

# **Result No 11**

## COUNTRY REPORTS

LANGUAGE  
ENGLISH

# COUNTRY REPORTS

AUSTRIA, BULGARIA, DENMARK,  
GERMANY, SPAIN, UNITED KINGDOM

IN ENGLISH



Literacy and vocation

## **INTRODUCTION**

The country reports consist of **TWO PARTS**, describing in the **PART 1** the general situation of literacy demands among the adult population and informing about existing measures of combating illiterism.

In **PART 2** are documented the procedures how the specific demands of literacy competencies in selected occupational fields have been inquired (e.g. evaluation of company requirements profiles, analyses of existing training and qualification standards, requirements for professional capacities to act in helper and/or assistant occupations).

The exemplary **JOB PROFILES – INCLUDING LITERACY DEMANDS ON THE JOB** (per country) are the following:

### **AUSTRIA**

Kitchen helper (German and English)  
Warehouse worker (German and English)

### **BULGARIA**

Woodworker (Bulgarian and English)  
Welder (Bulgarian and English)

### **DENMARK**

Domestic worker (Danish and English)  
Gardener (Danish and English)

### **GERMANY**

Construction helper (German and English)  
Cross-professional-ICT-skills (German and English)

### **SPAIN**

Electrician helper (Spanish and English)  
Housekeeping (Spanish and English)

### **UNITED KINGDOM**

Care worker (English)  
Housekeeping-Hotel (English)

## **AUSTRIA**

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### **PART 1**

#### **SITUATION IN AUSTRIA CONCERNING LITERACY AND NUMERACY NEEDS**

##### **PEOPLE AFFECTED**

The UNESCO estimates, that about 300.000 to 600.000 grown-ups in Austria are in need of basic education. (Volkshochschule Stadtbibliothek Linz: 2010). Collecting data for a verifying study has started in summer 2011 and the first results will be published in autumn 2013.

Analysing the numbers of participants in basic education courses in 2009, the initiative defined a need for such courses for 50 000 people. Till 2014 the plan is to provide courses for about 8 600 learners. The aim is to offer accredited courses for everyone and most importantly free of charge.

##### **SOLUTIONS AND MEASURES**

The project In.Bewegung (transl.: In.Motion) has created a network of institutions and organisations to offer basic education. Starting in 2000 there are several useful outcomes such as guidelines for argumentation with clients and for cooperation with companies, a handbook for basic skills for vocational training in the Austrian dual system and concepts for teacher training.

In general discussion using the term of basic education, instead of analphabetism or functional analphabetism, has been chosen, as it encompasses more than reading and writing skills. In our society modern cultural techniques for example also include numeracy, the use of new telecommunication and information technologies (ICT). Moreover the often used term combination "analphabet", "functional analphabet" or "functional illiterate" is very stigmatizing and it labels grownups, which have some knowledge about reading and writing, but not enough to get by at work or in their private lives. Reading, Writing, Numeracy, the use of new telecommunication and information technologies is an almost insurmountable obstacle for the concerned persons.

Basic education in Austria aims to integrate people into the education system who could not acquire basic skills in their past for whatever reason. The goal is to enable them to take part in lifelong learning. Further Education is fundamental for finding and keeping a satisfying job. Literacy also influences the way people can participate in politics and the society they live in. In private life they gain more independence and more freedom to create their lives. (Planungsdokument "Initiative Erwachsenenbildung", Länder-Bund-Initiative: 2011)

Until 2011 there have been many different ways of funding of basic education in the nine Austrian states and at federal level. The OECD advises: "One priority for national policy might (...) be to obtain better information about differences among Länder, and then devise corrective policies (including potential funding or regulatory policies) to moderate those differences that seem too large." (OECD 2004: Thematic Review on Adult Learning. Austria. Country Note. S. 31).

The OECD-Review further claimed: "There are two areas of adult education that have not been priorities. The most obvious of these is low-literacy adults and the Bildungsferne." (OECD 2004: Thematic Review on Adult Learning. Austria. Country Note. S. 20).

In 2011 the federal Austrian government and the nine Austrian states started a shared concept of funding basic education. The main goal of the new initiative for adult education "Initiative Erwachsenenbildung" is to ease the access to education for low –literacy and low-qualified adults.

In 2011 job statistics revealed repeatedly the importance of vocational training for employment in Austria. 75 percent of the unemployed were people without school leaving qualifications and

vocational training. (Arbeitsmarkt & Bildung / Juni 2011). Therefore the aim of the initiative is to work closely with the job centres (AMS) that should focus on vocational basic education.

Finally the Austrian federal government and the nine states have taken the matter seriously. Austria is starting to catch up with the initiative for adult basic education – accredited courses for everyone free of charge.

## **AUSTRIA**

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### **PART 2**

#### **KITCHEN HELPER**

##### **Overview of tasks and fields of activity**

Kitchen helpers work in kitchens of restaurants and hotels, in industrial kitchens as well as in canteens of companies, hospitals and educational institutions. Usually the work in a kitchen is split between cooks and kitchen helpers. Kitchen helpers also get in contact with waiters and buffet attendants.

Kitchen helpers assist the preparation of food and menus. They wash and cut vegetables, salads and fruits and prepare cold platters under supervision. Kitchen helpers prepare marinades, dressings, sauces and soups; they cut pastry products such as cakes and pies. They also arrange food on tables. Tidying up, washing up and cleaning also is part of their activities.

Depending on the company kitchen helpers also work directly with guests (ie at buffets) or they help planning menus. Dealing with suppliers they are sometimes responsible for taking over and paying goods. Helping with the inventory is also part of their responsibilities.

##### **Sources:**

[www.bic.at](http://www.bic.at)

<http://test.bis-entwicklung.ams.or.at/Stammb BerufDetail.php?noteid=1136>

##### **Fields of activity:**

Stocking and inventory management

Preparing and serving meals

Menu planning in catering and for special occasions

Cleaning and maintenance of rooms and equipment

#### **WAREHOUSE WORKER**

##### **Overview of tasks and fields of activity**

Warehouse workers receive store and ship goods that are kept in warehouses. Manufactured goods are often stored in warehouses between the time they are produced and the time they reach retail stores or customers. Many manufacturers, wholesalers, retailers and transportation companies, as well as federal, state, and local government agencies, have their own private warehouses.

Warehouse workers track as well as unload goods and merchandise as they are received at the warehouse and load them when they are being shipped to customers. Generally handlers in the warehouse load and unload merchandise as it is received or when it is being shipped to customers. When goods arrive at the warehouse, they are unloaded from trucks, ships, or railroad sidings onto warehouse platforms. In some warehouses handlers load and unload goods manually; in others workers operate forklifts, which are small trucks used to hoist and carry merchandise stacked on

wooden platforms and pallets. Automated material-handling equipment, conveyor belts, automated high stackers and guided vehicles help store and retrieve goods in larger warehouses. Groups of warehouse workers are supervised. These supervisors are generally in charge of all warehouse activities.

The exact duties of warehouse workers vary depending on the place of employment.

**SOURCE:**

<http://careers.stateuniversity.com/pages/637/Warehouse-Worker.html>

**FIELDS OF ACTIVITY:**

Incoming goods

Storage

Outgoing goods

Safety in storage area

**KITCHEN HELPER and WAREHOUSE WORKER**

**THE PROFILES**

The basic skills for kitchen helpers are based on a variety of developed vocational profiles developed by institutions in Europe:

**Berufsförderungsinstitut BFI OÖ** is an Upper Austrian vocational training institution founded by the Austrian Federation of Trade Unions and the Upper Austrian Chamber of Labour in 1960. It became a market leader in all forms of re-entry onto the job market, second-chance education and vocational qualification in health, social and other service jobs. [www.bfi-ooe.at](http://www.bfi-ooe.at)

The **Austrian Economic Chambers** supports Austrian companies with expert knowledge through educational facilities – WIFI, universities of applied sciences – and contributes to improving the competitive ability of Austrian companies. [www.wko.at](http://www.wko.at)

The **Institute for Research on Qualifications and Training of the Austrian Economy ibw** conducts research and development at the interfaces between education, business and qualification. At the centre of all ibw projects are application-oriented themes with relevance for the economy as well as issues to be treated on an interdisciplinary basis. ibw was founded in 1975 by the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber (WKO) and the Federation of Austrian Industry (IV). [www.ibw.at](http://www.ibw.at)

**ibw's career guidance tool** (BerufsInformationsComputer) provides comprehensive online job information and career guidance. The BIC was developed by ibw and is regularly updated and extended. ibw also uses its know-how for career information platforms in other countries. [www.bic.at](http://www.bic.at)

The **Austrian Public Employment Service (AMS)** is Austria's leading provider of labour-market related services. It matches candidates with job openings and assists jobseekers and companies by offering advice, information, qualification opportunities and financial assistance. Commissioned by the Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer protection, the AMS assumes its role as an enterprise under public law in close cooperation with labour and employers' organisations. [www.ams.at](http://www.ams.at)

**AlphaZ – basic education for employment offers**

developments for practical use according to exemplary models. In order to promote the employability of adults with inadequate basic education, AlphaZ has developed a transferable model which combines basic education, qualification and employment. As the major regional force in employment policy the Job Centres in Berlin have been involved in this process from its beginning. <http://site.alpha-z.de/>

The **Spanish National Catalogue of Professional Qualifications (CNCP)** is an instrument of the National System for Qualifications and Vocational Education and Training (SNCFP), which lists the professional qualifications according to the appropriate competences for the professional exercise. Some of the main objectives of the CNCP are to integrate the existing programmes on vocational education and training in order to adapt them to the characteristics and demands of the Spanish productive system.

The spanish **National Institute of Qualifications (INCUAL)** is responsible for defining, drawing up and updating the National Catalogue of Professional Qualifications (CNCP) and the corresponding Modular Catalogue of Vocational Education and Training. [http://www.educacion.gob.es/educa/incual/ice\\_catalogoWeb\\_ing.html](http://www.educacion.gob.es/educa/incual/ice_catalogoWeb_ing.html)

Safety regulations defined for warehouses by the **Allgemeine Unfallversicherungsanstalt - the Austrian Workers' Compensation Board (AUVA)** - which is the Austrian social insurance for occupational risks. One of its legal duties is the prevention of occupational accidents and diseases. [www.auva.at](http://www.auva.at)

## **BULGARIA**

### **PART 1**

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#### **SITUATION IN BULGARIA CONCERNING LITERACY AND NUMERACY NEEDS**

##### **PEOPLE AFFECTED AND REASONS**

Dressed in numbers, the facts are the following – more than 40 per cent of Bulgarian ninth-graders are functionally illiterate, according to the latest report by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development programme for international student assessment (PISA). In plain language, this means that Bulgaria's 15-year-olds can read and write, but not make inferences and understand forms of indirect meaning.

This is a result of the biggest failure of Bulgaria's secondary education system – its static nature and inflexibility. The main features of the system are outdated teaching methods, the lack of young and motivated teachers and the overly strong emphasis on the theoretic side of teaching. None of these have changed since Bulgaria joined the European Union in 2007.

To assess the quality of Bulgarian education, one does not need statistics, only a quick look at internet forums populated by teenagers.

The spelling mistakes outnumber the words, the commas are a thing of the past, and sentences are not always carried out to a logical conclusion. Then again, the language of the young generation is different and an education system cannot be judged only by grammar, so perhaps statistics are necessary.

There are other characteristics that have not changed. Bulgaria has a high ratio of drop-outs – between 16 and 22 per cent in the 18 to 24 years of age range, the only exception being the southwest part of the country. Lifelong learning courses for adults are all but inexistent, as is investment into scientific research, and whatever results there are, they are all concentrated in the southwest, which includes the almighty capital Sofia.

[From: The Sofia Echo, [sofiaecho.com/2011/02/25/1049914\\_education-for-dummies](http://sofiaecho.com/2011/02/25/1049914_education-for-dummies)]

About eighty thousand Bulgarians cannot read or write, according to Education Minister, Sergey Ignatov. Ignatov based his statement on data of wide-spread illiteracy in the country, published by the National Statistics Institute, NSI.

##### **SOLUTIONS AND MEASURES**

The Minister announced the launch of the "New Chance for Success" project to educate illiterate people and those with poor reading and writing skills. The project is financed by the EU operational program "Development of Human Resources," and will involve 10 500 people with 8 000 receiving certificates by the end of the course.

600 school hours in the span of 5 months will be provided for those in need of elementary education and 360 hours in the course of 3 months for middle school education. The value of the project is estimated at BGN 10 M.

Meanwhile, the Education Ministry is beginning mass training of teachers – over half of the country's educators will undergo a course in teaching thinking skills instead of rote memorization – the latter widely used in Bulgarian schools since the arrival of the Communist regime and continuing today as well.

The study titled "Teaching Reading in Europe: Contexts, Policies and Practices," which was published by the European Commission last week, ranked Bulgaria last by reading literacy with 41% of 15-year-old Bulgarian students having difficulties with reading.

The next such study will be for math skills and the Ministry is planning checks of math classes and training of math teachers. There are also plans for all day schooling from 1st to 7th grade, which is now mandatory for 1st grade and will include second graders in the fall with the opening of the new school year. An additional BGN 28 M has been slated for it. The additional classes will be in line with the age of the students and their interests and will be electives only.

[From: [www.novinite.com](http://www.novinite.com) > Education | July 18, 2011]

## **BULGARIA**

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### **PART 2**

#### **WELDER**

##### **REVIEW OF MAIN JOB ACTIVITIES**

Welder can work in small, medium and large companies in the field of engineering industry, metalworking, shipbuilding, ship repair, heat-power industry, construction, water-supply and sanitation, repair shops, separate building sites, where metal constructions are build, welding and assembly works, planned repairs and reconstructions, welding works on the transmission system are accomplished: heating systems, electric transmission networks, gas lines, water lines.

Some of the activities welder can accomplish outdoors in unsuitable weather.

Welder makes fillet welds in accordance with the welding procedure specification adjusting the welding machine by himself, selecting suitable supplementary materials in accordance with the specification of the welding procedure, cleaning welds, carrying out visual inspection and notifying his supervisor and removing imperfections, if deviations from the requirements were found.

The welder knows and applies the rules of rational organization of the work place for effective and safe work with metalworking machinery or welding equipment.

Carrying out welding works requires qualified welder with welding competence in accordance with Ordinance 7/11.10.2002 on the terms and conditions for the acquisition and recognition of welding competence.

The welder can work in: production facilities or at building sites with fully equipped welding position; at workplaces for preparatory and supplementary operations; at workplaces for assembling and joining of the welded details in accordance with the specification of welding procedure. In professional environment the worker has to be resourceful, responsible and skilled to react adequately in emergency. They have to communicate effectively with colleagues, the company management and they should have skills for team work also.

##### **FIELDS OF ACTIVITY**

I Organization of the work place and OSH

II Implementation of fillet welds of sheet metal

III Implementation of auxiliary welding activities

## **WORKER IN WOODPROCESSING INDUSTRY**

### **REVIEW OF MAIN JOB ACTIVITIES**

The worker in wood processing industry can work in companies in wood processing or furniture production in which materials or products of wood are produced – shaping wood, glued or layer glued wood, elements for flooring, elements for wall lining, wood planks, furniture, doors and windows, carpentry, wood art articles, musical wood instruments, children wood toys, knitted articles of wood, wood barrels, wrapping, package or pallet wood and other specific wood articles

The worker distinguishes and uses – in terms of quantity and quality- the necessary raw materials, basic and supplementary materials for the production of wood articles. The worker processes wood with hand tools and grinds manually, arranges wood in figures, executes various process operations in sequential order.

The worker in wood processing industry applies the rules for occupational safety and health.

They can work in: processing premises with wood machines ; at workplaces for manual and supplementary operations; in storehouses for materials and ready production; premises for drying. They are responsible for the quality of their work and their production.

In professional environment the worker has to be resourceful, responsible and skilled to react adequately in emergency. They have to communicate effectively with colleagues, the company management and they should have skills for team work also.

### **MAIN JOB ACTIVITIES**

Organization of the work place and OSH

Production of windows

Production of furniture

## **WORKER IN WOODPROCESSING INDUSTRY and WELDER**

### **THE PROFILES**

The present description of the vocational profile is developed on the grounds of a project of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Science in Bulgaria for State Education Requirements for acquiring a qualification on the job 'worker in wood processing industry', specialty 'production of doors and windows' and 'production of furniture', first degree of professional qualification.

The law for vocational education and training in Bulgaria puts requirements for input minimum education level for students, as well for adults, who are 16 or over. To acquire a first degree of professional qualification on the job 'worker in wood processing industry' the input minimum education level for people , aged 16, is to have graduated primary stage of basic education or to have completed successfully a course for literacy rate according to the Law for employment encouragement.

## **DENMARK**

### **PART 1**

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#### **SITUATION IN DENMARK CONCERNING LITERACY AND NUMERACY NEEDS**

According to OECD's criteria every fifth Dane (around 1, 5 mil. people) has difficulties reading and almost half of the adult population between the age of 16 and 66 cannot read sufficiently. 7 % of all adult Danes perceive themselves as dyslexic.

Every Dane needs to have the skills to read, spell and write. You have to be able to understand an instruction to a new machine, a rule of security or written information. Work development and new jobs demand that all employees have these skills.

Today you also need to have computer skills for almost any job and hereby to be able to read and write. Otherwise you cannot answer e-mails, find information on the Internet, read a message from your children's school, etc. The unemployed need to write and send applications electronically. If you have difficulties reading and writing, it will be hard to manage your job in the long run. Also the risk of getting fired is bigger. It means a lot to be able to read. It gives a person self confidence and provides security in everyday life both at work and in the spare time.

The Danish government wants 95 % of a youth year group to complete a higher education. Therefore focus in Denmark is on making sure that 95% also reads sufficiently. To reach this goal it is necessary to rectify reading disorders. Not just for society but also for the individual ([www.uvm.dk](http://www.uvm.dk) - vocational training).

#### **SOLUTIONS AND MEASURES**

In the Danish adult educational system focus is on the assessment of basic reading and mathematical skills. The learners will go through a screening (tests developed by the Ministry of Education) and be guided to the best educational plan based on the results. In this way one hopes to find the adults with illiteracy.

The screening is a computer based test where the score is the guideline for which educational direction would be the best for the person tested. In Denmark a cooperation between vocational training (AMU) and education in basic literacy skills (FVU) exist and is necessary. This way more adults with illiteracy is found and helped. This is again based on the screening of basic abilities ([www.uvm.dk](http://www.uvm.dk) - cooperation between FVU and AMU).

Adult and supplementary education has an essential function in maintaining and further developing workforce skills. Basic skills such as being able to read, write and arithmetic is more and more becoming a requirement for maintaining attachment to the labour market in Denmark. About one third of the learners in retraining at AMU courses have difficulties reading and writing (about 125.000 people in 2006).

A new evaluation (April 2012) of the education in basic literacy and mathematical skills (FVU) shows that the political goal to help and reach out for Danish people with low literacy and low mathematical skills is not reached yet (40.000 students per year). Only 79.000 students have completed a FVU course in literacy or a FVU math course since this form of adult education was initiated in 2000 in Denmark. The FVU activity is rising but nowhere near the political goal. This is not because the need for education has decreased. Also economy does not play a role; the FVU courses are free for the students, because they are state financed. At the same time the evaluation shows that typical participants in FVU courses are people with Danish as their second language. The

FVU system was not made for that group. This group will get better considering their basic writing skills but that is not all this group needs. The evaluation also concludes that those who do participate in a FVU course increase their basic skills. When not reaching the political goal a lot of people in Denmark with low literacy skills miss out on upgrading and hereby on the possibility for advanced training and obtaining active citizenship ([www.eva.dk](http://www.eva.dk) - evaluation of FVU).

Also a new report on AMU courses (2012) shows that short educated people start out with labour market training and often stop hereafter or maybe participate at more AMU courses. These courses therefore cannot be classified as a pathway for continued education but they can get people started upgrading and returning to school via labour market training. ([www.eva.dk](http://www.eva.dk) - evaluation of AMU)

Every year unskilled jobs are discontinued at the same time as new jobs based on higher educational level are created. The problem is enhanced as the approach to the labour market in these years is reduced compared to the exit from the labour market, and that 15-20 % of the approach does not get a qualifying education. There therefore exists a risk for a labour market with lack of labour with vocational and higher education together with a big group of unskilled labour. (VEU -rådet: "Strategiske fokusområder", May 2010)

## **DENMARK**

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### **PART 2**

#### **GARDENERS**

##### **OVERVIEW OF TASKS AND FIELDS OF ACTIVITY**

We operate with two types of gardener: landscape gardener and nursery gardener.

In both working fields it is central, that the gardener has knowledge of and is able to work with: Different plants, shrubs, perennials, summer flowers, bulbs and tubers in summer- and winter condition as well as their classification in the botanical system.

##### **FIELDS OF ACTIVITY:**

Planning, arranging and maintaining green areas for institutions, companies and private persons.

Propagating, growing and pruning plants in indoor and outdoor production areas.

Regulating temperature, light and ventilation in greenhouses.

Improving soil

Weed control

Pest control

Selling and marketing of plants

Giving advice to customers on maintenance and plant care.

#### **DOMESTIC WORKERS**

##### **OVERVIEW OF TASKS AND FIELDS OF ACTIVITY**

The working field of the domestic worker is today quite wide. The domestic worker deals with cleaning, maintenance, canteen work such as preparing and serving food as well as serving customers.

An important part of the work is to offer many kinds of service in an efficient and positive manner.

### **WORKING PLACES:**

The domestic worker can work at public institutions as well as in private companies.

### **FIELDS OF ACTIVITY:**

Cleaning

Tidying up

Maintenance eg. switching light bulbs

Some canteen work

Some office work

## **DOMESTIC WORKERS and GARDENERS**

### **THE PROFILES**

The job profile is based on directions from the Danish ministry of education.

The adult vocational training programmes (in Danish arbejdsmarkedsuddannelser or AMU) serve a triple purpose:

- To contribute to maintaining and improving the vocational skills and competences of the participants in accordance with the needs on the labour market and to furthering competence development of the participants.
- To contribute to solving labour market restructuring and adaptation problems in accordance with the needs on the labour market in a short and a long term perspective.
- To give adults the possibility of upgrading competences for the labour market as well as personal competences through possibilities to obtain formal competence in vocational education and training.

Participants may acquire new and updated skills and competences to better their opportunities to managing new and wider job functions and to becoming more flexible on the labour market.

Adult vocational training programmes have been developed for low skilled and skilled workers. But everybody may participate irrespective of educational background. Only formal entrance requirement is being resident or holding a job in Denmark. In general:

- The programmes are mainly provided for low skilled and skilled workers having a job. Workers and employers in private as well as public sector enterprises may participate in the programmes.
- The unemployed in their first unemployment term may have a combination of adult vocational training programmes of their own selection for 6 weeks. Unemployed with a personal action plan from the job centres/local authorities may participate.
- Immigrants and refugees may follow ordinary courses or courses specifically developed for this group.

The adult vocational training programmes and affiliated single subjects from the mainstream vocational education and training programme has been organized in joint competence descriptions (FKB). The joint competence descriptions gives an overview of the system for users, guidance staff etc. Every joint competence description corresponds to one job area for low skilled and skilled workers. A competence description consists of:

- A description of the typical workplaces

- A description of relevant competences within the job areas
- A list of adult training programmes and affiliated single subject courses from mainstream vocational education and training programmes leading to those competences.

There are about 120 joint competence descriptions to which are affiliated about 2 800 adult vocational training programmes and 300 single subject courses from the mainstream vocational training and education programme.

They are mainly short vocational training programmes, the duration of which normally varies from half a day to 6 weeks, in average 3 ½ days. It is possible to combine adult vocational training programmes in a package including programmes in the same field at a higher level. The training is organized in classes or as open workshops where participants may follow different programmes at different levels in the same room with the same teacher or organized at the workplaces. Normally the training activities take place during working hours. The training activity may also take place outside working hours e.g. during weekends or as distance learning. Language of instruction is normally Danish, but may be other languages.

## **GERMANY**

### **PART 1**

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#### **SITUATION IN GERMANY CONCERNING LITERACY AND NUMERACY NEEDS**

##### **PEOPLE AFFECTED**

Millions of people in Germany cannot adequately read, write or do arithmetic, despite having gone through the German school system. Often termed functional illiterates or persons with insufficient basic education they increasingly encounter more and more difficulties not only in meeting the complex demands of the labour market, but also those of their personal lives.

The result is stigmatisation and social exclusion. A lack of basic education leads to a higher risk of poverty and makes integration into the labour market more difficult as it blocks access to vocational qualifications.

The number of functional illiterates in Germany is considerably higher than previously thought. According to a study undertaken by the University of Hamburg, presented in Berlin on the 28th of February 2011, 14% of Germans between the ages of 18 and 64 are affected by “functional illiteracy”. That is 7, 5 million people of working age. Experts had previously assumed a figure of four million.

This means: 14% of the population of working age can only read or write individual phrases but not coherent or even short texts. These people are ill-equipped for an appropriate participation in society, write the authors of the study.

More than 8000 individuals were questioned for the study. Above all, individuals with no or low-level school leaving qualifications are particularly affected by functional illiteracy. These make up nearly 70% of the total number. In addition to this, the number of the working population who cannot read or write properly is startling: nearly 60% of people who are considered functionally illiterate have a job.

##### **GROUPS AND SECTORS**

Some 13 percent of people who are functionally illiterate are in the 18 to 29-year-old age group, about 15 percent in the 30 to 39-year-old age group and 40 to 49-year-old age group and about 16 percent in the 50 to 64-year-old age group [...]. Poor writing skills despite a command of familiar vocabulary are identified in just fewer than 25.9 per cent of the 18 to 29-year-olds with the 30 to 39-year-olds showing a similar figure. However, the figures for the 40 to 49-year-old age group are slightly better than the younger and older groups. These cohorts must have started school between 1967 and 1974 and finished primary school from 1971 to 1980. Since the mid 1970s they might have benefited from the institutionalised, publicly funded adult education schemes.

Of the 7.5 million people with functional illiteracy, 4.4 million (58%) learnt German as their first language. A further 3.1 million (42%) learnt another language first. The random sample only includes people whose verbal command of German is good enough to take place in a survey and a skills test. *[Taken from: Leo. – Level One Study, Literacy of adults at the lower rungs of the ladder. Press brochure. Anke Grotlüschen/ Wibke Riekmann 2011. Hamburg, spring 2011]*

## **SOLUTIONS AND MEASURES**

The Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) in Germany introduced the programme “Research and Development for Literacy and Adult Basic Education” in 2007. Over the period of five years, the BMBF encouraged knowledge and innovation transfer with over 100 projects.

The research and development projects included:

- exploring the basic principles of literacy and adult basic education,
- enhancing the efficiency and quality of support and advice services for adults with low basic education,
- exploring literacy and adult basic education in the context of industry and employment,
- Enhancing the professionalism of teachers of literacy and adult basic education.

The programme has produced new findings and concepts in the following areas:

- increasing awareness and reaching the target group,
- diagnosis of skills and consultancy,
- diagnosis and promotion of reading and writing skills,
- organising adult basic education classes and developing materials for adult basic education,
- qualifications for lecturers and key personnel as well as
- Adult basic education in specific operational contexts.

In 2008 148 adult education centres (Volkshochschulen) and 53 other institutions in the educational sector took part in the first comprehensive enquiry into the field of illiteracy and basic skills. The enquiry gathered information, amongst other topics, on literacy courses according to target groups. The study found that 9,391 participants were reached with 2,000 courses. 88 per cent of the identified courses were organised by adult education centres, 11 per cent by private, church institutions, or associations. Approximately 97 per cent out of 1,189 courses for participants whose mother tongue is German were conducted by adult education centres. Just under one third of courses for people with a migrant background (excluding integration courses with alphabetisation/Federal Office for Migration and Refugees) were provided by other educational institutions.

## **GERMANY**

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### **PART 2**

#### **CONSTRUCTION HELPERS**

##### **OVERVIEW OF TASKS AND FIELDS OF ACTIVITY**

Construction helpers can be found on almost all construction sites performing a wide range of tasks and may work in a range of industry sectors.

Construction helpers clean and prepare construction sites. Helpers also work in the organisation of the construction site and work place.

They help to set up a site, maintain it, and eventually clear it at the end of the work. They transport and store materials, tools and machines, as well as auxiliary equipment and other implements used on site.

Construction helpers load and unload materials and maintain equipment. They erect and dismantle scaffolding (incl. auxiliary, work, support and portable scaffolds).

They assist with redevelopment work (removing and storing old fittings/materials, checking the condition of tools and equipment, clearing away rubbish and cleaning the workplace, carrying out chisel work (by hand or by machine), pre-treating surfaces through cleaning, sanding, roughening and rust removal, finishing surfaces by cleaning, filling, smoothing and painting with primers/undercoats, removing old wall and floor coverings).

Construction helpers often help other craft workers, including carpenters, plasterers, operating engineers, masons, painters and drywall installers.

Construction helpers often work as part of a team with other skilled craft workers, jointly carrying out assigned construction tasks. At other times, construction helpers may work alone, reading and interpreting instructions, plans, and specifications with little or no supervision.

##### **FIELDS OF ACTIVITY:**

Organisation of the construction site and work place

Redevelopment work

Fabrication of plaster and flooring plaster

Walls and Brick constructions

Installing above-ground components

Renovation and maintenance work (windows and doors, painting, tiling)

## **ICT**

### **OVERVIEW OF TASK AND FIELDS**

Information and communication technologies are a regular part of everyday working life. Companies and businesses streamline their workflow through extensive computer programs and networks. The digital processing of information has become increasingly important, new forms of knowledge transfer processes and new ways of communication have evolved.

Mobile devices such as cell phone or laptop are often for work equipment. For employees, it is the handling and management of PC and mobile devices to acquire safe and keep their knowledge available.

There is a great significance to the field 2, using PC and file management. The most important knowledge about functions is compiled to work with the PC. These functions are often similar in different programs, and make it possible to quickly incorporate in unknown programs.

Working with the PC and mobile devices depends on the technical equipment and internal communication of companies and businesses. Complex programs e.g. Databases with downloadable templates and text blocks can facilitate ease of use by working with the very PC. In addition, access and editing rights regulate the operation of the PC.

Information and communication technologies are tools that can encourage more autonomy at work. Whether it comes to knowledge independently to edit open up – need to solve problems, or problems in a team to present findings and results effective: more than ever, it is important that workers in shaping processes.

### **FIELDS**

Basic computer components

Using PC and file management

Word processing

Spreadsheet

Database

Internet and communication

Mobile communication

## **CONSTRUCTION HELPERS**

### **THE PROFILE**

The definition of the job profile COSTRUCION HELPER in “Literacy and Vocation” is based on the European project BASICON (European Building Essentials) in which 26 institutions from 11 countries were involved ([www.basicon.org](http://www.basicon.org))

The European partnership BASICON agreed basic skills for Construction helpers crucial for employability across the European building sector. These basic skills have been filtered out of each country’s own specific nationally-defined vocational requirements for the given qualification, and describe the key skills needed for working in the building sector across the whole of Europe.

In the process of determining the national vocational requirements and the corresponding areas of mutual convergence and agreement were involved a high range of organisations (training organisations, chambers, national institutes for vocational training, regional and national employment agencies, employer organizations).

Although the vocational training situation initially appeared to be very different in each of the countries involved in the project, the degree of agreement that was reached with regard to necessary European-wide basic qualification was astonishingly high.

- The most important goals of the BASICON project were:
- To focus not on the differences in the national vocational profiles
- To allow access to the (European) labour market, through developing an adequate vocational training programme that corresponds to the needs of employers
- To simplify existing methods of certification, making them not only more realistic and relevant, but also transparent, transferable and easily comparable at a European level
- To lay a future-orientated foundation for standards expected in vocational training at a European level
- To establish language training, computer skills and ‘learning to learn’ as being key areas within a qualifications course – on the one hand to further mobility within the European labour market and on the other hand to strengthen the employability of disadvantaged individuals and migrants in the relevant national labour markets.

## **ICT**

### **THE PROFILE**

The requirements and skills are combined to an extensive profile. They are based on the “European Driver License” (<http://www.ecdl.com/>), <http://www.bbc.co.uk/webwise/0/>, “The new Essential Skills ICT Curriculum” ( based on the National ICT Skill for Life Standards Levels 1 and 2 which can be found in on the DfES website - [dfes.gov.uk](http://dfes.gov.uk).) and the New Zealand Curriculum for ICT Literacy.

## **SPAIN**

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### **PART 1**

#### **SITUATION IN SPAIN CONCERNING LITERACY AND NUMERACY NEEDS**

##### **PEOPLE AFFECTED AND REASONS**

In 2007, functional illiteracy in the Spanish population of working age had been reduced from 50% since 1980. It was at 23.7% and was reduced to 11.9%. The gradual decline of this variable during the first half of the eighties was followed by a rebound at the end of the decade, before falling rapidly during the nineties and until the end of the period.

In 1980, regional differences in terms of functional illiteracy were very significant. While some Regions, such as Cantabria (5.5%) and La Rioja (7.4%), had very low values, others, such as Castilla-La Mancha (38.2%) and Andalusia (36.4%) exceeded the national average.

However, in 2007 all regions registered functional illiterate rates lower than in 1980. In absolute terms, some of the most backward regions at the beginning of the period managed the broader progress and distance from the latter was markedly reduced. Thus, the difference between the region with the highest percentage of illiteracy and one with a smaller proportion was halved, from 32.6 percentage points in 1980 (Castilla-La Mancha and Cantabria to the tail to the head) to 16.5 points (with the worst position in Extremadura and the Basque Country region being the highest).

The southern regions of Spain had the highest percentages, and exceeded 20% in the case of Extremadura and Castile-La Mancha.

A general problem to obtain conclusive data is the definition of illiterate. Illiteracy exists in the strict sense, i.e., no training, while functional illiteracy also exists, when people have had at least 4 years of formal education and knows letters and numbers but without the ability to do simple math or interpret texts.

Therefore, the statistics on this aspect of training can be misleading on many occasions. In France, illiteracy also includes those who have gone to school only a couple of years but not in Spain or Portugal. Consequently, we can see statistics specifying that France has an illiteracy rate (15%) higher than in Spain (8%). But this is just a lack of common statistical criterion since Spain does not recognize the functional illiteracy as illiteracy, as it is demonstrated in some studies developed at the national level.

##### **GROUPS AND SECTORS**

Another source to analyze illiteracy in Spain is the population census carried out by National Statistics Institute every 10 years

Conclusions drawn from these studies:

- People age: 21% of people over 75 years are functionally illiterate
- Data from the towns' people live: The smaller the municipality of residence, the higher rates of illiteracy.

##### **SOLUTIONS AND MEASURES**

After analyzing such diverse sources on functional illiteracy in Spain, we could draw the following conclusions:

- The Spanish authorities have not conducted official studies to approach this matter in a reliable way.

- The different interpretations of functional illiteracy respond to different alternatives when doing a survey or study.
- The periods used are too broad to draw conclusions applicable to the present time.
- However, although the studies were not conducted properly, the Spanish educational system attempts to monitor this issue through the following measures:
  - Support for pupils in need of understanding (for diversity).
  - Counselling services to students at risk of school dropout.
  - Specific support for students who undertake basic vocational training to facilitate the basic skills of language use or basic mathematical operations.
  - Specific training Centres for Adults in order to provide literacy qualifications to reach minimum Secondary Education objectives.

## **SPAIN**

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### **PART 2**

#### **ELECTRICIAN HELPER**

##### **OVERVIEW OF TASKS AND FIELDS OF ACTIVITY**

Perform auxiliary operations, under instructions from the supervisor or manager, in the assembly and maintenance of electric power networks overhead and underground, applying the techniques and procedures required in each case, achieving the quality criteria, in conditions of security and compliance with the regulations in force.

#### **HOUSE KEEPING**

##### **OVERVIEW OF TASKS AND FIELDS OF ACTIVITY**

Perform the tasks of cleaning surfaces and furniture of the housing, food processing, washing and ironing, basic manual sewing and prepare beds, selecting and using the techniques, tools, products and appliances to ensure the sanitizing of the home and allow the availability of use of the beds, household linens, clothing and food consumption, complying with the regulations for the prevention of occupational risks.

#### **ELECTRICIAN HELPER and HOUSE KEEPING**

##### **THE PROFILES**

The profiles are based on the NATIONAL SYSTEM FOR QUALIFICATIONS AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING (SNCFP) and NATIONAL CATALOGUE OF PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS (CNCP)

The National System for Qualifications and Vocational Educational and Training (SNCFP) consists of instruments and actions which are necessary to promote and develop the integration of vocational education and training through the National Catalogue of Professional Qualifications. Besides, it aims at promoting and developing the assessment and accreditation of professional competences in order to encourage the professional and social development of the people and to meet the needs of the productive system. Procedures of collaboration and consultation with the different productive

sectors and the social partners have been established in order to identify and update the needs for qualifications, as well as their definition and the definition of the associated learning.

The National Catalogue of Professional Qualifications (CNCP) is an instrument of the National System for Qualifications and Vocational Education and Training (SNCFP), which lists the professional qualifications according to the appropriate competences for the professional exercise. The Spanish National Catalogue of Professional Qualifications (CNCP) consists of professional qualifications arranged in level of qualification and professional family. The 26 professional families which make up the National Catalogue of Professional Qualifications (CNCP) have been created according to affinity criteria among the different professional competencies.

## **UNITED KINGDOM**

### **PART 1**

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#### **THE SITUATION IN THE UK CONCERNING LITERACY AND NUMERACY NEEDS**

##### **PEOPLE AFFECTED AND REASONS**

The National Literacy Trust claim; “For one in six people in the UK today, literacy is a real struggle. They do not have the communication skills they need to fulfil their potential. Poor literacy means children do not gain the knowledge they need to succeed at school and as adults will have limited opportunities.”

[Taken from: [www.literacytrust.org.uk/support?gclid=CJTBSve20q4CFcwTfAodX3WV-g](http://www.literacytrust.org.uk/support?gclid=CJTBSve20q4CFcwTfAodX3WV-g)]

Around a fifth of pupils leave school without functional literacy and functional numeracy skills, despite average achievement in the three Rs improving over the past decade, a new Government-funded study has found. Sheffield University researchers synthesised more than 60 years of evidence on numeracy and literacy and concluded that standards have generally risen in England, with the highest skills among the best in the world. But they also found a significant proportion of young people still lacked the basic skills needed to function in society.

Teaching union the NUT said the study, funded by the Government’s Skills for Life strategy unit, confirmed the “long tail of underachievement” already highlighted by the Pisa international comparative study. The Sheffield report - The levels of attainment in literacy and numeracy of 13- to 19-year-olds in England, 1948-2009 - says the latest evidence shows that 22 per cent of 16- to 19-year-olds are functionally innumerate. Professor Greg Brooks, one of the study’s authors, said this had remained at around the same level for at least 20 year. His report says this means people have “very basic competence in maths, mainly limited to arithmetical computations and some ability to comprehend and use other forms of mathematical information”. “While this is valuable, it is clearly not enough to deal confidently with many of the mathematical challenges of contemporary life,” the report adds. Levels of functional innumeracy are higher still among older age groups and even the 22 per cent is “higher than in many other industrialised countries”.

The latest evidence on reading shows 17 per cent of 16- to 19-year-olds are functionally illiterate and Professor Brooks said this had also been the case for at least two decades. “People at this level can handle only simple tests and straightforward questions on them where no distracting information is adjacent or nearby,” his report says. “Making inferences and understanding forms of indirect meaning, e.g. allusion and irony, are likely to be difficult or impossible. This is less than the functional literacy needed to partake fully in employment, family life and citizenship and to enjoy reading for its own sake.”

[Taken from: [www.tes.co.uk/article.aspx?storycode=6042996](http://www.tes.co.uk/article.aspx?storycode=6042996)]

##### **ILLITERACY COSTS THE UK ECONOMY £81 BILLION ANNUALLY**

According to a preliminary report released by the World Literacy Foundation, the estimated cost of illiteracy to the UK economy is £81.312bn each year. The interim report entitled ‘The Economic and Social Cost of Illiteracy’ aims to highlight the economic and social cost of illiteracy to the global and UK economy, where in the latter six to eight million adults are functionally illiterate. This means that although they can read and write simple words, they cannot apply these skills to accomplish tasks which are necessary to make informed choices and participate fully in everyday life, such as filling in a job application form or reading a bank statement.

The report draws figures from the money spent of welfare and unemployment benefits, estimated to be £23.312bn. It explains that illiterate people are more likely to be claiming such benefits because there is more chance of them dropping out of high school and / or being unable to find work.

However, the report also infers the no-win situation that these illiterate people face, earning 30-42% less than their literate counterparts, but not possessing the literacy skills required to undertake further vocational education or training to improve their earning capacity.

[Taken from:

[www.fenews.co.uk/fe-news/illiteracy-costs-the-uk-economy-81-billion-annually](http://www.fenews.co.uk/fe-news/illiteracy-costs-the-uk-economy-81-billion-annually)]

#### **WHAT ARE THE SOLUTIONS AND MEASURES PUT IN PLACE TO COMBAT THE PROBLEMS?**

Nationally, the Government established new qualifications to reflect the needs of the labour market. These are the Functional Skills qualifications that all 16-19 year olds undertake along side their vocational qualification. 'Functional skills are core elements of English, mathematics and ICT that provide individuals with the essential knowledge, skills and understanding that will enable them to operate confidently, effectively and independently in life, education and work'. QCA 2006

## **UNITED KINGDOM**

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### **PART 2**

#### **CARE WORKER**

##### **OVERVIEW OF TASKS AND FIELDS OF ACTIVITY**

Carers or Care workers operate in a variety of different settings and locations and perform a wide range of tasks for a variety of people. The job title Carer and Care worker are often used to describe the same job, however for this document we will use care worker to avoid any confusion with family oriented carers.

Care workers support higher level nursing professionals and tasks in house or in a mobile, home support context. Care work offers introductory employment opportunities for young people and those re-entering the labour market wanting flexible employment terms.

Care workers provide basic support for people, who either temporarily or permanently, cannot perform basic tasks themselves. These tasks range from cooking and cleaning to basic medical and personal care tasks and everyday household chores.

Care workers also carry out essential tasks to release other professionals to carry out more vital duties. Their role is supportive, not only of the patient or cared for person but also for the other people in the caring team.

Care workers in the community often work with handover duties that are centrally administered and managed, and despite being part of a wider, multi-agency team often work to a care plan with little or no direct supervision.

Care workers often play a key role in supporting qualified professionals in hospitals, care homes and other health-care environments as well as in educational settings.

Care workers also often work as part of a team, alongside Allied Health Professionals as part of a multi-agency approach to caring at home or in supported accommodation.

Depending on the individual role and setting, a care assistant may assist therapists or specialists by setting up equipment and providing hands-on support or by working directly with patients in carrying out routine personal care duties.

Included here are the four most common fields of activity that can be covered under the headline role of carer or care worker. The terms 'patient' and 'client' often refer to the same person; the person who the care worker is responsible for, however this can depend on the context of their care, location and needs.

**FIELDS OF ACTIVITY:**

- Home based care worker / personal support
- Residential based care worker / personal support
- Auxiliary hospital based care worker / care assistant
- Personal care worker assistant

**HOUSEKEEPING (HOTEL)**

**OVERVIEW OF TASKS AND FIELDS OF ACTIVITY**

Housekeepers, often called chambermaids, operate in a variety of different environments and locations and perform a wide range of tasks. The job title Housekeeper or Chambermaid are often used to describe the same job and in this document we will use both.

Due to the nature of the work Chambermaids and Housekeepers are often employed on a seasonal, casual or part time basis. Housekeeping offers introductory employment opportunities for young people and those re-entering the labour market wanting flexible employment terms.

Housekeepers often play a key role in supporting other staff whether in hotels or other organisations. They also come in to direct contact with the general public and need to maintain a professional approach at all times.

They often work as part of team, however, due to the nature of the role they also have to work on their own initiative to strict deadlines.

Hotel chambermaids are tasked with different combinations of cleaning duties to maintain the cleanliness of each room. They make sure that the bed sheets are well arranged and the bathrooms are clean and restocked. They also take charge of accounting for the room supplies that may have been destroyed or consumed for proper billing.

Hotel chambermaids are also trained on the proper use of prescribed cleaning procedures, solutions, and equipment.

They are likewise guided on how to follow the specific hotel standards.

**FIELDS OF ACTIVITY:**

- Cleaning and hygiene
- Basic maintenance
- Maintaining Hotel Standards
- Security and Safety
- Customer Services

## **CARER/CARE WORKER**

### **THE PROFILE**

The definition of the job profile CARER/CARE WORKER in “Literacy and Vocation” is based on Skills for Care information, related resources and case studies in addition to information provided by the National Health Service (NHS)

#### **Skills for Care**

Skills for Care ensures that England's adult social care workforce has the appropriately skilled people in the right places working to deliver high quality social care. Skills for Care focus on the attitudes, values, skills and qualifications people need to undertake their roles. They work closely with the 48,000-plus organisations that employ adult social care workers, together with people who use services, carers and other key partners to develop effective tools and resources that meet the workforce development needs of the sector.

Skills for Care supports employers (organisations and people who 'directly' employ PAs) develop the knowledge and skills of nearly 1.56 million workers and support the sector to plan for the future using data from a National Minimum Data Set for Social Care (NMDS-SC). NHS Careers is the information service for careers in the NHS in England.

Further information is available using this link: [www.skillsforcare.org.uk](http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk)

#### **National Health Service**

Since its launch in 1948, the NHS has grown to become the world's largest publicly funded health service. It is also one of the most efficient, most egalitarian and most comprehensive. The NHS employs more than 1.7m people. Of those, just under half are clinically qualified, including, 39,409 general practitioners (GPs), 410,615 nurses, 18,450 ambulance staff and 103,912 hospital and community health service (HCHS) medical and dental staff.

The National Health Service offers a huge range of exciting and challenging opportunities for people who are passionate about making a difference.

There are more than 350 different careers on offer that cater for everyone regardless of interests, skills or qualifications.

#### **Further information is available using these links:**

[www.nhscareers.nhs.uk](http://www.nhscareers.nhs.uk); [www.nhscareers.nhs.uk/downloads](http://www.nhscareers.nhs.uk/downloads)

This information is to be used as a guideline only for the basic role of carer and care worker in different contexts that apply across Europe. There will be areas of health care that differ from these examples but that share commonality in relation to literacy and the basic skills required to perform the role.

## **HOUSEKEEPING**

### **THE PROFILE**

The definition of the job profile HOUSEKEEPING in “Literacy and Vocation” is based on a selection of job descriptions from various sources.

A housekeeper is responsible for maintaining the cleanliness and presentation of a hotel or similar type of accommodation. The role may involve specialised cleaning duties, doing laundry, general room maintenance and stock-keeping. A housekeeper’s duties involve cleaning rooms thoroughly during and after guests check out, usually according to a detailed check list. The level of attention to detail is to ensure the appropriate level of cleanliness according to the star rating for the accommodation. The hotel rating system will usually dictate the level of professional qualifications and expertise the employees need.

Housekeepers need to be diligent and have an excellent eye for detail. You should be well presented and able to work quickly and effectively without disturbing the privacy of the hotel's guests. Qualifications and experience are not usually required, depending on the policies of the hotel and the rating of the services, however on-the-job training is often provided to.

Job specifications for the role of Housekeeper and/or Chambermaid usually rely on the ability to learn new skills, work as part of a team but also possess good customer service skills along with basic levels of literacy and numeracy. The research site below advertises for staff with ‘understanding of the technical service skills for assigned area’ thus highlighting the need for a new, more qualified and skilled worker in this service industry ([www.hotel-jobs.co.uk/housekeeper.aspx](http://www.hotel-jobs.co.uk/housekeeper.aspx)).

Most training or work related profiles in this area rely on a generic request for skills. These apply across the service industries with no specific ones belonging to the hotel trade. Traditionally the attraction to hotel work was the non-requirement for even the most basic skills and qualifications. This meant that low skilled and often migrant workers were employed for these industries. The introduction of minimum wages in many countries will ensure a competition element for these low skilled jobs, but also the need for employers and organisations to demand more from all of their staff ([www.ind-training.co.uk/index.php/hospitality](http://www.ind-training.co.uk/index.php/hospitality) and [www.wetherspoonjobs.co.uk/home/career/staff-vacancies/hotel-housekeeper](http://www.wetherspoonjobs.co.uk/home/career/staff-vacancies/hotel-housekeeper)).

This information is to be used as a guideline only for the basic role of housekeeper in different contexts that apply across Europe. There will be areas of hotel housekeeping that differ from these examples but that share commonality in relation to literacy and the basic skills required to perform the role