

EMP-ADAPT - Community initiative on the adaptation of the workforce to industrial change (ADAPT), aimed at promoting employment and the adaptation of the workforce to industrial change, 1994-1999.

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Successor programme SOC-EQUAL	Programme funding EUR 1 792 million
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To contribute to the adaptation of the workforce to industrial change, and to improve the workings of the labour market with a view to promoting growth, employment and the competitiveness of companies in the European Union.

Abstract

The ADAPT initiative aims at implementing a major transnational action programme linked to the new Objective 4 of the Structural Funds and contains measures to encourage Member States to initiate the reforms prescribed in the White Paper on Growth, Employment and Competitiveness relating to the adaptation of the workforce to economic and technological change.

The ADAPT initiative has four interrelated objectives over and above the measures taken by the Member States themselves and the other activities supported by the European Social Fund (ESF):

- To assist workers, especially those threatened with unemployment as a consequence of industrial change, to adapt to the increasingly rapid changes in the organization and structure of employment;
- To help enterprises increase their competitiveness, mainly by encouraging organizational adaptation and non-physical investment;
- To prevent unemployment by improving the qualifications of the workforce;
- To facilitate the development of new jobs and new activities.

When first established, the ADAPT initiative had three major priorities, concentrating on:

- Facilitating the adaptation of the workforce at risk through vocational training and retraining, guidance and counselling actions, especially for workers confronted with evolving job requirements;
- Promoting partnership and cooperation between research centres, enterprises, training bodies and public authorities;
- Developing networks and cooperation between producers, suppliers and customers to stimulate the transfer of relevant know-how and good practice and to improve the ability of firms to train their workforce especially to meet the requirements of

SMEs.

At its meeting on 8 May 1996, the Commission decided to introduce a further priority within the initiative aimed at contributing to the development of a proactive social policy for the emerging European Information Society (Official Journal No C 200 of 10.7.1996). Known as Adapt-bis, this new action has the following aims:

- To evaluate and anticipate labour market developments related to the emerging Information Society;
- To develop active strategies to assist the labour force to adapt to the new demands of the Information Society and to encourage the gearing of IT products to the needs of society;
- To develop and experiment policies and schemes which will support the adaptation of work organization and employment practices to the Information Society and to identify ways to improve both the quality of working life and business efficiency.

The activities to be pursued under the ADAPT initiative are carried out on a Community-wide basis. They will facilitate cross-fertilization between enterprise strategies, research and development, and training provisions across a wide-range of industries and services in all Member States. In particular, a major effort is to be made to develop and implement adequate training schemes, to identify and develop new skills and qualifications, to upgrade the level of existing skills and to improve the capacity of the workforce to acquire new skills, to develop and support innovative approaches focused on networking between enterprises, and to promote the diffusion of R&D results.

The Commission, in partnership with the Member States, is responsible for ensuring complementarity between the measures supported under the ADAPT initiative and those introduced under the Employment and Development of Human Resources initiative, the initiative for SMEs, and actions supported under other Community programmes, in particular in the domain of vocational training and of equal opportunities for women.

Subdivision

Eligible measures:

- Supply of training, counselling and guidance, including:
 - . Provision of expertise for groups of firms designed to help them to identify the implications of changes to the industrial environment and to define and set up business plans and to implement the corresponding training plans and actions;
 - . Support for the development and supply of training schemes related to new qualifications and skills of the workforce in firms affected by changes in production systems, by developing cooperation between training institutes, research centres, and economic development agencies;
 - . Development and supply of guidance and counselling systems for workers affected by industrial change in different economic sectors;
 - . Assistance to SMEs for the setting-up and implementation of internal and external ongoing training programmes;
 - . Training actions aimed at improving the capacity of entrepreneurs and managers to adapt to change and to design the relevant business plans (particular attention is to be paid to improving management quality in SMEs);

- Anticipation, promotion of networking and new employment opportunities including:
 - . Creation or development, at European level, of sectoral and regional networks set up to analyse trends in markets, production systems, enterprise organizations, industrial relations, employment and related qualifications, and the local development and support structures and services offered to firms;
 - . Encouragement of cooperation and training in new fields of economic activities;
 - . Support for local employment development initiatives;

- Adaptation of support structures and systems including:
 - . Promotion of cooperation and exchange between companies and research centres in the field of technology transfer to local

labour markets and economic sectors most affected by change in employment and training to firms and vocational training bodies;

- . Support for the development of schemes for the training of trainers, adaptation of workers to industrial change, and change in production systems outlined for this initiative;
- . Support to actions promoting regional, inter-regional and transnational cooperation between enterprises;

- Information, dissemination and awareness actions including:

- . Development of databases on employment and actions geared towards the adaptation of workers to change, and interlinkage with databases on continuous training;
- . Promotion of the diffusion of best practice and exchange of experience based on an inter-regional and transnational approach stimulating the application of adequate training schemes and to enhance the multiplier effect;
- . Studies relating to industrial change with particular reference to management, organization, technological innovation, communication and information systems, and training activities;
- . Actions to raise the awareness of the different economic sectors, training and employment services, research institutes, chambers of commerce and industry, employers and workers organizations and the public authorities, amongst other relevant actors, in particular through specific exchange seminars and publication of examples of good practice; support for information services and support structures such as networks for the dissemination of this information.

Implementation

The actions covered by the ADAPT initiative are to be jointly financed by the Member States, the Community and by enterprises and other bodies where appropriate. Where employees of companies take part in the various operations covered by the initiative, the enterprise concerned will finance an appropriate part of their cost.

The Member States are invited to present proposals for support under the initiative in the form of operational programmes or global grants to the Commission by 1 November 1994. In accordance with the rules covering the Structural Funds, these proposals must include a general appreciation of the situation indicating the objectives to be attained and should include a timetable, criteria and procedures for implementation, monitoring and assessment. The Commission is responsible for approving the proposals submitted by the Member States.

It is expected that the content of the operational programmes or global grants supported under the initiative will result in a significant added value for the Community. This is to be achieved by emphasising transnational cooperation, innovation, a "bottom-up" approach and the reinforcement of Community policies and programmes. To support this approach, technical assistance will be strengthened at the Community, national and decentralized levels in order to assist public authorities, private bodies and other interested bodies in the formulation and subsequent implementation of programmes. Technical assistance will take various forms and may include the dissemination of information and other awareness actions, creation or development of Community-wide networks to facilitate innovation and transnational cooperation, provision of consultancy and other awareness actions, etc.

Community assistance to selected proposals is in the form of subsidies funded from a budget of ECU 1.792 billion. The initiative is applicable across the whole territory of the European Union, although a special emphasis is placed on less-favoured regions in accordance with the objective of economic and social cohesion. In general, the distribution of funds between the Member States under the initiative will be based on the relative severity of structural problems, unemployment levels and the quality of the proposals submitted for operational programmes and global grants.

Responsibility for implementing the initiative is entrusted to a single Monitoring Committee in each Member State. During and at the end of the planning period, the Commission shall evaluate, in partnership with the Member States, the results of the programmes submitted. The Commission will use the targets specified by the Member States in their proposals as the main benchmark against which progress is to be assessed. The European Parliament, the Management Committee for the

Community initiatives and the national Monitoring Committees shall be fully informed of the results of these evaluations and the action taken in response to them.

Remarks

ADAPT was established by a Decision of the European Commission, meeting on 15 June 1994, in accordance with the provisions of the Regulations governing the Structural Funds.

Subjects

[Economic Aspects - Education and Training - Innovation and Technology Transfer](#)

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