



A typology of Training Cultures in Enterprises. Evidences from European Case Studies

Jörg Markowitsch

Danube University Krems
University

ASEM-LLL Research Network 2: Workplace Learning
11-13 July 2011 AK –Bildungshaus Seehof, Innsbruck



Context of the Research

- **Subproject within the LLL2010 project (FP6) – coordinated by Ellu Saar (Tallinn University)**
- **Significance of formal adult education for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and their employees compared to other forms of learning and training**
- **Case studies in SMEs (10-249 employees) of two sector families (group of sectors in manufacturing; business-to-business services); interviews with the management and employees participating in formal adult education (approx. 250 interviews and 89 cases in 12 countries)**

Contrasting Education and Training

(Fig. from R. Scott and J. Meyer (1994), *The Rise of Training Programs in Firms and Agencies. An Institutional Perspective*, in: *Institutional environments and organizations*, p. 238.

Education	Training
<p>Learning as an end in itself Future Utility Understanding</p>	<p>Learning as means to an end Present Utility Results</p>
<p>Theoretical Subject-oriented Concepts emphasized</p>	<p>Practical Task-oriented Skills emphasized</p>
<p>Teacher active; students passive Students dependent Students differences minimized</p>	<p>Both teacher and students active Students independent Students differences emphasized</p>
<p>Cooperation forbidden Learning only from teacher</p>	<p>Cooperation encouraged Learning from each other</p>

**FORMAL
ADULT
EDUCATION**

Goals

*S-S-
Relation*

Examples for the variety of formal adult education

Example	Origin of the Example	Duration of the program	Number of teaching hours (approx.)
Fork Lift Driving Licence	Belgium/Flanders	3 Days	24
Safety regulation training	Scotland	5 Days	40
Preparation course for apprenticeship examination - Logistics	Austria	9 Month	220
Technical Vocational School (ISCED4)	Estonia	4 years	3200

Types	A	B	C	D	E
Level of support	Low	Medium	Medium	High	High
Level of organisational initiative					
1. Acknowledging verbally the interest and accepting interference					
2. Regularly supportive activities of any kind					
3. Substantial support at least in particular circumstances					
4. Co-initiating at least in particular situations					
5. Adjustments of organisational needs and participation requirements on a general basis	-	-	-	√	√
6. At least financial support or working time is offered on a general basis	-	-	-	√	√
7. At least one initiative on project basis to increase formal adult education for a group of employees	-	-	-		√

Criteria:

- to pay more than 50% of the participation fees, or
- to accept participation during working hours of at least 30%, or
- to support the finalisation of a thesis or other project work using examples or resources of the company, or
- to offer any clear reward for completion, for example, a promotion or wage increase

A Typology of Support for Formal Adult Education

Type	Characterisation
Ignorance (A)	The enterprise takes no initiatives to promote participation in formal adult education. The enterprise shows little support for formal adult education
Acceptance (B)	The enterprise takes no initiatives to promote participation in formal adult education - In individual cases, the enterprises offers some forms of support, mainly with regard to work schedules and the permission to use actual work activities also for educational purposes
Individualized Support (C)	The enterprise supports individuals to participate in formal adult education, but do not set up projects – Support is agreed mainly on an individual basis, is substantial at least in some cases and includes financial support and/or devotion of some working time to the program
Principle Support (D)	The enterprise offers support for formal adult education in several ways. A general policy of support (even when concretised on an individual basis), is substantial, at least in some cases, and includes financial support and/or devotion of some working time to the programme – at least sometimes, the enterprise initiates formal adult education
Integrated Support (E)	The enterprise offers support for formal adult education in several ways, some of them on a regular basis, including financial support and the devotion of working time – programmes leading to formal adult education are established for one or more groups of employees

Two Examples

Acceptance **XY-trucks** (Slovenia, 50-99 employees): The management of the enterprise appreciates participation in formal adult education and expects benefits for the company. However, no policy to support participation is in place. For the current participants, the enterprise does not contribute to tuition fees, nor devote working time for the participation.

Integrated support **XY-Chemicals** (Austria, 50-99 employees): The company organizes – on a permanent basis – a preparation program for exceptional apprenticeship examination for chemical technicians (blue collar; ISCED 3a). Due to skill shortage, it attracts unskilled workers (normally trained in an other field then chemistry) and offers them the opportunity to join the 18 month in-house program (two third within the working time, adjusted to the companies shift work). All costs are covered. For successful completion, employees are going to be promoted including a substantial increase in payment. Additionally, the enterprise invites regularly employees to prepare for foreman examination (ISCED5b). Other formal adult education programs are strongly encouraged, but supported on individual agreements.

Understanding enterprises' agency in the field of training: Reactive versus expansive training cultures

Reactive Training Cultures

Training mainly seen as a cost factor and therefore minimized

The average training activity (over a multi-year period) is comparatively low

Experiences with and competences about the use of training are restricted to smaller groups of employees

Training mainly reacts to a need, the training volume depends on the increase/decrease of this needs

Changes in external factors may lead directly to more/less training

Expansive Training Cultures

Training is understood as an investment with significant value added

The training activity is high and tends to make full use of the potential to support workplace learning

Experiences with and competences about the use of training are widely diffused within the organisation, providing a framework for further improvements

Within an existing potential (Training Potential, TP), the use of training and other opportunities to support learning at the workplace are optimised; changes in external requirements influence only the composition of the range of training activities, not the level of activity

Changes in external factors have little effect on the level of training activities

Reactive Training Culture

Expansive Training Culture

Minimizing

Streamlining

Orientating

Experimenting

Elaborating

Optimising

	Minimizing	Streamlining	Orientating	Experimenting	Elaborating	Optimising
[I] Level of commitment	low	Low to medium	High	Medium to High	High	High
[II] Level of activity	Low	Low to medium	High	Medium to High	High	High
[III] Proportion of training potential used	Low	Low to medium	High	Medium to High	High	High
[IV] Constancy of use of training potential	Constant low	Constant low	Constant high	Constant high	Constant high	Constant high
[V] Proportion of inevitable training	High	High	Low	Low	Low	Low
[VI] Distributed experience & participation	Low	Medium	Low	Medium	Medium to high	High
[VII] Range of experience	Low	Low	Low	Medium to high	Medium to high	High
[VIII] Dependency of external drivers	High	High	Low	Low	Low	Low
[IX] Momentum	Towards a minimum required	Towards a minimum required	Towards a minimum required	Towards full potential	Towards full potential	Towards full potential

Example for criteria:

low – less than 10 participants or less than 20 hours
Example for criteria:

For the average of employees ... 40 hours per year for ISCED (0-2), 50 hours for ISCED 3-4, 60 hours for ISCED 5-6

Example for Reactive Training Culture: Streamlining

XY-packaging Ireland (20-49) is engaged in a niche market of the printing sector and limits training to that required by regulations and short-term needs in particular workplaces. The HR is described literally, 'like [in] many small companies, it's as is or as needs insist'. Nearly any activity around organising training and workplace learning is informal and not regulated. Training-needs analyses are performed in order to meet quality-management criteria. Available training includes courses offered by organisations training for that sector with training for computer applications and for newly acquired printing facilities. Recently, within a lean management project, regular training activities were introduced to increase productivity-training activities. Training is clearly understood as a cost factor – even when fees are covered by public funds, the loss of working time is seen as serious handicap. The management is quite sceptical on the short-range returns of investments in training. Overall training activity is significant, but the use of the assumed training potential is clearly low. Learning on the job was clearly the most favoured way of acquiring new skills. Opportunities for workplace learning are somewhat restricted, given the stable production in a mature niche market. Because of the importance of optimising a given way of production, the workplace-learning regime seems more restrictive. Levels of organisational learning could be regarded as low to medium, but mainly focussed on competing on costs in a mature and shrinking market. (EDC/CSHD SP4 Project Team (2008)).

Example for Expansive Training Culture: Optimising

A+ Pharma Research and Distribution (Russia, Chemical, 100-249) is engaged in research and production as well as gross sales for a wide range of products needed by medical laboratories. Three university researchers founded the company in the early days of Russia's new capitalism; the enterprise experienced rapid growth in recent years, developing from a local supplier to a principal actor in the Russian market. Currently, 85 per cent of the staff are highly qualified, 60 out of 200 employees engage in research and development activities. Nearly 120 employees have obtained higher education degrees. The company works in a quickly expanding yet unstable market, subject to external shocks such as quickly changing regulations and tax requirements. Securing 'western' quality at a locally competitive price level is key for the success, requiring continual innovation. The firm has a HRD manager. All employees have a yearly appraisal interview that includes discussing individual training plans. Workplace learning is supported by regular meetings, collaboration in multidisciplinary project teams, job rotation and regular attendance of seminars and conferences. Nearly all the staff are engaged in in-house training activities. Aside from more regular activities in different fields (for example, learning about new products), training includes project-based, targeted programmes (in the year of the interview, a programme for all members of the sales staff). About 10 per cent (in 2007) attend external educational programmes; in particular, university-based formal programmes. The company regularly covers 50-100 per cent of tuition fees and grants free-days to attend courses and prepare for examinations. Training costs are about 8-10 per cent of the wage costs, each employee participates an average of between 5-6 days in training a year. (Khokhlova, 2008)

Training cultures & Support patterns for Formal Adult Education



Cross Tabulation of Training Cultures & Support Patterns

	'Ignorance' 'Acceptance'	'Individual support'	'Support in Principle' 'Integrated Support'
Reactive Training Cultures	44%	30%	26%
Expansive Training Cultures	13%	33%	54%

Source: LLL2010/SP4 Data N=74

List of drivers for support of formal adult education and training cultures discussed - based on the case studies

Features of sectors

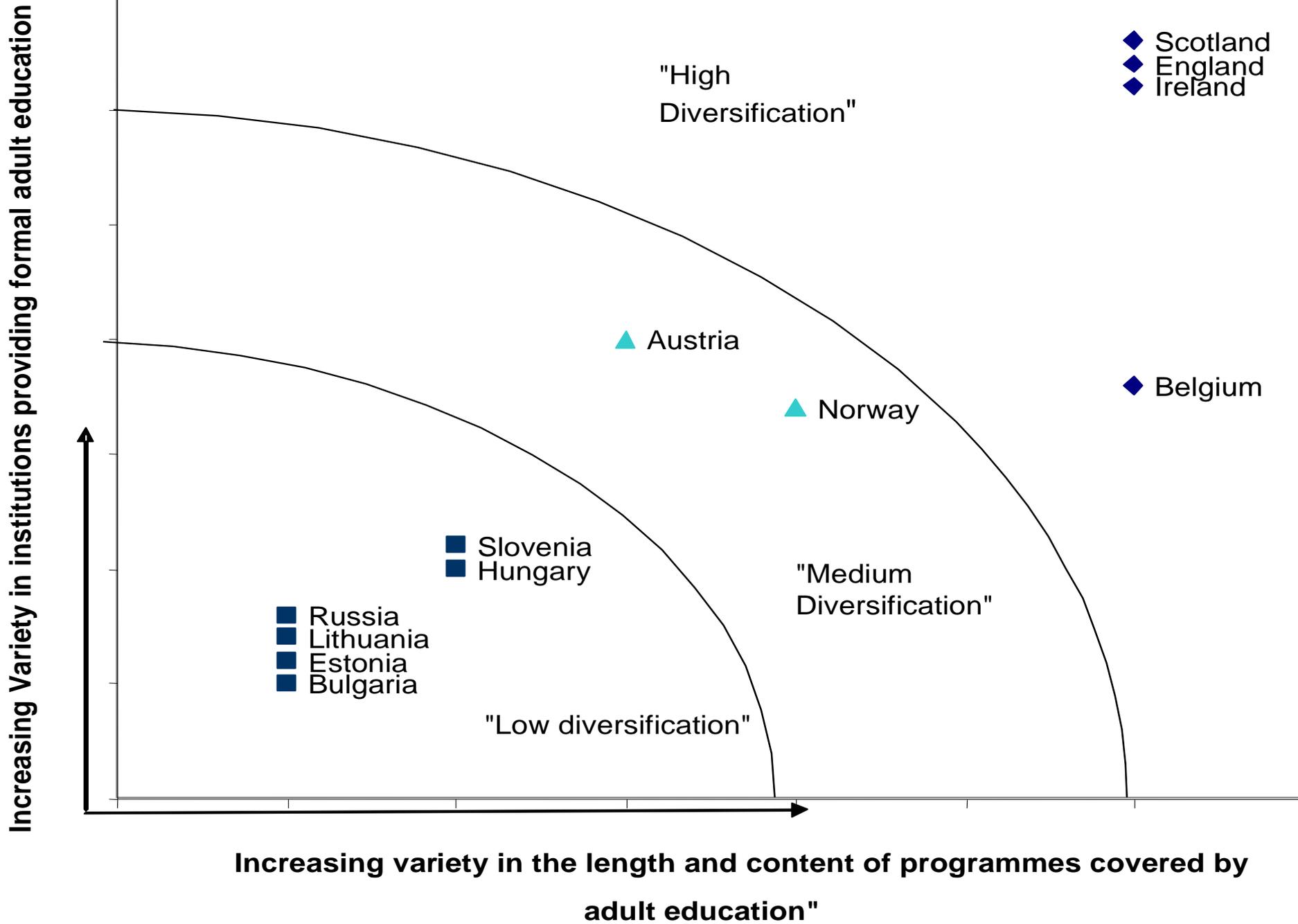
- Legal obligations to provide training in specific fields
- Requirements of quality management systems
- Dynamic of technological development
- High degree of innovation in the sector
- High global competition in the sector
- Level of qualification demand
- Skill-shortages for the relevant level on the labour market

Organisationally related issues

- Maturity of organisation - Time for organisational development
- Tenure structure of the work force
- Fast-growing organisations
- Size of the firm
- High-performance, high-trust regime
- Specific skills used in the company
- Stability of employment relations

LLL System/ Formal adult education system

- Availability of providers of formal adult education
 - Level of fees for formal compared to non-formal adult education
 - Availability for public co-funding for training
 - Quality and flexibility of provision in formal adult education
-



Diversification of Formal Adult Education & support by SMEs

- In countries with a low degree of diversification, the level of support for formal adult education can be comparatively high. However, the opportunities for customised formal adult education limited. Moreover, enterprises are more often unsatisfied with the available formal education programmes.
- In countries with a more flexible approach, we found more examples for a systematic integration of formal adult education within the context of the companies.
- Finally, in countries with a high degree of diversification, the border between formal and non-formal become blurred, so we seldom found specific strategies favouring formal adult education. Support for formal and non-formal education follows the same principle.

References & Further Reading

- Markowitsch, J. & G. Hefler (Eds.) (2008): *Enterprise Training in Europe*. Vol. 1, Lit- Verlag: Vienna
- Hefler, G. & J. Markowitsch (2010) Formal adult learning and working in Europe: a new typology of participation patterns. *Journal for workplace learning*, 22, 79-93.
- Hefler, G. & J. Markowitsch (forthcoming): 'The qualification providing enterprise? Support for formal adult education in small and medium organisations', in: Riddell, S., Roberts, P. & J. Markowitsch *Lifelong learning in Europe: Equity and efficiency in the balance*, The Policy Press: Bristol.
- Hefler, G. & J. Markowitsch (forthcoming): 'Bridging Institutional Divides: Linking formal adult education and work in 'organizational space' and 'skill space' dominated employment systems.' in: *New Spaces of Education. The Changing Nature of Learning in the 21st Century*, ed. by R. Brooks, A. Fuller & J. Waters, Routledge.
- Hefler, G. (forthcoming) *Taking steps - Formal adult education in private and organisational life: A comparative view*. Wien, LIT-Verlag.

