New Cedefop publication: Improving career prospects for the low-educated: The role of guidance and lifelong learning

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This report draws both on literature review and an original collection of stories from biographical interviews of individuals in the Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, France, Italy, Poland and the UK.

The narrative accounts describe the wide variety of experiences with initial and further education. The analysis focuses on motivations for learning (or not) and the findings confirm that early negative experiences with schooling have a scarring effect inhibiting workers’ willingness to re-engage in education later in life. Nevertheless, many low-educated adults command a variety of skills, which they have developed in the work context, while the interest of the low-educated in education and training may be rekindled by making learning instrumental to improvement in their work situation.

Improving career prospects for the low-educated