

10. INVESTING IN EDUCATION, SKILLS AND LIFELONG LEARNING

What does the EU want to achieve ?

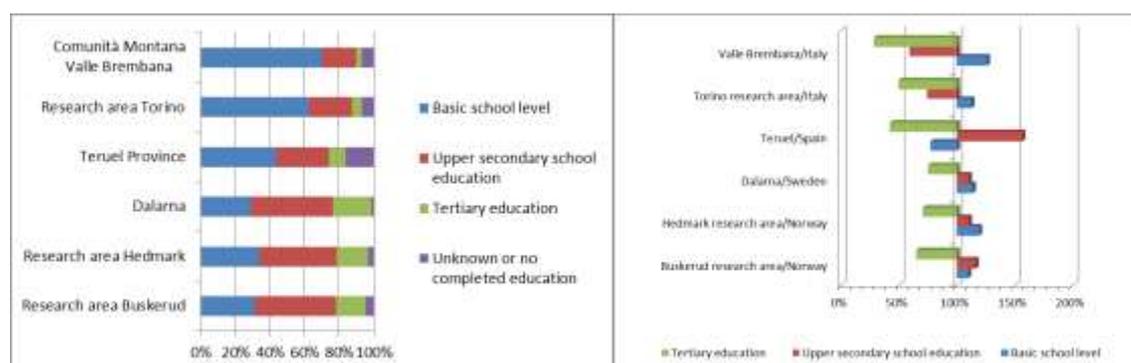
- Reducing school drop-up rates below 10%
- Achieve a proportion of 40% of people aged 30-34 with tertiary education

How?

- By reducing early school leaving and promoting access to good quality, early-childhood primary and secondary education
- Improving the quality, efficiency and openness of tertiary and equivalent education
- Enhancing access to life-long learning, upgrading the skills and competences of the workforce and increasing the labour market relevance of education and training systems
- Fostering lifelong learning and vocational training in the agricultural and forestry sectors

According to the CSF, ERDF should fund infrastructures, and ESF the education activities themselves in all sectors apart from agriculture and fisheries, for which training should be funded by EAFRD and EMFF.

How can mountains contribute?



Education and training are among the most urgent needs for mountain communities.

PADIMA has shown that people aged 16 and above in mountain areas **have a low education level compared to EU targets and a lower education level compared to current national averages**. Pupils have to travel quite far to get to school and may have to leave home at the age of 14-16 to attend school. Many school classes, and even entire schools, have closed in areas which are sparsely populated or where there are very few children.

PADIMA has also identified a **mismatch between young people's aspirations, the supply of educational opportunities, and needs in the local economy**.

This situation leads young mountain people to leave their areas. They often stay where they have studied. Those who do not leave tend to start working early in jobs requiring low qualifications.

Much progress can be achieved in developing the human capital in these areas, resulting in a better capacity to take advantage of mountain resources and innovation potential. There are positive examples of innovative and high-quality education supply systems throughout European mountains which could be replicated.



What do they need in order to contribute?

In order to develop their human capital, the **authorities responsible for mountain areas need to invest in education and training** systems for all parts of the population. They must be provided with the necessary competence in this respect.

In terms of infrastructures that should be financed under ERDF, there is a need to **relocate branches of Universities or specialisations in the rural and mountain areas** : positive examples can be seen of successful mountain universities like the *University of the Highlands and Islands (Scotland)* and *higher education in Hedmark (Norway)*.

In terms of educational activities that can be financed by ESF, mountains need actions in the following fields:

- **Rethinking the education system** using opportunities offered by ICT, at all levels of education and training. Positive examples include :
 - Creative use of ICT in kindergartens in Hedmark, Norway ;
 - Setting-up of distance learning in Dalarna (Sweden) ;
 - The High North Academy : <http://www.highnorthacademy.com/>
 - The University of the Highlands and Islands in Scotland delivers a part-time on-line MSc in Sustainable Mountain Development, available to students anywhere in the world. Some of its graduates are from small communities in mountain areas in other parts of Europe.
- Promoting **equal access to good quality early-childhood, primary and secondary education**: For young families to settle and work in remote mountain areas, access to kindergartens and nearby primary schools is essential. Solutions addressing school transport and organisation must be considered and innovative ideas can be used, such as *Collective kindergartens organised by medium farms in Torino (Italy)*;
- Improving the **supply of higher education in mountain areas, by**:
 - Diversifying the supply of education and training by providing education in traditional sectors as well as in highly innovative sectors *such as engineering, environment, nature-based and cultural tourism, e-health, energy, care for the elderly people, bio-economy...*
 - In the province of Teruel, Spain, rich in archaeological sites, specific training has been created for young curators and restorers, to work on Paleontological issues (PADIMA Good Practice education and training no 5). This has become a well-known diploma, with many exchanges with major universities.
 - Promoting mobility between mountain schools and universities and other schools and universities (using the ERASMUS/Leonardo/ EVS programmes):
 - One example is the [CliChaMor two-week summer school](#), on climate change in mountain regions. Another is CIPRA's annual training courses.
- **Increasing the relevance of education and training activities for the labour market**:
 - Encouraging **actions linking schools and businesses**, as in Buskerud, Norway :
 - [Wood industry companies](#) were concerned about their ageing workforce and the negative image of their profession. They went to schools to present their profession and encouraged students to design a small piece of furniture (see also priority 8).



- Developing **traineeships and apprenticeships** ;
- Using **ICT to provide access to a wider range of content** ;
- Providing **on-site targeted training to companies** : people working for Very Small Enterprises and SMEs in remote areas cannot necessarily travel to distant training centres.
 - Chambers of Commerce in the Massif Central (France) developed a range of 300 training programmes that they can organise on-site, in companies. These programmes have been elaborated in close connection with companies in order to reply to their expectations. Courses are proposed then to several companies at the same time to decrease costs (ESF funded).
- Providing specific training in **specialised economic sectors which are well represented in the local economy of mountain areas**, such as tourism, natural resources management, food or wood industry ;
 - The University of the Highlands and Islands (Scotland) offers a [Bachelor degree in adventure tourism management](#).
 - The Politecnico di Milano, with the support of ERSAF and Advocacy Europe, developed a Masters on “Planning for sustainable development in mountain areas and politics for mountains of the European Union”: its objective is to train specific professionals for the development of territorial projects in mountain areas, in the fields of economy, tourism, education, territorial planning and valorization of environmental and cultural goods.
- Support **skill development of specific populations such as migrants and refugees**, fostering their integration and employability:
 - As mentioned earlier [Teruel](#) (Spain) and Dalarna (Sweden) developed specific courses for migrants, in languages and specific skill development helping to find a job easily.

Finally, with regard to skill development in the field of agriculture and forestry, Euromontana has identified important needs in the following fields:

Agriculture

- Development of entrepreneurial skills in business management and marketing of food products, with a focus on the specific situation of pluri-active small mountain farms; training in legal affairs and finance schemes for farmers and development actors;
- Training to support the development of quality food supply chain ;
- Training and skill development in environmental management and environmentally-friendly practices;

Forestry

- Training and information for forest owners and managers for the maintenance and exploitation of forests, with the promotion of management plans:
- The match between existing training opportunities and the real needs of companies must be improved, with more on-the-job training (e.g. sandwich training courses, internships or practical in-company training sessions) and with training in the knowledge and the practice of specific and advanced techniques such as cable yarding.

More information :

PADIMA – Education and training – [Final report](#) – [Good practice guide](#) – [Newsletter](#)
 The [declaration of Chambéry on Youth](#)