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Impulses for European Employment Policy - Impulses for Germany
- Report of the European Employment Task Force

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WG 3: Investment in Human Capital

Country Report of Finland

1. Anticipation

Finland welcomes that in Mr Kok's report great attention is paid to investment in human capital. The report underlines the role of anticipation, and suggests an establishment of a European network of forecasting agencies.

In Finland, anticipation has been a priority in recent years. However, this is a very challenging topic. The first question is, what do we mean by anticipation?

Anticipation is not solely a forecasting method. It is or it should be a knowledge management system, which combines long-term scenario and forecasting work with quite pragmatic planning processes, for example to help designing the amount of training places. It should be a constant process. It should also be a process to be carried out both at national and regional levels. Thus anticipation should be a network, which is interlinking different actors, research institutes and planners, national and regional authorities etc. Everybody should find a role in this puzzle.

In Finland, one is at present establishing this kind of anticipation network. At national level it is agreed that Ministry of Labour will co-ordinate this work. As far as anticipation on education is concerned, two ministries will be at key position. Firstly, Ministry of Labour will make long, medium and short term labour supply and demand forecasts. Secondly, on the basis of these calculations Ministry of Education will make long-term estimations on education needs for various sectors and education levels. This process is also carried out at regional level by the regional authorities. This will be an ongoing process.

2. Adult education

Finland is known as a country of very high levels of education and this is certainly true as far as young generations are concerned. However, among older work force the situation is not so good. Among the total working age population about 80 per cent has achieved at least upper secondary education but among older workers the figure is only 56 per cent. In addition, among older workers, there exists a large group having

only a basic education. This group has of course a big risk to be excluded from the labour market.

For them a special programme is now being planned, aiming at giving a vocational training certificate. Obviously, it is a very challenging task to motivate adults even after 30 years after the basic education back to school. Traditional education methods do not fit for their needs. Therefore special tailor-made flexible schemes are designed, which are a combination of theoretical education and practical training.