Dana Bachmann (European Commission) is Head of the Vocational Education and Training (VET), Apprenticeships and Adult Learning unit at DG EMPL. She is responsible for vocational education and training and adult learning policy. In the past, she worked as a lawyer at the European Court of Human Rights and she managed diverse projects in the field of environmental law in Central and Eastern Europe.

Paul Holdsworth joined the European Commission in 1996 where he has always worked in the field of education. He currently leads a small team working on Adult Learning policy in DG Employment Social Affairs and Inclusion.

Alexia Samuel (European Commission) is currently working in the Adult Skills Team within the Unit "VET, apprenticeships and adult learning" of the European Commission's Directorate General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion. Previously she notably worked in the Lifelong Learning Platform, a European civil society organisation, and in the Université Libre de Bruxelles. She has a master degree in European Affairs from the Institute of Political Sciences of Bordeaux, France.

Lidia Salvatore (CEDEFOP) is expert for adult learning and continuing vocational training at Cedefop. She was responsible for Cedefop publication and research conducted under the economic and social cost of low skilled adults in Europe project (Investing in skills pays off: the economic and social cost of low-skilled adults in the EU) and she is currently responsible for managing and carrying out analysis and research on the potential of work-based learning in developing upskilling pathways for adults. Lidia holds a BA in political science and a Masters in EU economics and politics from the University of Bologna in Italy and she also studied in Australia at the University of New South Wales and University of Sydney. Prior to Cedefop Lidia worked for five years as a research officer in Eurofound, the European Union agency for the improvement of living and working conditions, where she contributed to designing, initiating and carrying out research and comparative analysis in the field of youth employment policies.

Katia Ceré (Italy) is an EURES Adviser in Bologna and Deputy local manager of Centro per l'Impiego di San Lazzaro di Savena, Bologna. Since 1990, she has been working at PES in the area of Bologna. She provides services of information, guidance, counselling and placement to both jobseekers and employers.

Gianna Renzini (Italy) – Headmaster, CPIA4 ROME Adult education institute
Costanza Pagnini (Italy) is senior manager and evaluation expert at Fondazione G. Brodolini in the fields of social policies, employment and regional development - mostly in the framework of the ESI-funded interventions. Economist, she is in charge of implementing and coordinating applied research programmes at the EU level and national/regional level in Italy. Within the framework of the project for the monitoring of ESF performance of ESF 2014-2020 she has coordinated the drafting of a thematic report on the contribution of the ESF to New Skills Agenda, with a particular focus on the Upskilling Pathways. She has a very good knowledge of programmes centrally managed by the European Commission mostly thanks to her different collaborations in PROGRESS funded actions dealing with social inclusion of the most vulnerable groups. She was involved in the pilot study on the counterfactual impact evaluation of three ESF hiring incentives.

Nadia Reynders (Belgium) works as a Project coordinator GOAL at the Department of Education and Training, Flanders, Belgium, University of Leuven. Project GOAL is one of the projects under the Erasmus+ programme Key Action 3, prospective initiatives, European Policy Experimentation. GOAL stands for Guidance and Orientation for Adult Learners and is developing educational guidance services for low educated adults in 6 countries across Europe: Belgium (Flanders), Czech Republic, Iceland, the Netherlands, Lithuania and Slovenia. These educational guidance services will be organised as a policy experimentation in which evaluation of the process and the outcomes will play a crucial role. The project is coordinated by the Department of Education and Training, Flanders.

Iveta Mihailova-Djekova (Bulgaria) graduated from the Sofia University with a degree in Pedagogy in 2005. She was as a senior expert in the Centre for Human Resources Development and Regional Initiatives, a structure within the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy of Bulgaria where she organized vocational training courses for unemployed persons and taught basic computer skills. Since 2007 she has been working at the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy. Currently Iveta is a chief expert at "Vocational qualification” Unit, “Labour market policy and labour mobility” Directorate. Her main responsibilities are in the field of workforce training and encouragement of lifelong learning. She participates in the elaboration and methodical support of the implementation of programmes and measures for adults’ training and employment.

Erno Hyvönen (Finland) works at the Ministry of Education and Culture in Finland. His main responsibilities in the Ministry of Education and Culture are skills programmes for young adults and for immigrants. He also deals with basic skills and like playing with statistics.

Veselina Tyufekchieva (Bulgaria) is a state expert at the Managing Authority of OP SESG, responsible for programming and planning procedures on the OP, developing the selection criteria for the operations on the programme, as well as the guidelines for the potential beneficiaries. Her main responsibilities include: programming and planning the grant procedures on the programme priority axes financed by ESF, namely priority axis 2 "Education and Life Long Learning" and 3 "Educational Environment for Active Social Inclusion"; applying integrated approach as integrated project proposal procedure and Common Led Local Development (CLLD) approach with other Bulgarian operational programmes; developing the guidelines for applicants, evaluation criteria and monitoring indicators in accordance with national and European legislation.
Lubov Popova (Bulgaria) is the Manager of the 5 German-Bulgarian Centres for VET. VET are providers of vocational training, key competences, validation and professional orientation for adult people - 16+. She has a Masters and Doctor’s degree in pedagogic and andragogic - methodical for adult education. Her expertise is in LLL and VET for adults.

Svetla Toneva (Bulgaria) has a Master in Pedagogy and Education management and is Director of Vocational Education and Training centre in Workers’ Education and Training College at Confederation of Independent Trade Unions in Bulgaria (KNSB). She is experienced in the management of Adult Training, VET and CVT activities. Mrs. Toneva is involved in carrying out practice-oriented studies and evaluation on the relations between Employment, Labour Market and Education & Training issues both at EU and national level. Taking part in different European projects in Adult Training and LLL area, Mrs. Toneva has significant experience in applying research methodology and toolkits, including IT tools, especially in conducting studies. She has been involved in the process of Validation of Skills and Qualifications acquired from Informal and Non-formal Learning at national level as well as in the process of recognition of Skills and qualifications, Bologna process and Bologna transparency instruments, NQF and EQF, Quality Assurance Framework in Education.

Silviya Toneva (Bulgaria) is Chief expert at the National Agency for Vocational Education and Training, Bulgaria. She has a Bachelor’s degree in Economy with specialization on Psychology and a Master’s degree in HR management. She has working experience in recruitment and selection, adult education, case management, development of learning handbooks and manuals, career development systems. Some of her most recent responsibilities involve the development of State educational standards.

Radosveta Drakeva (Bulgaria) is an independent expert in education and vocational education and training (VET), with interests in education management and data analysis. Her expertise covers strategic planning in education and VET, quality in education, education management information systems as well as delivering face-to-face and online trainings. She also has a rich experience in EU programmes and initiatives, participating in transnational project teams as expert and project manager for the LifeLong Learning Programme and for Erasmus+. Radosveta is the Bulgarian coordinator of ReferNet - a pan-European network created by CEDEFOP to provide exchange of information and best practices on national VET systems and policies in Member States, Iceland and Norway. She participates in various activities related to the promotion of stakeholders’ cooperation in education and VET with a focus of the involvement of NGOs and training providers.

Verica Batur (Croatia) is Head of Service for Secondary Education and Adult Education, Directorate for Education at the Ministry of Science and Education of the Republic of Croatia. Before that, she worked as Head of Department for the gymnasium, art schools and student dormitories. She has a Doctorate in biotechnical sciences and is a Scientific Associate at the Faculty of food technology and biotechnology, University of Zagreb.

Ana Pikelja (Croatia) works in the department that provides support to vocational and adult education at the Agency for Vocational Education and Training and Adult Education. They organise professional developing for vocational teachers and for all that are involved in adult education. Ms Pikelja also worked on the evaluation of programs of basic training and specialisation.
Nikolina Stopfer (Croatia) has spent the last four years in the Service for EU programmes and projects at the Ministry of Science and Education. She has worked mainly on monitoring of ESF projects in the field of Education and Lifelong Learning. Her day-to-day challenges involve reporting on implementation with regard to indicator and financial progress, contributing in providing support to potential applicants during open calls for tenders and to current beneficiaries concerning project implementation, contributing to organization and participation in visibility and information activities regarding ESF.

Dario Baron (Croatia) is currently working as a Senior Expert Advisor at the Ministry of Labour and Pension System of the Republic of Croatia within Service for international employment policies. Among other duties, he is in charge of implementing projects aimed at harmonizing education to the needs of the labour market, as well as developing national documents in the field of employment policy in accordance with various EU guidelines. Mr. Baron is also actively involved in developing national position papers on documents discussed at the Working Party on Social Questions of the Council of the European Union and EPSCO Council.

Igor Štavlić (Croatia) works in an adult education institution as a professor of economics group of classes (business communication and entrepreneurship) and as an expert pedagogic branch manager responsible for organising different education groups (contacts with the participants, lecturers, schedules). Additionally, he is a trainer in the field of communication and group dynamic for teachers who are working in the adult education sector. Since 2010 he has been implementing different EU projects as a member of the project teams.

Goran Lapat (Croatia) has a PhD in social sciences – pedagogy. Since 2009, he has been working the Faculty of Teacher Education, University of Zagreb, Department of Education, today as an assistant professor. His research interest is in the field of school pedagogy, didactics and inclusive teaching, the method and practice of teaching adult learners.

Ante Franić (Croatia) after Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences and five years of teaching Greek and Latin in various schools, he started working at Ministry of Science and Education within the field of adult education. Mr. Franić is National coordinator for E+ project Implementation of EU Agenda for Adult Learning, interested in connection between labour market and education.

Maria Kapniari (Greece) is a senior staff of the General Secretariat for Lifelong Learning and Youth (The National Coordinator for the European AL Agenda) and she is working on Adult Learning issues at National and EU level. Maria has been working on the Implementation of the European Agenda since 2013 as member of the core group during the period 2012-2013 and as a project manager since 2015. She contributed to the submission of the proposal for the latest project (2017-2019) and to the submission of EaSi progress project collaborating with PES and social partners.
Eleni Giannakopoulou (Greece) is Chief Executive Officer of the Greek National Organisation for the Certification of Qualifications & Vocational Guidance (EOPPEP). Eleni received her Degree in Mathematics at the University of Athens, her D.E.A. in Applied Mathematics in Social Sciences at the Université Paris 5 René Descartes and her Ph.D in Education at the University of Ioannina. She has extensive experience in designing and conducting social research as well as teaching work in adult education. The last fifteen years she taught as a Professor - Advisor in Adult Education Department of the Hellenic Open University and the last two years onwards she lectures in postgraduate courses at the School of Education of the University of Athens. She has many publications on research methodology and data analysis, on adult education as well as issues relating to the design, organization and implementation of adult training programs. She is a founding member of the Hellenic Adult Education Association.

Antonios Angelakis (Greece) is an innovation expert at The Small Enterprises' Institute of the Hellenic Confederation of Professionals, Craftsmen and Merchants (IME GSEVEE), with a major focus on business support services, innovation management, innovation networks and clusters, digital transformation and automation, skills' formation systems and policies. He obtained his Ph.D. in Innovation Policies and Systems from University of Crete, Greece, while his interests span innovation sciences, technology transfer, innovation and technology policies, innovation management, and emerging business models. He has also a research and working experience on relevant subjects through his active participation (as researcher and technical expert) in numerous EU-funded and national technology and innovation projects.

Athina Lazou (Greece) is Director of Vocational Training Directorate /OAED. She is a Physicist with an MSc in Exploration Geophysics. Previously she worked as a Researcher Geophysicist at the Institute of Geological and Mineral Exploration (IGME). She also worked with the General Secretariat for Research and Technology (GSRT)-Ministry of Industry. In parallel, she was a tactical member of the Mega Science Forum Committee of the OECD as National Representative. Ms Lazou was also Coordinator of the MOU unit of OAED and Director General of the Organization of Tourism Education and Training (OTEK). She has 30 years’ experience in Management in general and Project Management, as well as in the co-ordination and management of national and transnational Education and Training programmes.

Chara Gonzou (Greece) is Head of Unit on Vocational Training Actions, under O.A.E.D Directorate of Vocational Training for Adults. She is a Political Scientist, with a Masters’ Degree in European Studies (U.L.B-Institute of European Studies). During the twenty seven years of her working life, she has been involved in several projects, studies and evaluations in the fields of training – lifelong learning, employment.

Aikaterini Alexomanolaki (Greece) is Head of VET Department of Employment, Directorate of the Ministry of Labour, Social Security and Social Solidarity. Her main responsibilities are vocational education and training policies, enhancing skills for the unemployed and socially vulnerable groups in order to enter the labour market. She has represented the Hellenic Government on meetings and committees of the European Union regarding matters of employment and vet policies. She holds a Literature degree from the University of Athens, a master degree in European Social Policy from London School of Economics and Political Science and she joined the Ministry of Labour after graduated from the National School of Public Administration.

Christos Zagkos (Greece) is a researcher in the Center of Educational Policy Development (KANEP/GSEE). He studied Balkan Studies at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki and he obtained his postgraduate studies in International Relations and International Law at the University of Lancaster, U.K. He holds a Ph.D. degree from the University of Western Macedonia in the field of Sociology and he has published more than fifty papers in Greek, European and American scientific journals. His research is focused on aspects that concern sociology of education, educational policy, ethnicity and vulnerable social groups.
Konstantinos Melas (Greece) works as an Advisor to the Deputy Minister of Education, Research and Religious Affairs. Since 2013, he is a Ph.D. candidate at the Medical School of the University of Athens. His past work experience includes being Scientific Associate of General Secretariat for Lifelong Learning and Youth in the Ministry of Education and teaching at the Associate Laboratory at the Department of Civil Engineering, Piraeus, University of Applied Sciences, for nine academic years on a full academic schedule.

Valentina Curzi (Italy) is a senior researcher in the newly born National Agency for Active Labour Market Policies. She has been working with VET and AL policies at EU level and their implementation at national level for more than 20 years. She has also worked for over 15 years on the ESF programming and coordination at EU and national level. Valentina is actually in charge of the coordination of training provisions for unemployed, as well as of the coordination of National Contact Points of the EU transparency tools (Europass, EQF and Euroguidance).

Alessia D'Annibale (Italy) is a Civil servant at Ministry of Labour - Directorate-General for Unemployment Benefits and Vocational Training. In particular, her responsibilities include monitoring and applying the legislation in these fields, with special attention to financial aspects.

Gilberto Collinassi (Italy) attained a secondary school certificate in Industrial Electronics in 1976; He began his career in the private industry (Danieli &C and Olivetti &C). Since 1985, he has been working in ENAIP FVG, a regional no-profit VET provider. He started as a computer science teacher, then as department coordinator, training designer, principal of the Udine training centre and eventually regional research and development director. Currently he is appointed as Design Director of Effe.Pi FVG, Monitoring Director of Apprendisti.fvg.it, and Innovation Director of ENAIPNET impresa sociale, all of them consortiums of training providers providing training services. On behalf of ENAIPNET he is involved as expert in European projects managed by EVTA.

Luisa Daniele (Italy) works at the study centre of ANPAL - the Italian governmental Agency for ALMP since 2017. Previously she worked at ISFOL, the Italian Institute of Research on Vocational Education and Training Policies the (institution supervised by the Ministry of Labour).

Patrizia Garista (Italy) is a full time Researcher at INDIRE, Adjunct Professor in Pedagogy, Lecturer MA & SUMMER SCHOOL, University of Perugia and IULINE, Italy, has a BA in Educational Sciences, MA in Health Promotion and Education and a PhD in Health Education, EuHP (IUHPE registered practitioner).
Fabrizio Da Crema (Italy) is a representative of CGIL – trade union and member of the ACVT. He is responsible for education policies in Trade Union organisation (CGIL).

Alessio Balsamo (Italy) works at The General Confederation of Italian Industry, also known as Confindustria.

Ana Rădulescu (Romania) started her professional activity working in a county employment service, where she was in charge of information and guidance services for jobseekers and coordination of integrated services office. After that she moved to the national PES’ labour market management directorate, coordinating the county agencies in delivering vocational training and guidance to jobseekers, establishing tailor made procedures for their activity and providing support and internal training. Ms Rădulescu has been managing teams of experts working in projects financed by European Funds. From the beginning of 2014, she has been working within the Employment, Competences and Vocational Mobility Policies Department, at Ministry of Labour and Social Justice in Romania, developing the national strategic framework for vocational training of workforce (including apprenticeship and traineeship), promoting draft legislation and policy documents necessary to achieve strategic objectives in the field of vocational training of workforce. She holds a university degree in Economics and 3 Master’s Degrees in Economics, Public Politics and Evaluation of European Politics and Programs.

Claudio Vitali (Italy) works at National Institute for the Analysis of Public Policies (INAPP) and has been appointed by Ministry of Education and Ministry of Labour as National Coordinator for the EU Agenda for Adult learning in Italy. Claudio has a long experience in EU Programmes and projects evaluation and is an expert in the field of Adult education. He is actually the project manager of Project E.QU.A.L., funded in the framework of Employment and Social Innovation EU Programme, to sustain the Upskilling Pathways implementation in Italy.

Lara Porciatti (Italy) is project manager and policy advisor on different sectors: education, adult education, VET. She is collaborating with the Education and Training Department of Tuscany Region for the implementation of regional policies and the management of project at regional level with the involvement of adult education providers, schools and local authorities.

Mihaela Tania Irimia (Romania) works at the Ministry of National Education, Early, Primary and Secondary Education General Department. As a general director, her responsibilities are in the field of education policy, quality assurance in pre-university education, coordination, monitoring and evaluation of the pre-university national system of education, curriculum design, developing the partnerships between Ministry of National Education and other Ministries, monitoring and modernisation of the school network. She was responsible for the Programme "Second Chance" - lower secondary education. They have coordinated the elaboration of methodology for organising and conducting of the Programme, curriculum and educational materials specific to the programme, they designed the evaluation methodology, she coordinated the design and conducted training sessions for managers and teachers, developing tools for monitoring and evaluation, whilst building partnerships with stakeholders, especially local communities. Ms Irimia is a member of the Management Team of the Strategic Project funded by European Social Fund: RCQE (Relevant Curriculum to Quality Education). She is also representative of Romania in the ECVET users group, She graduated in Economical Sciences, with a diploma on Cybernetics, Statistics and Informatics; Economic Informatics Specialization and Engineering Sciences, with a diploma on Electrical engineering.
Tania Grigore (Romania) has extensive experience in employment and training areas, both at regional and national level. She has been Executive Director of the County Employment Agency Ialomita for 10 years and Director of Employment, Competences and Vocational Mobility Policies Department, at Ministry of Labour and Social Justice in Romania for 9 years. Her regional experience includes coordinating the implementation of employment services at the county level, measures to prevent unemployment, coordinating the implementation of programs for the development of human resources financed from European funds. Her expertise expanded once she has moved at national level. As director, she coordinates the implementation of strategic objectives in the field of employment, continuing vocational training, labour mobility and the social economy, the elaboration, promotion and updating of the national strategic framework in the field of labour, based on the internal and European requirements. Mrs. Grigore holds a university degree in Law and several Master’s Degrees in her field of expertise.

Elena Matache (Romania) works at the Humanitarian Organization Concordia as Executive Director for programmes and projects. Ms Matache has extensive experience in the social field, in particular in working with children with special needs and social workers.

Tiberiu Dobrescu (Romania) has been involved in a number of projects with European funding relating to adult education sector (such as National Coordinators for the Implementation of the European Agenda for Adult Learning, EPALE National Support Services for Romania, European Qualifications Framework –National Coordination Point (EQF-NCP), EQF Databases –Support for European Qualifications Framework –National Qualifications Databases). He is also a member in several working groups at European level (such as EQF AG, ESCO) as well as in various working groups and committees at local level involving adult education and training, higher education and professional development. Mr. Dobrescu is the author of various scientific papers, articles and publications on engineering as well as of several articles and publications related to adult education sector.

Nela Plugărescu (Romania) is experienced in the implementation of policies and strategies adopted by the Ministry of Labour and Social Justice in the field of employment programs, labour market analysis, labour market statistics, vocational training, information and professional counselling.

Ion Picioruș (Romania) has been the President of the Back to Work Association since 2001. In this position he has been managing a large number of European funded projects, in the areas of professional counselling, training, assessment of competences and job mediation.

Stanisław Drzażdżewski (Poland) works in the Polish Ministry of National Education. For the last 10 years, he has been working as a coordinator of LLL policy and for the past four years as the country coordinator for implementation of European Agenda for AL in Poland.
Agnieszka Majcher-Teleon (Poland) works at the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Policy, Labour Market Department, unit for lifelong learning. Her area of expertise and her duties include training fund (for employers and employees), training and re-training for unemployed and job seekers, classification of occupations and skills.

Sylwia Walicka (Poland) is the National Qualifications Framework Project Expert at the Educational Research Institute (IBE) in Warsaw. Her main area of expertise includes implementation of NQF, validation of learning outcomes, assessment methods, designing the process of validation, quality assurance of validation, best practices of non-formal and informal learning, and lifelong learning policies. Co-author of the publications: The validation of learning outcomes in Poland - new opportunities for attaining qualifications (in English), Including non-formal sector qualifications in the National Qualifications Framework in Poland (in English), Validation in Europe. A review of selected practices (in Polish).

Jakub Mincewicz (Poland) is a teacher and project coordinator at Folk High School in Radawnica, North of Poland. He has also been elected the President of Polish Federation of Folk High Schools (schools for adults across country using/ referring to Nicholas Grundtvig pedagogy). Jakub also works as a lecturer at Sunderland University in the UK where he teaches subjects related to Applied Linguistics.

Ewelina Sołoducha (Poland) works at the Ministry of Investment and Economic Development in ESF Department, which is a MA for OP KED, financed from ESF. She is involved in the implementation of social innovations in Poland. They are currently heavily involved in preparing for the implementation of the project, which is responsive to the recommendations of the European Commission Upskilling Pathways (referred to above). She will be personally responsible for supervising its implementation.

Ewelina Iwanek (Poland) has a PhD in Law and is the President of the Board of OIC Poland Foundation and lecturer at the University of Economics and Innovation in Lublin. She has been working at the OIC Poland Foundation for last 15 years dealing with all aspects of project management, from preparation to coordination of complex projects at national and international scale. An expert in development and management of projects in the field of entrepreneurship, education, labour market including innovative projects. Actively involved in preparation of competence assessment tools and training need analysis. Approved adviser for SME in training and information services and holder of the Prince 2 Project Management certification.

Alina Respondek (Poland) is the Coordinator of the Erasmus + Adult Education Team at the Foundation for the Development of the Education System. She is a graduate of the Faculty of Chemistry of the Warsaw University of Technology, after several years of work on the creation of new chemical technologies and after graduation of Human Resource Management at the University of Warsaw and many training courses, she started career in Adult Education. In the years 1994-1999 she was involved in educational Phare programs implemented in Poland and managed by the Foundation for the Development of the Education System. Since 2000, she has been supporting the development of the adult learning field in the Polish National Agency for Socrates, Lifelong Learning and Erasmus+, located in the same Foundation. She also was involved during the first two years in implementing EPALE in Polish National Support Service.
Tomasz Gryczan (Poland) is a Legal Advisor in National Education Section of NSZZ "Solidarność". His main responsibilities and activities include developing arguments and positions on regulatory and legislative issues on upskilling pathways, evaluating the views of members so as to adopt common position, appearing before legislative and regulatory bodies or government agency, constantly monitoring national and EU legislation, acting as an intermediary between employees and employers and advocating for initiating legislation desired by teachers' trade union.

Vicente G. Manjavacas Méndez (Spain) has a University Degree in Journalism, Master Degree in International Relations and African Studies, Master Degree in International Relations and Diplomacy. Currently he is studying for a university degree in Law. He has been a Civil Servant since 2015 as a Civil Administrator of the State. His work Experience in the Spanish Public Administration includes 5 years working for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, 2 years working for the Ministry of Health, Social Policies and Equality and currently working for the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport.

María Gutiérrez (Spain) has been working at the European Social Fund for almost one year. It has been a very challenging experience since she started from scratch. She is in charge of most areas related to finances, audits and programs financed by the Fund.

Mónica Castañón Llamas (Spain) is a Telecommunication Engineer and she works at the DG Telecommunications of the regional government of Castilla y León (Spain). The main goal of her Department is the digital inclusion of citizens (young people, adults and aged people), entrepreneurs and SME to improve their digital and professional skills. Thanks to CyL Digital Programme, they develop different initiatives dealing with awareness and training of the whole society in the application of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) to their daily lives, to their jobs or to their businesses.

Diana Mora Izquierdo (Spain) is a Member of the Board of Directors of the Spanish Federation of Popular Universities and the Vice-president of the Canarian Association of Popular Universities.

Ángel Goya Castroverde (Spain) has been a Higher civil servant, since 1989. He has been working as Home Office (Governor of Guipuzcoa or Lieutenant Governor (Avila), Manager in RLD institutes (in European Agencies as Fusión for Energy). He has international experience as Education attaché at New lock or Lavour Counsellor at Berlin and currently he is Deputy Director at SEPE. His department includes Lifelong training, vocational training and Employment policies.
Mariya Dzhengozova (Bulgaria) is a project manager at 3s and a social researcher (MA in sociology) in the field of education, labour market and equal opportunities. Her research work is based on comparative analysis on international and national trends in education, patterns and policies in the wider European context. Mariya joined 3s in October 2011 and since then has been involved in multiple projects dealing with topics such as classification and assessment of skills and competences, skills analysis, anticipation of skills needs; learning outcomes and competence acquisition in the area of lifelong learning and development and implementation of European transparency instruments (EQF, ECVET, ECTS, Europass). Mariya contributed to the 2014 and 2016 update of the European Inventory on Validation of Non-formal and informal learning as a country expert for Bulgaria. Furthermore, Mariya is currently part of the core team (led by 3s) of the Cedefop project ‘Validation of non-formal and informal learning and career guidance’ which focuses on the inter-linkage between validation and career guidance regarding low-skilled adults (among other target groups).

Anna Manoudi (Greece) is a researcher and public policy consultant based in Athens. Throughout the past 20 years, Anna has participated in a wide range of evaluation and transnational research studies focusing on the thematic areas of employment, local development, education, vocational education and training, lifelong learning, the social economy, inclusion and immigration. Anna has been involved in EU-wide assignments which have covered, among other issues: monitoring of employment policies throughout the EU; local responses to unemployment; training and skills; female participation in the labour market; initiatives promoting equal opportunities; training and support for young people and disadvantaged groups to access the labour market; early school leaving; the job creation potential of the social economy; and social dialogue. Anna’s role in the current context has been to support the Greek delegation in exploring possibilities for the further development of Upskilling Pathways in the country.

Mariya Pavkov (Croatia) has broad knowledge and experience in the field of national and European policies and practices in the field of education and training, labour market and employment acquired since 2001. Ms Pavkov has been involved since 2008, as an independent expert, in different assignments for the Executive agencies of the European Commission (EACI, EASME, EACEA, REA, INEA) and ETF (European Training Foundation). Since 2013, Ms Pavkov is providing expertise to CEDEFOP, as a national expert in skills forecasting and labour market developments for the project on Skills forecasting. Since 2009, Ms Pavkov has been involved in numerous research activities (literature desk research, questionnaires, stakeholder interviews) for the needs of preparing country reports (for Croatia) in the field of education (e.g. skills forecasting, skills audits, early school leaving, validation of non-formal and informal learning, work-based teacher training, VET dual system training, quality assurance in VET), labour market and employment (e.g. EU Skills Panorama, Mutual Learning Programme for Labour Market Policies) for the European Commission and CEDEFOP. Throughout 2014 and 2015, Ms Pavkov was a national member on the Network of Independent Experts in Education for DG EAC (analysis of the implementation of Country Specific Recommendations for Croatia, provision of the advice to the DG EAC and the Commission through replies to ad hoc requests, policy analysis, etc.)

Flavia Pesce (Italy) holds a PhD in Political Sociology, University of Florence. In IRS since 1999, she is actually Director of the Education, Training and Labour Policies Area and Member of the IRS Board of Directors. Member of AIV Italian Evaluation Society of which she was a member of the Board of Director in the period 2008-2012. Member of EES European Evaluation Society. Co-Coordinator of the NESE – Network of European Evaluation Societies in the period 2010-2012. Since 1999, she was lecturing Sociology and Sociology of Labour at the Faculty of Educational Sciences - University of Bologna. She is Senior expert with more than 15 years of experience in research and evaluation of training and labour policies, training tools and learning approaches, projects and programmes at national and European level, of gender equality and social inclusion with regard to disadvantaged target groups. Senior expert with more than 20 years of experience in social research with strong expertise in different qualitative and quantitative methodologies and tools.
Aleksandra Duda (Poland) is a Senior Consultant with over 10 years of experience working as a researcher and policy analyst. She has been involved in providing consulting services to the European Commission and other EU bodies focusing on education, training, labour market, and youth. During her career, Aleksandra was responsible for project management, data collection, drafting policy recommendations, peer learning and dissemination. Most of her assignments required carrying out evaluations, analyses, and mapping exercises, examining European and national public policies in Member States and non-EU countries. Her assignments covered initiatives such as: European Higher Education Area, Mutual Learning Programme, European Employment Observatory, Agenda for new skills and jobs, Education and Training 2010 and 2020, European credit system for Vocational Education & Training, Western Balkans Platform on Education and Training, European and National Qualifications Framework. In addition, Aleksandra has a keen interest in EU and EU-neighbourhood’s affairs and completed her PhD studies on democratization in Eastern Europe. In particular, she has looked into the development of youth activism and the limitations of the third sector in post-communist countries.

Elvira Gonzalez-Gago (Spain) is a post graduated economist specialised in employment, social cohesion and gender policies, she is an independent expert working in research and consulting activities, assessing public and private institutions. With 20 years’ experience as senior researcher and managing director of a research institute, she has gained deep understanding of the functioning of employment market and of employment and social policies. She is at present involved in projects for the DG EMPL European Commission: she is the Spanish member of the SYSDEM/EEPO/ECE network of researchers on labour market policies since 2003; she participates also in the European Platform tackling undeclared work as external expert; she is also member of the Scientific Advisory Group on Gender Equality (SAAGE) financed by DG JUST, since 2008. She has participated in numerous Peer Review events of the MLP, in its employment, gender and social strands.

Magda Balica (Romania) is a university lecturer and senior researcher in education with over 20 years of experience in national and international research projects supported by various organizations such as Ministry of Education in Romania, UNICEF, World Bank, European Commission, European Training Foundation and others. With a background in psychology and educational sciences, Magdalena Balica has extensive experience in producing, testing and interpreting both quantitative and qualitative research tools and in drafting policy papers on different educational issues such as early school leaving, lifelong learning, education for Roma students and others.

Anette Curth (Mutual Learning Services Team) is an experienced Project Manager, analyst and report writer at ICF. Her main areas of expertise are Education and Training Policies (ET 2020), Lifelong Learning, Vocational Education and Training; Qualifications Systems and Frameworks; Credit Systems, European Instruments (ECVET, ECTS, EQF); Acquisition/Development of Key Competences (particularly entrepreneurship education with a focus on teachers’ preparation), and Labour Market Policies (European Employment Strategy – Youth Employment). Since 2016, Anette is acting as Project Manager for the ECVET Secretariat for DG EMPL; supporting the ECVET Network. Moreover, Anette has recently acted as Project Manager of the study ‘Mapping Skills Audits in and across the EU’ (DG EMPL). Anette has strong comparative knowledge of the education and training systems across the EU and in particular in the various formal, informal and non-formal learning pathways. This includes in depth knowledge of employment, training and education policies in terms of identification and documentation of skills of individuals (unemployed and employed) and of the relevant stakeholders that carry out skills audits (including employers and Public employment Services.
Jane Nimmo (Mutual Learning Services Team) is a Consulting Director at ICF. She works across different policy areas with a focus on social policy issues particularly employment, education and training. Currently she works on larger-scale implementation projects, which focus on peer review and mutual learning activities for the European Commission in particular around the grey economy and undeclared work. Previously she worked delivering EU’s Lifelong Learning Programme in the UK with a focus on adult learning and vocational education and training. Outside of work Jane works as a volunteer training new bee keepers.

Ali Zaidi (Mutual Learning Services Team) is a Lead Managing Consultant specialising in education and skills policy and implementation. Ali has conducted a range of research studies for the European Commission on the implementation of various EU instruments and policies, including ECVET, ECTS and EQAVET and the European Qualification Framework. He has also conducted many studies for UK and Ireland government departments examining the implementation of various VET programmes and policies, and particularly initiatives focused on functional literacy, numeracy and ICT. Prior to joining ICF, Ali worked in the basic skills policy team for the Learning and Skills Council, which was responsible for implementing the Governments Basic Skills Strategy.

Andreea Hrimiuc (Mutual Learning Services Team) is a Junior Consultant at ICF working on different policy implementation projects such as the Mutual Learning Programme and the European Platform for Tackling Undeclared Work for DG EMPL. Apart from supporting the technical delivery for these programmes, Andreea also conducts research in different fields. She is experienced in in both qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis. Recently she worked on the evaluation of the Creative Europe Programme and the mid-term evaluation of the Erasmus+ Programme.