

Vocational training: Community action programme 2000-2004, Leonardo da Vinci, 2nd phase

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This report was written to fulfil the requirements set out in the European Parliament and Council decisions establishing the Community action programmes in the field of education ([Socrates 2000-2006](#)), vocational training (Leonardo da Vinci 2000-2006) and integration of information and communication technologies (ICT) in education and training systems in Europe ([eLearning 2004-2006](#)).

Together, these programmes received more than **EUR 3 billion of Community funds**.

For the period 2007-2013, the various initiatives under these three programmes have been integrated under a single umbrella, the new [Lifelong Learning Programme](#) (LLP). The decision to conduct a joint evaluation and to present this joint report follows the same line as this integration.

The **Leonardo da Vinci** programme had three main objectives: (i) to improve skills, especially of young people in initial vocational training; (ii) to improve the quality of and access to continuous vocational training and lifelong acquisition of skills and qualifications; and (iii) to promote and increase the contribution made by vocational training to the process of innovation with a view to improving competitiveness and entrepreneurship and creating new employment opportunities. The total budget for the Leonardo da Vinci programme was EUR 1.270 billion.

The programme included six areas of activity: (i) mobility; (ii) pilot projects; (iii) language skills; (iv) transnational networks; (v) reference material; and (vi) accompanying measures. Joint action with related programmes was also envisaged.

Results of the evaluation: the Leonardo da Vinci programme responded to the needs for vocational education and training, fostered further cooperation at Community level and helped to achieve convergence between Member States by clearly aligning its multiannual priorities with the policy objectives addressed in the Copenhagen process.

Significant socio-economic benefits have been achieved in relation to young people in VET. The projects contributed to improving their knowledge and their **capacity for lifelong acquisition of skills**. Improved foreign language skills were another major benefit for young people participating in the mobility part of the programme, making them more employable and adaptable to labour market developments.

The mobility schemes and pilot cooperation projects also considerably influenced the development of high-quality curricula and teaching methods in the institutions participating, as 63% of the respondents confirmed. By organising transnational cooperation and placements, the programme contributed to further opening up VET systems and, thereby, to greater transparency in curricula and qualifications.

The programme also made an impact on VET policy by developing standards, methods and tools that were integrated into national or regional policy and practice. The policy impact was strongest at local (71% of respondents) and regional (57%) levels, since many of the partners in projects are active at these levels. Country-specific analyses showed that the impact was stronger in countries with underdeveloped VET systems, i.e. mainly the new participants.

Overall, the programme contributed to creating a **European VET area** which otherwise would not have developed at all or at best at a much slower pace. The most significant contribution made by the programme to the Lisbon goals was to improve the skills and, thus, labour market opportunities of young people.