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Training after 30 years of age

According to the results of the Labour Force Survey, just over 8 million Europeans over 30 years of age declared in Spring 1996 that they had received teaching or training in the four weeks preceding the interview.

Training rates are higher in northern Europe: 11.8% in Denmark, 11.7% in Sweden, 10.7% in Finland, 8.6% in the Netherlands and 7.4% in the United Kingdom, as against an EU average of 3.6%.

Current statistical tools do not permit all training measures aimed at the unemployed to be identified. Thus, this study focuses on the 6.3 million people in employment following training. It emerges that being new to the job and having qualifications are important factors in increasing training opportunities.

Education and lifelong training: different stakes

Of the multiple forms of education/training for people over 30 years of age, three main ones can be highlighted.

The first consists of providing new recruits with knowledge specific to enterprises. This is either a matter of rounding off initial training to make it working knowledge or putting across what is generally called "corporate culture". In other words, the training is geared towards making the employee "productive".

In the second case, training is an adjustment to technological progress as, for example, with the com-

puterisation of counter transactions in banking. Knowledge acquired during initial studies or in the first years in an enterprise has to be expanded or updated. In this type of training, certain enterprises go no further than to follow the advance of technologies and adapt their employees to this, while others seek to anticipate such progress in order to create "niches" of productivity by changing skills.

Lastly, as unemployment has risen in the last 20 years, training has also been aimed at providing the unemployed with skills or new skills. It aims to equip them better to find work. In this context, training is a decisive factor in employment policy.

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Lifelong learning: more common in the Scandinavian countries, the United Kingdom and the Netherlands

In Spring 1996, nearly 8.1 million Europeans aged 30 and older declared that they had received education or training during the four weeks preceding the interview.

In the United Kingdom alone, 2.6 million did so, followed by Germany (1.4 million), the Netherlands (0.8 million), Italy and Sweden (0.6 million each).

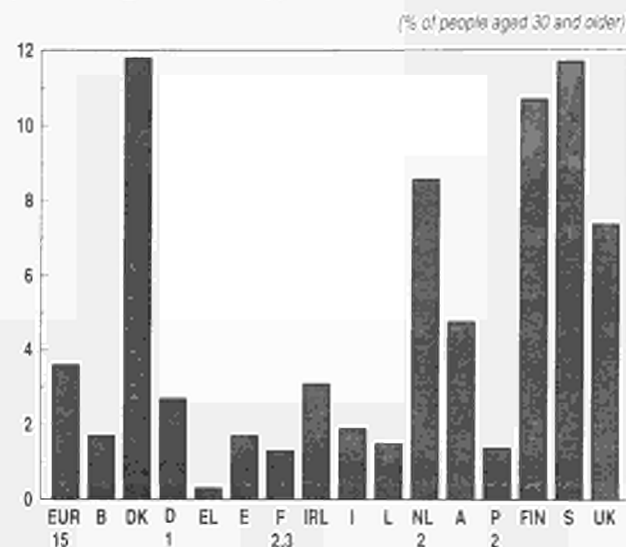
As a percentage of the adult population, approximately 3.6% of people over 30 in the European Union had received training over the last four weeks. The percentages are noticeably higher in Denmark (11.8%), Sweden (11.7%), Finland (10.7%), the Netherlands (8.6%) and the United Kingdom (7.4%). On the other hand, fewer than 2% of over-30s had received training in Belgium, Greece, Spain, Italy and Luxembourg (Figure 1). In France and Portugal, the figures were also low, but the different reference periods in these countries have to be taken into account.

Although the Labour Force Survey (LFS) questionnaire links training and employment, 1.3 million inactive people declared that they were following training (Table 2). Among males, the majority are retired (four out of five inactive men in training); the balance between housewives and retired women following training is more even.

According to the LFS, of 100 adults in training in the European Union in 1996, 77 were in employment, six were unemployed in the ILO sense, and 17 declared that they were not in the labour force.

The link between current training and unemployment is relatively difficult to analyse on the basis of the Labour Force Survey data. Because of the International Labour Office (ILO) criteria used in the LFS, it is possible for people who are out of work not to be recorded as unemployed because they are unavailable or not actively

Figure 1:
Adult participation in training over the four weeks preceding the survey, 1996



¹ 1995

² Information on training is collected only if this is under way on the date of the survey.

³ Exclusively in-house training is not covered



seeking employment, and to follow training at the same time. Furthermore, the criterion by which anyone is considered in employment if they have worked for at least one hour during the reference week means that people benefiting under any specific employment measure combining training and work are classed as being in employment.

As a result, in view of the difficulties of measuring all training aimed at the unemployed, it is wise to concentrate this analysis on persons in employment.

Table 1:
Adult participation in training over the four weeks preceding the survey, 1996

(% of people aged 30 and older)															
EUR15	B	DK	D ¹	EL	E	F ^{2,3}	IRL	I	L	NL ²	A	P ²	FIN	S	UK
3.6	1.7	11.8	2.7	0.3	1.7	1.3	3.1	1.9	1.5	8.6	4.8	1.4	10.7	11.7	7.4

¹ 1995.

² Information on training is collected only if this is under way on the date of the survey.

³ Exclusively in-house training is not covered.



Table 2 :
Training of adults and occupational status, 1996

(in thousands)

	EUR15	B	DK	D ¹	EL	E	F ^{2,3}	IRL	I	L	NL ²	A	P ²	FIN	S	UK
In employment	6 261	76	302	976	13	197	285	47	474	3	563	190	70	277	557	2 233
Unemployed⁴	503	10	22	116	-	89	55	-	26	-	30	11	5	25	13	97
Inactive	1 347	19	60	316	4	99	100	8	153	1	197	35	12	36	72	235
Total	8 111	105	383	1 408	18	384	440	57	653	4	790	235	87	338	642	2 565

- : unreliable data.

¹ 1995.

² Information on training is collected only if this is under way on the date of the survey.

³ Exclusively in-house training is not covered.

⁴ On account of what is stated in the text, these figures provide only a very partial view of all training measures aimed at the unemployed.

Source : Eurostat - LFS 1996.



Women in employment receive more training...

Of people in employment, women follow training programmes more often than men (Table 3). In the Union, an average 6.5% of women receive training, as against 5.0% of men. Only Austria shows decidedly higher rates of training for men, 8.3% as against 6.3% for women. By contrast, the countries where women lead by most are Denmark (19.1 for women and 13.8 for men), Sweden (19.4 and 15.8 respectively), Finland (18.4 and 15.2),

and also Ireland and the United Kingdom (more than two points' difference).

This relative predominance of women could be explained by the type of occupation. Thus, in the *professionals* category, some occupations have both a higher incidence of women and substantial continuing training (Figure 2). For example, over 18% of the women in the *Life science and health professionals* sub-set (doctors, nurses and midwives) are in training, as are 13% of female *Teaching professionals*.

Table 3 :
Training of adults in employment, by sex, 1996

(as % of people aged 30 and older in employment)

	EUR15	B	DK	D ¹	EL	E	F ^{2,3}	IRL	I	L	NL ²	A	P ²	FIN	S	UK
Males	5.0	2.9	13.8	3.6	0.4	1.7	1.5	4.3	2.6	2.7	11.1	8.3	1.8	15.2	15.8	10.6
Females	6.5	2.3	19.1	3.7	0.4	3.0	1.9	7.1	4.1	2.4	12.4	6.3	2.4	18.4	19.4	13.3

¹ 1995.

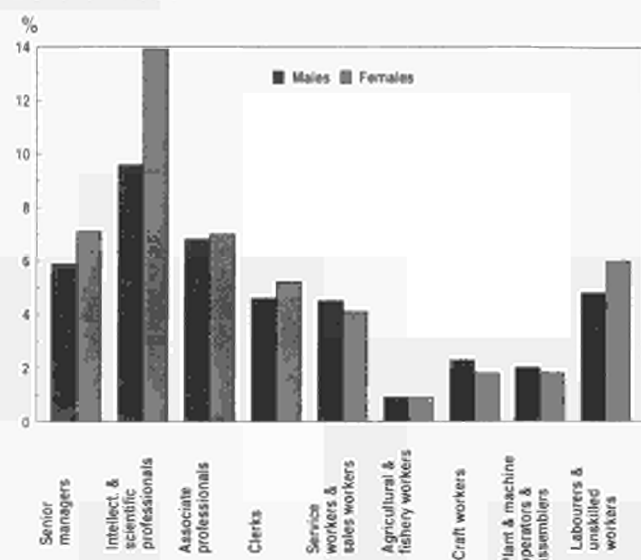
² Information on training is collected only if this is under way on the date of the survey.

³ Exclusively in-house training is not covered.

Source : Eurostat - LFS 1996.



Figure 2 :
Training of adults in employment by occupation¹
EUR15 - 1996



¹ The International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO-88 COM) to which the LFS refers is based on the international standard classification published by the International Labour Office (Geneva, 1990).

No data on occupations are available for Finland or Sweden.

Source : Eurostat - LFS 1996.



While it is an important factor, the structural effect by occupation alone is not sufficient to explain greater participation in training of women in employment. Other

considerations which cannot be measured from the Labour Force Survey may also be advanced, e.g. the need to undergo training after returning to work after maternity leave.

Furthermore, the measurement of training taken here does not take account of the duration of training and does not therefore justify the assertion that the supply of training expressed as the number of hours benefits women more.

... young adults, too.

People tend to receive less training as they get older: 7.3% of people in employment between 30 and 39 years of age are in training. The rate declines to 5.6% for those between 40 and 49, thence to 3.6% for those between 50 and 59 and finally to, below 2% of the over-60s. This pattern is repeated in all the Member States, with the exception of Sweden where the 40-49 age group has the highest rate of participation in training programmes of those in employment (Table 4).

The greater participation of young adults in training reflects the predominance of one type of training, designed to round off the skills and knowledge acquired at school to adapt them to the specific needs of the enterprise. This type of "adjustment-training" may be the necessary redirection of school or university education to match a recruit's skills to the real world of work, or - and this is no contradiction - to acquire in-house know-how or thinking.

Table 4 :
Training of adults in employment, by age, 1996

(as % of people aged 30 and older in employment)

	EUR15	B	DK	D ¹	EL	E	F ^{2,3}	IRL	I	L	NL ²	A	P ²	FIN	S	UK
30 - 39	7.3	3.2	18.5	5.5	0.8	4.1	2.5	7.7	3.8	3.4	16.3	9.3	4.2	19.0	18.5	15.1
40 - 49	5.6	2.5	17.8	3.3	0.4	1.9	1.4	4.8	3.5	2.6	9.8	7.0	1.9	17.1	19.6	12.7
50 - 59	3.6	1.8	12.7	1.9	-	0.6	0.7	3.1	1.8	-	6.2	5.0	0.5	14.5	16.4	7.9
60 and over	1.8	-	5.4	0.8	-	-	-	-	0.9	-	2.1	3.4	-	5.2	9.9	3.4

- : unreliable data.

¹ 1995.

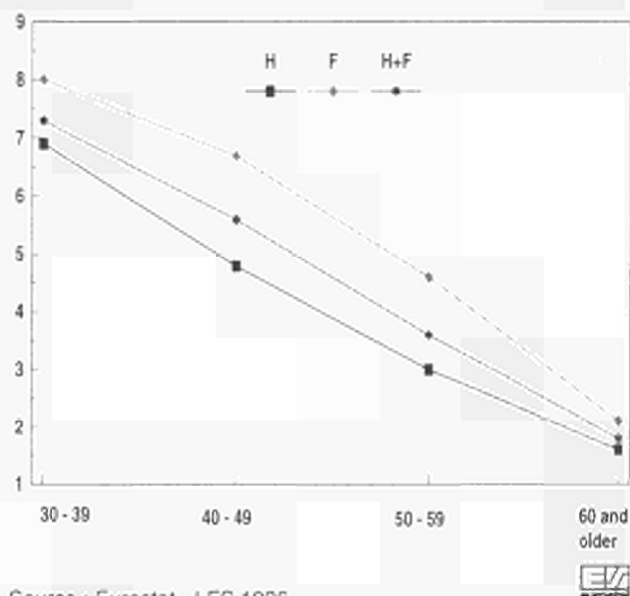
² Information on training is collected only if this is under way on the date of the survey.

³ Exclusively in-house training is not covered.

Source : Eurostat - LFS 1996



Figure 3 :
Training of adults in employment by age, EUR15 - 1996

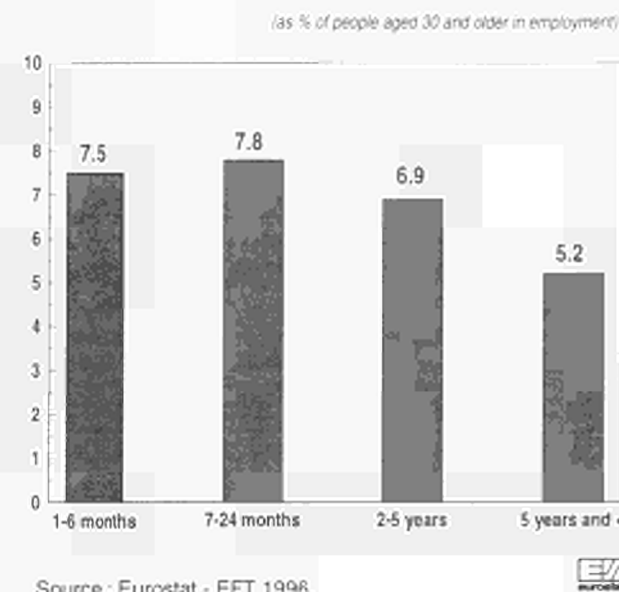


Source : Eurostat - LFS 1996.

This hypothesis is confirmed by the fact that participation in training tends to decrease with length of service in an enterprise (Figure 4). Thus, in the great majority of countries, continuing training is more often offered to persons occupying a job for less than two years. Germany, France, Ireland and Austria, in particular, tend to stress training in the first few months spent in the enterprise. In Ireland, for example, over 13% of individuals in their current position for less than six months undergo training, as against half as many thereafter.

On the other hand, the link between "frequent participation in training" and "joined the enterprise recently" is considerably less clear in the Scandinavian countries and the United Kingdom. In these countries, priority is not given to training new recruits. In fact, the two main forms of training received by people in employment over the age of 30 tend to coexist, i.e. training for new recruits and training of current employees to update their knowledge and to put them in a position to follow, to adjust to and even to anticipate technological change.

Figure 4:
Adult training and length of service in current position, EUR15 - 1996



Source : Eurostat - EFT 1996.

Table 5:
Adult training and length of service in current position, EUR15 - 1996

(as % of people aged 30 and older in employment)

	EUR15	B	DK	D ¹	EL	E	F ^{2,3}	IRL	I	L	NL ²	A	P ²	FIN	S	UK
1-6 months	7.5	-	19.4	7.5	-	2.1	3.4	13.4	4.0	-	12.8	12.5	-	14.8	15.1	12.7
7-24 months	7.8	3.9	15.6	6.2	-	3.4	1.9	7.7	2.9	-	17.3	9.1	2.4	15.7	18.1	12.5
2-5 years	6.9	3.0	18.1	4.4	-	3.2	2.3	6.4	3.5	-	15.1	7.5	3.7	18.2	16.5	12.1
5 years and +	5.2	2.5	15.7	3.0	0.4	1.9	1.4	4.4	3.1	2.6	10.5	7.1	1.9	17.2	19.0	11.3

- : unreliable data.

¹ 1995.

² Information on training is collected only if this is under way on the date of the survey.

³ Exclusively in-house training is not covered.

Source : Eurostat - LFS 1996.

Table 6 :
Training of adults in employment by level of education, 1996

(as % of people aged 30 and in employment)

	EUR15	B	DK	D ¹	EL	E	F ^{2,3}	IRL	I	L	NL ²	A	P ²	FIN	S	UK
ISCED 0-2	2.6	0.8	6.4	1.2	-	0.6	0.7	2.3	1.0	1.3	6.7	3.7	0.7	8.1	10.8	7.1
ISCED 3	5.5	2.7	14.4	3.0	0.6	3.6	1.5	5.3	4.9	3.1	12.5	6.6	6.6	14.0	17.4	10.9
ISCED 5-7	10.8	4.7	24.1	6.5	1.2	5.6	3.6	8.6	7.5	4.4	15.7	13.8	6.9	31.7	24.5	21.1

- : unreliable data.

¹ 1995.

² Information on training is collected only if this is under way on the date of the survey.

³ Exclusively in-house training is not covered.

Source : Eurostat - LFS 1996.



More qualifications means more training

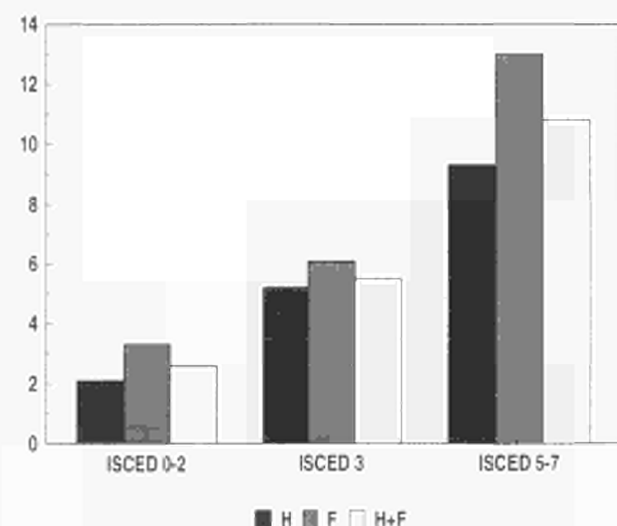
Analysis of training received as a function of trainees' level of education points to the principal conclusion that graduates are afforded the greatest training opportunities.

Nearly 11% of people with a higher education degree (ISCED 5-7) are given training. Half as many people with secondary-level education (ISCED 3) and one-fifth as many of people with no certificates, i.e. at best lower secondary-level education, receive training (ISCED 0-2) (Table 6). In every country of the Union, people with the highest levels of education are given priority for training. Furthermore, and this corroborates the preceding observations, the most highly-educated women are given more training opportunities than their male counterparts. The differences are less marked for people with fewer academic qualifications.

The link highlighted here between training and the level of education completed also underlines the observations presented in figure 2. With the exception of labourers, the figures suggest that the most highly-qualified employees are given career-development opportunities which others are not. The latter tend only to contemplate or to be offered training when what is really involved is a change of job or way of working.

Figure 5:
Training of adults in employment by level of education and sex, EUR 15 - 1996

(as % of people aged 30 and older in employment)



Source : Eurostat - LFS 1996.



The questions on “current training” in the Labour Force Survey

The data presented in this study are drawn from the results of the European Union Labour Force Survey (LFS). Since 1988, the LFS has included questions on current training: level, type, objective and duration. The explanatory notes on these questions recommend covering only training with a link to interviewees' current or future jobs. However, the great number of persons not in employment who declare that they have received training suggests that the Member States do not strictly observe this recommendation.

The information collected concerns only training pursued during the four weeks preceding the survey, mainly because relying on respondents' memory is a delicate matter. It should be noted that France, the Netherlands and Portugal refer solely to current training on the date of the survey. Moreover, vocational training organised solely in-house is not covered in France.

Data comparability has been guaranteed only since the questionnaire was redrafted in 1992, particularly as regards the level of education completed. It should be stressed that the results obtained concerning the objective and duration of training are still equivocal.

For convenience sake, the term “adult” is occasionally used to define people of 30 years of age and older. Likewise, the expression “current training” is used to define training received during the four weeks preceding the survey (other than the exceptions mentioned), whether this is complete on the date of the survey or still under way.

Level of education attained according to the LFS :

The LFS includes one question on the level of general education and one on the level of higher education or vocational training completed. Eurostat has defined a variable ‘Level of education and training attained’ by combining these two headings. This variable corresponds to three different values which come close to the levels defined in the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED).

ISCED level 0-2 is assigned to people who have completed at most the first level of secondary education. ISCED level 3 includes people who have completed the second cycle of secondary education. ISCED level 5-7 corresponds to people who have a higher education degree.

See also the following Eurostat publications:-

Education across the European Union - Statistics and indicators - 1996-

**Continuing Vocational Training in enterprises - an essential part of
lifelong learning. Statistics in Focus No. 7/1996-**

Labour Force Survey - Results 1995-

Labour Force Survey - Methods and definitions - Series 1996-

Youth in the European Union from Education to Working Life - 1997

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