepingontrack.net. The working language of the conference will be **English** (no interpretation will be provided).

MarketPlace

If you are a current or former project promoter (any EU or national programme) and would like to showcase your project or project outputs at the Marketplace, please contact *Eyrún María Rúnarsdóttir* (emr@hi.is) who will send you further information on registering your project.

Fees and Accommodation

Registration fee is **€110**. Included in the registration fee are all conference materials, dinner on 4 June, lunch on 5 June and light refreshments and coffee during breaks.

Accommodation has been reserved for all participants at Hotel Mövenpick and can be booked at the same time you register for the conference. Accommodation costs are:

One night:	€ 80	Two nights:	€ 160	Three nights:	€ 240
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Travel

Participants are expected to organise their own travel. The organisers will not reimburse these expenses. Information on flights and more general information on Prague can be obtained at the following websites:

www.czechairlines.com www.prague-holiday.cz/

The nearest metro station, 5 minutes walk (Andel)

The nearest tram station: 5 minutes walk (Andel)

Grants

Participants who would like to use this opportunity to find products to transfer or meet potential new partners can apply for a **Leonardo Preparatory Visit Grant** at the Lifelong Learning Programme National Agency in their own country. Preparatory visit grants cover costs related to travel, registration fees and accommodation.

Further information

For further information, please contact:

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