pedocs
Open Access Erziehungswissenschaften

DIPF

Arold, Heike; Koring, Claudia; Windelband, Lars

Qualification Needs, Approaches and Strategies in the Second-Hand Sector. A European Good-Practice Report

Bremen : Institut Technik und Bildung 2008, 81 S. - (ITB-Forschungsberichte; 35)

Empfohlene Zitierung/ Suggested Citation:
Arold, Heike; Koring, Claudia; Windelband, Lars: Qualification Needs, Approaches and Strategies in the Second-Hand Sector. A European Good-Practice Report. Bremen : Institut Technik und Bildung 2008, 81 S. - (ITB-Forschungsberichte; 35) - URN: urn:nbn:de:0111-opus-91403

Nutzungsbedingungen

Gewährt wird ein nicht exklusives, nicht übertragbares, persönliches und beschränktes Recht auf Nutzung dieses Dokuments. Dieses Dokument ist ausschließlich für den persönlichen, nicht-kommerziellen Gebrauch bestimmt. Die Nutzung stellt keine Übertragung des Eigentumsrechts an diesem Dokument dar und gilt vorbehaltlich der folgenden Einschränkungen: Auf sämtlichen Kopien dieses Dokuments müssen alle Urheberrechtshinweise und sonstigen Hinweise auf gesetzlichen Schutz beibehalten werden. Sie dürfen dieses Dokument nicht in irgendeiner Weise abändern, noch dürfen Sie dieses Dokument für öffentliche oder kommerzielle Zwecke vervielfältigen, öffentlich ausstellen, aufführen, vertreiben oder anderweitig nutzen.
Mit der Verwendung dieses Dokuments erkennen Sie die Nutzungsbedingungen an.

Terms of use

We grant a non-exclusive, non-transferable, individual and limited right to using this document.
This document is solely intended for your personal, non-commercial use. Use of this document does not include any transfer of property rights and it is conditional to the following limitations: All of the copies of this documents must retain all copyright information and other information regarding legal protection. You are not allowed to alter this document in any way, to copy it for public or commercial purposes, to exhibit the document in public, to perform, distribute or otherwise use the document in public.

By using this particular document, you accept the above-stated conditions of use.

Kontakt / Contact:

pedocs
Deutsches Institut für Internationale Pädagogische Forschung (DIPF)
Informationszentrum (IZ) Bildung
E-Mail: pedocs@dipf.de
Internet: www.pedocs.de

Mitglied der Leibniz-Gemeinschaft

INSTITUTE TECHNOLOGY AND EDUCATION
INSTITUT TECHNIK UND BILDUNG

Heike Arold, Claudia Koring, Lars Windelband

Qualification Needs, Approaches and Strategies in the Second-Hand Sector

– A European Good Practice Report

ITB-Forschungsberichte 35/2008
Oktober 2008

Universität Bremen

Heike Arold, Claudia Koring, Lars Windelband

Qualification Needs, Approaches and Strategies in the Second-Hand Sector – A European Good-Practice Report

Bremen: Institut Technik und Bildung (ITB), Universität Bremen, 2008

ITB-Forschungsberichte 35/2008

Die ITB-Forschungsberichte sollen Forschungsergebnisse zeitnah der Fachwelt vorstellen. Zur Absicherung der Qualität wird ein internes Reviewverfahren mit zwei Gutachtern durchgeführt.
Die ITB-Forschungsberichte können kostenlos von der Webseite des ITB geladen werden oder als Druckversion gegen Erstattung der Druck- und Versandkosten angefordert werden.

ITB-Forschungsberichte is a series which serves as a platform for the topical dissemination of research results. Quality is being assured by an internal review process involving two researchers.
ITB-Forschungsberichte are available for free download from the ITB-Website. A printed version can be ordered against a small contribution towards expenses.

ISSN 1610-0875

© 2008 ITB, Universität Bremen
Am Fallturm 1, 28359 Bremen
Tel. +49 (0)421 218-9014, Fax +49 (0)421 218-9009
info@itb.uni-bremen.de

www.itb.uni-bremen.de

Verantwortlich für die Reihe: Peter Kaune

Heike Arold, Claudia Koring, Lars Windelband

Qualification Needs, Approaches and Strategies in the Second-Hand Sector
– A European Good Practice Report

ITB-Forschungsberichte 35/2008

Oktober 2008

Zusammenfassung

Vor dem Hintergrund eines sich ändernden Konsumverhaltens sowie des Wandels in der Umweltpolitik ist zukünftig mit einem Wachstum des Secondhand Sektors zu rechnen. Um die Qualität sowie die Professionalisierung innerhalb der im Sektor operierenden Unternehmen zu stärken, bedarf es der Entwicklung einer europaweit einheitlichen und sektorspezifischen Qualifizierung, die an den realen Arbeitsprozessen und Anforderungen ausgerichtet ist. Der vorliegende Good-Practice-Bericht zeigt neben einer allgemeinen Darstellung der Trainings- und Qualifikationsstrukturen im europäischen Secondhand Sektor betriebliche und allgemeine Qualifizierungsansätze, -strategien und -anforderungen, die mittels berufswissenschaftlicher Forschungsinstrumente in sieben europäischen Ländern (Deutschland, Österreich, Belgien, UK, Finnland, Slowenien und Bulgarien) identifiziert und analysiert wurden.

Weiterhin werden die wesentlichen Kernarbeitsprozesse und -aufgaben in vier Geschäftsfeldern (Möbel, Textilien, CD/Bücher und elektrische/elektronische Geräte) des Sektors detailliert beschrieben, um einen Überblick über die Anforderungen an die Beschäftigten zu geben. Abschließend werden die aus den Ergebnissen der Untersuchung resultierenden Konsequenzen für eine mögliche sektorspezifische Qualifizierung diskutiert.

Abstract

Against the background of changing consumer behaviour and environmental policies, a growing second-hand sector is expected. In order to ensure quality and professionalism within companies operating in this sector, it is necessary to develop a unified Europe-wide and sector-specific qualification which is geared to real working processes and requirements. This good practice report describes the training and qualification structures in the European second-hand sector. In addition, occupational and general qualification approaches, strategies and requirements, which are identified an analysed by professional scientific research instruments in seven European countries (Germany, Austria, Belgium, UK, Finland, Slovenia and Bulgaria) are characterised.

Furthermore, essential core working processes and tasks of four business fields (furniture, textiles, CD/books and electrical/electronic devices) of the second-hand sector are described in detail. They allow an overview of the requirements that employees need to comply. Finally, consequences for a possible sector-specific qualification will be discussed, based on the results of the investigation

The present report was prepared by the Institute Technik und Bildung (ITB) of the University of Bremen in cooperation with the partners involved in the Leonardo da Vinci project »QualiProSecondHand«:

▪ die umweltberatung	Vienna, Austria	Johanna Leutgöb Angelika Hackel
▪ RREUSE	Brussels, Belgium	Paolo Ferraresi
▪ Jordanka Andreeva - Smoljan	Madan, Bulgaria	Jordanka Andreeva Ivanka zur Oven
▪ Tervatulli Ltd	Oulu, Finland	Annukka Jarva Saila Lampela
▪ Center RS za poklicno izobraževanje – CPI (Centre of the Republic of Slovenia for VET)	Ljubljana, Slovenia	Darja Starkl
▪ Coleg Morgannwg	Pontypridd, United Kingdom	Tony Hitchins Mark Gorman
▪ Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft Arbeit e.V. (BAG Arbeit)	Berlin, Germany	Martin Koch
▪ Qualifizierungs- und Arbeitsförderungsgesellschaft Dresden mbH (QAD)	Dresden, Germany	Ulrike Markmann Christiane Buhle

The project »QualiProSecondHand« was supported by funds of the European Commission.

Education and Culture

Leonardo da Vinci

Content

Content **4**

1. Introduction **5**

2. Initial training as well as training/qualification structures in the sector **7**

2.1 Educational levels of the employees in the second-hand sector *8*

2.1.1 Educational levels of employees in profit enterprises 8

2.1.2 Educational levels of employees in non-profit (social) enterprises 11

2.2 All general qualification approaches, strategies and concepts in Europe *13*

2.2.1 Criteria for qualification approaches in the second-hand sector 13

2.2.2 Cross-company and new qualification approaches ..... in the European second-hand sector 14

2.3 Corporate qualification approaches, strategies and concepts *17*

2.3.1 Nature, location and contents of qualification measures 17

2.3.2 Motivation for and organisation of qualification programmes 20

2.3.3 Examples for corporate requirements, qualification needs ..... and strategies in profit enterprises 22

2.3.4 Examples for corporate requirements, need for qualification ..... and qualification strategies in non-profit (social) enterprises 33

2.4 Relation between enterprises and education and training institutions *46*

3. Operating processes and tasks in the second-hand sector **48**

3.1 Core working processes and tasks in the business area of »furniture« *50*

3.2 Core operating processes and tasks in the business area of »books and CDs« *55*

3.3 Core operating processes and tasks in the business area of »electrical and electronic devices« *59*

3.4 Core operating processes and tasks in the business area of »textiles« *64*

3.5 Operating processes and tasks relevant for all areas of business *67*

3.6 Area-specific operating processes and tasks *69*

4. Consequences for qualification in the second-hand sector **72**

4.1 Need for sector-specific development of competences *72*

4.2 The importance of homogeneous quality standards in the context of qualification *75*

4.3 The creation of sector-specific qualification *76*

4.4 Possible consequences for the sector if sector-specific qualifications are developed and introduced. *79*

5. Conclusion **81**

1. Introduction

The study and analysis of Europe's second-hand sector carried out by means of professional scientific research instruments in selected European countries (amongst these are Germany, Austria, Finland, Belgium, Great Britain, Slovenia and Bulgaria) clearly showed the need for sector-specific qualifications. Especially when taking into account not only the future growth of the sector in Europe which is to be expected, but also society's attitude towards consumption and the environment which is currently changing (the trend is that more second hand goods are bought) it is necessary to strengthen the sector by professionalising it. With regard to professionalisation it is first and foremost an improved quality as well for the businesses themselves as for outside parties (e.g. customers) which plays an important role in the context of supporting the second-hand sector in establishing itself as an independent sector. This was shown in the results of the sector analyses carried out on a national level as well as in the case studies carried out in selected second hand businesses. Thus, the sector will only be able to establish itself in Europe in the future, if professionalisation of the second hand industry is furthered in the individual businesses by increasing quality (e.g. increase in quality of the goods on offer, of the services, the operating processes, the way a business is presenting itself etc.). In order to achieve certain quality standards that first and foremost should be homogeneous, well-trained and skilled members of staff are required as well in the different levels as in the different areas of business. By improving the qualifications of the people working in the second-hand sector, bearing in mind that this should be done paying attention to its particularities and its Europe-oriented context, it is possible to standardize operating processes furthermore and make them more comparable like this and achieve better operational results (e.g. regarding the performance of goods, sales and turnover figures and the presence of the business).

Altogether this project is deeply linked to the European Union long term strategy in the field of action of environment and training. The focus intent of the project is therefore to spread out means of professionalisation keeping in mind the framework set out by the Lisbon strategy for sustainable growth and jobs, as revised in 2005. In this context, we want to recall the relevant importance of training in the second-hand topic as fully integrated in the strategic field of action of the European Union in this sector. In this regard the project tries to create new training concepts in a field of action highly environmentally related, so focusing the target on the possibility of creating new green jobs.

Some initial approaches towards qualification were identified in the partner countries of the »QualiProSecondHand« project. Such approaches that already exist and were implemented successfully are very limited, however, and relate mostly to individual initiatives (e.g. network in Belgium). The approaches which have been analysed are cross-business approaches on the one hand and network-internal strategies of qualification on the other, which are fitted to the individual needs of the businesses (being part of the network) in order to professionalise them furthermore. The businesses or networks therefore did not disclose the respective approaches in detail. They cannot be transferred into other networks. This is why the respective approaches are only presented rudimentally in the good practice report to follow. In order to point out the need for sector-specific qualification,

chapter two of the report mainly contains different examples of such businesses that are good examples for the respective partner country. Additionally, the current level of education in the European second-hand sector and the qualification approaches, strategies and concepts (either cross-business or network internal) that already exist, are presented. The results of the case studies carried out provide an overview as well of the requirements and qualification needs as of possible approaches of in-house qualification strategies.

Furthermore, the qualification requirements should be corroborate in chapter 3 by a detailed presentation of the core work processes and tasks in second-hand enterprises. Because of the different work requirements it has bee distinguished between four main fields of business, textiles, books and CDs, furniture and electronic and electrical equipment. This should be made clear that in the sector many different sector-specific work tasks and processes exist, which deliver starting point for a sector-specific qualification. Finally, in chapter 4, based on the results of the sector analysis and the case studies, the resulting consequences for the development of uniform training sector are discussed. Because there couldn't be identified no transferable best-practice solutions in the European second-hand sector, this report contains only »good practice« approaches and ideas.

2. Initial training as well as training/qualification structures in the sector

As the sector analyses of the partner countries participating in the project have shown, the European second-hand sector does neither have a uniform initial training nor a qualification system. However, the survey has underlined that the individual partner countries have different qualification systems depending on the respective sector structures. In addition it could be shown that there are no uniform qualifications, not even on a national level. The qualification approaches and/or models that could be identified in the course of the survey are partly depending on the respective company structures of the second-hand enterprises and are tailored to their individual needs. Nevertheless some approaches could be identified in some partner countries which are organised across the individual enterprises and are generally open for all persons engaged in the second-hand sector. The analysis of the European second-hand sector has revealed that this multi-dimensional sector with its numerous employees offers an abundance of potential for the development and establishment of reasonable qualifications. Against the backdrop of continuity and growth within the sector it may be assumed that the need for more professionalisation entails the call for a good qualification of the persons engaged in the sector.

Thus the division of the sector into non-profit (social) enterprises and profit enterprises, the numerous different company forms and structures and the wide range of products offer a lot of different employment possibilities in different operational fields such as acquisition of goods, processing, logistics, distribution, sales, marketing etc. and thus also a variety of qualifications. The development and the implementation of uniform qualifications are above all evident for areas where the same fields of tasks and work processes could be identified in spite of different corporate structures. This does not imply that no qualification is necessary wherever partly decisive and company-related differences apply. The need for qualification not only results from a wish for more professionalisation but also from an increasing demand for quality both on the part of customers and companies. Thus the sector analysis has underlined that above all bigger companies and/or concerns organised in networks and enterprises specializing in certain product groups attach more importance to the quality of their goods. In order to safeguard this quality, many of these companies have quality management systems considering the qualification of the employees as well as other forms of quality approaches.

The fact that there is no uniform and above all Europe-wide officially recognized qualification or initial training available for the second-hand sector cannot only be justified with the heterogeneous standing of the sector in the individual countries. The different working fields in the second-hand sector often do have points of contact with special fields of other sectors where training takes place. Nevertheless there are a number of special requirements exclusively required by the second-hand sector. Due to the assignment of the sector to the trade sector, there are a lot of interfaces with commercial occupations in terms of the necessary competences. Still the adequate training occupations do not reveal any specialisation for the field of used goods. The German framework curricula of the training occupation of a salesperson and/or a retail salesperson does not include sector specific issues of the trade with used goods. Apart from the pure working fields and work

processes typical for the trade, the second-hand sector additionally encompasses a variety of tasks which are usual in other fields, such as e.g. handicraft (e.g. the processing of goods) or marketing. Even the transport as well as the storage logistics represents an autonomous field. The various fields of work which can be found in other sectors as well also encompass a number of special requirements only present in the second-hand sector. The mere fact that the sector deals with used goods rather than with new ones requires different and special competences for the employees working in the different fields of work. This is where the qualification approaches identified within the framework of the analysis as well as the qualification concepts to be developed in the future comes in.

The following chapter gives an overview of the already existing and identified qualification approaches as well as the corresponding aspects such as the level of education, possible qualification concepts and strategies, organisation and contents of possible qualifications and networking of companies with educational institutions. It must, however, be underlined that only few Best-Practice approaches could be identified by the partners in their countries. Some companies did not allow a further look at their in-firm qualification systems. Nevertheless the compiled data may contribute to complete the overall image of the structure of the second-hand sector. They also form a good basis for the future and necessary development of uniform qualification courses in the European second-hand sector with the aim to further promote the professionalisation and to improve the quality.

2.1 Educational levels of the employees in the second-hand sector

2.1.1 Educational levels of employees in profit enterprises

Corresponding to the differentiation into private economy and social economy and according to the different employment levels, the educational level of the persons employed in the second-hand sector is very different. In privately managed second-hand enterprises all educational levels as well as numerous occupational careers could be identified among the employees. Neither a uniform pattern nor a certain trend towards school graduations or occupational groups is visible. In all European countries there are no legal stipulations with regard to the occupational prerequisites for the trade with second-hand goods. The sector is open for everybody, regardless of his or her qualification or occupational career. No legally required knowledge in the field of commerce or handicraft (or in another specialist field) is required to work in the second-hand sector with one exception: The trade with used electrical appliances.

In order to avoid hazards caused by defective appliances and to ensure the safety during their handling, Germany has established the so-called VDE Directives. Along with numerous other stipulations, these directives lay down who is entitled to inspect electrical appliances and how these devices have to be inspected. The qualification »VDE inspection authorization« can be acquired in order to pave the way for laymen in the field of electrical technology to carry through this work. Without this authorization, the repair and/or the refurbishing of used electrical and electronical appliances is not allowed. Based on the open access, in the German sector you can find employees without or with a very low educational level as well as employees with a higher educational level, an occupational degree or experience in different fields of tasks and even academics. There is, however, a

slight trend towards personnel with a higher education and/or a university degree on the management level. This applies above all for well-structured and organised second-hand enterprises with a larger number of employees and/or an own management. The full-time employees in accordingly large enterprises who are mainly working in the sales department partly have undergone commercial occupational training. Persons with handicraft training, on the other hand, can mainly be found in fields calling for their specialist abilities (e.g. Second-hand furniture stores, stores trading with used electrical appliances). Besides the employment level of the management and the full-time staff, the German second-hand sector is, however, also marked by a great number of temporary staff. Their educational level has not been assessed. It can be assumed that both un-skilled and semi-skilled workers with or without school graduations as well as academics are employed in this area.

Similar to Germany, the trade with used goods in Austria is a so-called free trade without any obligation to a training or authorization. According to the *Landesgremium Wien*, this area does not have any standardized training and the educational levels of the used goods dealers' ranges from former »clearers« without training up to academics such as graduates of the University of Commerce. According to statistical data provided by the *Landesgremium Wien* for the year 2005, 16 out of a total of registered used goods dealers were academics, seven were engineers. No statement could be given on the occupational background of the remainder of the used goods dealers. It can, however, be assumed that all educational levels can be found in the persons employed in the Austrian profit-oriented second-hand sector.

In Finland, on the other hand, the educational level of the sector is not very high, as the interviews with second-hand experts revealed. Generally it could be shown that the employers of the Finnish second-hand sector like to hire people with a commercial or technical training (explicitly with respect to the repair of used electronic and electrical equipment). The majority of the persons starting work in the sector comes from different branches and has very different occupational backgrounds.

In the UK the second-hand sector has a great number of employees with different educational levels. Above all in smaller enterprises – similar to Germany and Austria – no qualifications are required. One reason is that small profit enterprises very often work with part-time staff that are not required to have any formal educational or vocational qualifications. On the other hand larger organisations with full-time employees are far more structured in their approach to training and the qualifications they look for in employees. They often look for specific qualifications in employees relevant for their jobs. They employ staff with qualifications at all levels, but specific to their needs, e.g. graduate chemists and engineers.

Different educational levels could be also being identified in the profit enterprises in Belgium. There are no special requirements for the employees. As seen before staff are recruited without attaching too much importance to their educational backgrounds. For example, a medium sized profit enterprise dealing with books, music and games often employs people with diplomas in history, psychology or art along with persons with very little education. The quality of their CVs is not relevant. Altogether it is more important to

hire persons with a good general knowledge and common sense who are able to quickly take over responsibility and have more feeling for the business than the objects as such. At the management level people come even from different backgrounds. It would be difficult to define a specific profile.

Apart from smaller and medium-sized profit enterprises, the franchising enterprises strongly represented in Belgium do not have special requirements for the shop managers or the employees. As revealed by one of the surveyed shops, the shop manager is normally someone who has already gathered experience in the field of sales and trading. Due to the high investments that are done in such franchising networks, it is necessary that shop managers are often people with a strong business background (also some of them are indeed responsible for two or more shops). On the other hand, the staff members working in the shop do not have a special profile apart from being customer orientated, being capable of working in team, being good mannered, having a good presentation, being able to listen to and assisting the client. No particular education background is demanded. They only must be able to learn different tasks e.g. how to attach a suitable price to an item and how to evaluate it. They have to know when it is time to take the item from the shelf, how to organise special events to get rid of stocks, etc.

The surveyed company examples from Slovenia – where the second-hand sector in general is not yet very strong and still determined by smaller profit enterprises run by their owners with a maximum of three employees – underline that the shop owners and the employees in Slovenia have basically either a commercial or vocational training. It is obvious that the persons engaged in the sector have very different occupational backgrounds. The same is true for the employees of the Bulgarian second-hand sector. Here as well there are employees with adequate commercial or handicraft background – if they have an education at all. In general all surveyed second-hand enterprises stated that they faced great difficulties in recruiting well qualified employees. Therefore it can be assumed that the educational levels or not extremely high.

The different results of the partner countries clearly show that the educational level of the employees can be both – low and very high. There is some correlation between the field of tasks and/or the business field and the educational levels. Accordingly the employees on management level rather have a higher educational level as their colleagues e.g. in the sales department. As the second-hand sector in Europe is open for anyone and as there are no restrictions or regulations for the trade with used goods (with the exception of used electrical appliances), it is comprehensible that all kinds of educational levels can be identified in the employees of the sector. This can have different reasons. Many second-hand enterprises emerged as a consequence of the collecting passion of individual persons who formerly worked in other occupations. Or the companies were founded by unemployed persons who saw a good economic chance for starting a business of their own. Finally it must be stressed that the trade with used electrical appliances is subject to regulations in all European countries. Therefore it can be assumed that the handling of this group of products requires a special qualification, not only in Germany.

2.1.2 Educational levels of employees in non-profit (social) enterprises

In all partner countries participating in the project where non-profit enterprises and/or charity organisations play a major role (such as in Germany, Belgium Finland, Austria and the UK), the educational levels of the employees are comparatively well known compared to those of the employees of the private economy second-hand trade. As the second-hand trade is but one out of numerous other employment fields in non-profit enterprises and as the focus is mainly on employing disadvantaged persons, these enterprises have clear hierarchies with adequately different educational levels. In Germany for example, the leader and management levels are mainly staffed with academics whereas the level of instructors employs both employees with an academic career (above all from the socio-pedagogical field) and employees with a commercial, handicraft or vocational education. The degree of the educational levels on instructor level seems have a connection to the field of tasks within the company.

With regard to the level of the temporarily employed persons who consider their tasks mainly as a job opportunity, a clear trend towards staff with little education is visible. Apart from persons with psychological and/or physical disabilities, the sector mainly employs persons with disadvantages in the labour market. The reasons for such disadvantages are often based on the low educational level. Many of the employees have no or just a very low school education (special school and/or secondary modern school) and have not graduated. In the course of their occupational career they have often only worked as semi-skilled or un-skilled workers or aids. Apart from employees who became unemployed due to their low educational levels, there are also long-term unemployed persons with an occupational graduation who found a job opportunity in the second-hand sector. These persons do not lack specialist competences but often social competences. Another group of persons employed in the non-profit enterprises in Germany on a part-time or full-time basis are migrants. Their educational levels are differently high depending on their origin and the educational systems in their home countries. The problem with regard to qualification is partly not based on their educational levels but on the transferability of their know-how and its applicability due to language barriers. The analysis of the German second-hand sector also revealed that there are differences in terms of the educational levels of the temporarily employed in East German and West German non-profit enterprises. The employees in the east mainly have a vocational education. This is due to the training assurance in the former DDR (German Democratic Republic). In West Germany, however, the share of the employees with low or no qualifications is predominant. In addition the migrants working in East Germany often come from Eastern Europe and have a quite high educational level whereas numerous different nationalities are employed in West Germany. These persons have very different educational levels.

About the same is true for Austria. The main focus of non-profit enterprises is also on the social training and integration of disadvantaged persons in the labour market. According to the latest directives of the labour market service, these employees are called transit employees (e.g. handicapped people, young people and long-term unemployed people) and can be employed in an enterprise for a maximum of six months. They have partly no qualifications and/or no school graduation. Their educational levels on the whole are very low. Apart from transit employees, the non-profit enterprises also employ full-time per-

sonnel. They often have jobs in the management or carry out instructor tasks. Furthermore every company employs at least one social worker. According to the different tasks and fields of tasks within the company, these employees often have graduated from commercial, handicraft or vocational educational courses or even universities.

Further examples underlining the comparatively uniform educational profile in non-profit enterprises in Europe can also be found in Finland and Belgium. One of the interviews conducted in a non-profit enterprise in Finland not only reflects the employment structure but also the educational levels of the staff employed there. Thus employees who are recruited through the labour office in cooperation with a social worker are almost all long-term unemployed people. Beside these long-term unemployed there are also a lot of immigrants who do not speak Finnish at all. The employees may also have psychological problems or no education which makes it difficult for them to enter the first labor market. Because the work does not usually require a vocational training or extensive work experience, the recruited staff has very often a low educational level. The most important objective is self-motivation and the desire to work. Apart from the persons employed for a maximum of one year, the Finnish non-profit enterprises have numerous other employment fields staffed with full-time personnel. This includes the manager of the enterprise (or organisation); a few project designers in the administration, persons for marketing, quality control, personnel management etc. and different kinds of work instructors (depending on the working field). In addition, a foreman is in charge of all operations in the workshop. All these people have professional skills and they can handle the operative work and are the responsible for the business. They all have an apprenticeship or a study graduation (for example the manager).

In Belgium, the non-profit enterprises and networks also offer temporary job contracts to disadvantaged groups of persons (who make up for the majority of the persons engaged in non-profit enterprises and networks). No experience or competences are required for the temporarily employed persons as they are offered numerous further training courses during their work. Thus it is neither expected that they already have an apprenticeship graduation or higher qualifications. The instructors guide and monitor the respective employee individually and on a daily basis. These groups of persons (e.g. the instructors) do need different qualifications. They have to be able to understand the holistic process starting with the collection, the selection and the sale of goods. It is although not necessary that they have a certain educational background. They should, however, have gathered experience on all levels of the enterprise. In general the instructors have the chance to become managers of the companies. Furthermore there are the employees in administration and management (who make up for a small share of the total staff). They often have a higher educational level as their work tasks concentrates on key positions in the enterprises. They are eventually responsible for a smooth operation of all business processes.

Finally the educational levels of the employees on Great Britain will be outlined. The share of non-profit enterprises in the UK second-hand sector is comparatively high. A slightly different employment structure and consequently another educational profile of the employees could be identified in the UK compared to other partner countries. The interviews conducted within the framework of the sector analysis in non-profit enterprises

have shown that these enterprises employ only a few full-time employees compared to the high number of volunteers. The volunteers mainly belong to the group of 60+ with consequences for the educational and further training offers. The organisations also employ young volunteers such as young mothers or young people as trainees. In general these volunteers do not need a special training and their educational level does not need to be very high. The most important required abilities apply for the practical side of the work, e.g. in the field of customer service and social competences. On the other hand there are the full-time employees who to a great extent have knowledge and skills in sales. Their educational level does not need to be higher than the levels of the volunteers. Some enterprises additionally employ a person responsible for development who is taking care of the administration and of organizational tasks. And finally there are the managers with a wide range of qualifications who are often graduates and/or vocationally qualified.

As the descriptions of the partner countries show, the non-profit area of the second-hand sector reveals a rather uniform pattern in terms of educational profiles of the persons employed in Europe. As the focus of these enterprises is on the social training and the integration of a temporarily limited workforce who can often be trained to be simple workers, the specialist competency only plays a subordinate role. In all countries the majority of the temporarily employed persons have a very low educational level. Compared to the temporarily employed persons, the full-time personnel have a higher educational level according to their tasks and fields of tasks. Instructors and foremen almost all have graduated from their occupations. The highest educational levels could be identified on the executive and management level as well as in the field of socio-pedagogical care for the temporarily employed. These employees often have a university graduation or at least a higher vocational education.

2.2 All general qualification approaches, strategies and concepts in Europe

2.2.1 Criteria for qualification approaches in the second-hand sector

Whereas some European countries obviously do not have a lot of qualification or personnel development approaches for the second-hand sector (e.g. Slovenia), other countries have developed a variety of different strategies, often closely linked to the respective company (cf. Chapter 2.3). The existence and the quality of the qualification approaches applied by the second-hand enterprises depend on a variety of different criteria. It seems to be adequate to differentiate between profit and non-profit enterprises as both are pursuing different business objectives. Profit enterprises aim at making turnovers and profits whereas the philosophy of non-profit enterprises concentrates on social aspects. According to the specific orientation and the different business philosophies, the different requirements and qualification for the employees and a possibly existing need for qualification play a decisive role in decision making on how a company qualifies its employees. This also results in the fact that existing rudimentary qualification attempts are individually oriented to the various needs of the different kinds of enterprises. Thus they are mainly need orientated and carried out according to the specifications of the company. Another criterion with an influence on the decision on a certain qualification approach in

the company is the qualification possibilities as such. After the determination of a possible need for qualification, the companies have to decide who should engage in qualifications, what should be the objective of such measures and which contents the individual qualification measures should impart (i.e. which kind of qualification would make sense). Furthermore the qualification approaches are very strongly dependant on the qualifying staff and their corporate tasks.

Due to the numerous requirements for the employees of profit enterprises resulting from the variety of company forms as well as from the numerous different specialisations in goods, there are – if any – very different qualification approaches. The needs for qualification in the sector are very different against the backdrop that a career change into the second-hand sector is open for all persons (regardless of their occupational prerequisites). Accordingly every educational level can be found in the sector. This also results in different qualification approaches. Conversations with sector experts and with educational institutions have underlined that most of the countries participating in the project do not have special and above all external training courses for profit enterprises in the second-hand sector (with a few exceptions in Belgium, Germany and Austria, cf. Chapter 2.2.2).

Compared to the profit enterprises (with the exception of bigger enterprises such as e.g. the Belgian franchisers) there are further aspects apart from the above mentioned criteria with regard to non-profit enterprises and their decision for certain qualification strategies. Often the hierarchies existing in these enterprises determine the kind and/or contents of possible qualification measures. Thus the employees face different requirements according to the corporate tasks as well as the position of the enterprises. These results in completely different needs for qualification to be tackled with adequate qualification approaches. Furthermore it has been shown that the lowest employment level (of the temporarily employed persons) is shaped differently in the individual enterprises. On the other hand the decision for a certain qualification strategy depends on the educational level, the existing competences and the social background as well as on the duration of work in the company and/or the subsidizing of the work places.

On the whole it can be stated that the kind of qualification depends on both a variety of in-firm criteria in terms of structure, organisation and contents and on external influences. This is why no uniform qualification structures are so far exists in profit and non-profit enterprises. But also the lack of legal framework conditions and quality standards has contributed to the fact that there are hardly any qualification approaches and above all no uniform approaches.

2.2.2 Cross-company and new qualification approaches in the European second-hand sector

As already shown in Chapter 2.2.1, the European second-hand sector currently neither has a uniform sector-specific qualification nor a vocational occupation or a recognized occupational profile. Nevertheless cross-company qualification approaches could be identified within the framework of the national sector analysis in a few partner countries (such as Germany, Austria and Belgium). These approaches were not solely oriented to the special features and needs of an individual enterprise. These approaches identified either had

been developed and tested within the framework of projects or they resulted from the need of several enterprises acting within a network. The approaches for qualification strategies and/or concepts mentioned below are qualifications which are not only oriented to companies but in a cross-company way. Thus experiences made during the development and testing of the respective qualification concepts can be transferred into the project QualiProSecondHand. In addition further input is given for the further development towards a uniform qualification of the European second-hand sector.

In Germany, a qualification concept for the second-hand market was developed within the framework of the EQUAL-programme and the development partnership »Second Chance«, partial project »*Second Chance Brücke*«. This concept was above all developed by and tested in profit enterprises. In close cooperation with *»Second-Hand vernetzt e.V.«* (association for the support of the second-hand trade), an attempt was made in the German *Land* of North Rhine-Westphalia to develop, carry through and implement a modular qualification entitled »Training for sales assistants in the second-hand sector«. According to the objectives of the EQUAL programme, the developed sector specific qualifications were aimed at the integration of disadvantaged people on the labour market. The developed training course encompassed seven modules and a total of 96 instruction hours. Within the framework of the training, branch-specific specialist knowledge and methods for the occupational reflection of everyday work were imparted. The contents of the modules in detail are as follows:

- Module »Job Application training« (Time: 8 instruction hours). The own situation is analysed and a profile of the personal abilities and deficits is set up. If necessary, an offer for consulting is worked out. Furthermore the requirements of the field of work sales are explained.
- Module »Personal Appearance« (Time: 16 instruction hours) with focus on rhetoric, clothing, communication skills and handling of conflicts.
- Module »Practical sales/merchandise knowledge I« (Time: 20 instruction hours) with focus on sales training and merchandise knowledge of textiles and clothing.
- Module »Merchandise Knowledge II« (Time: 8 instruction hours) with focus on furniture, wood, household goods, books and flea market items.
- Module »Phone training/Office organisation« (Time: 8 instruction hours) with focus on correct phoning and handling of customers, work processes in acquisition and sales.
- Module »EDP« (Time: 28 instruction hours) focussing on information and communication. After the examination, the trainee is certified according to ECDL.
- Module »Job Application Training II« (Time: 8 instruction hours) focussing on the evaluation of the qualification. The module also encompasses issues such as occupational profiles in the sales area, recommendation for further training and the course of job application interviews.

A successful participation in all modules was to be confirmed by an adequate certificate. Nevertheless it must be stated that the qualification measure described above was only successfully carried through within the framework of the project. Therefore no official recognition within the framework of the Vocational Training Act could be attained. The

developed qualification measure can therefore only be rated as continuing further training with a focus on the second-hand sector.

Apart from the development and successful testing of the above mentioned qualification, the participants in the same EQUAL project in Germany tried for the first time to adapt the curriculum of the occupational profile of a »retail salesperson« to the needs of the second-hand branch in terms of contents. Besides the development of substitute and additional vocational school modules with learning contents specifically tailored to the needs of the second-hand branch, the concept suggests issues such as merchandise knowledge and processing on a company level. The framework curricula should be amended by subjects such as:

- Knowledge of the sale of goods: secondary virtues and sales training;
- Acquisition of goods: purchasing management;
- Warehousing: warehouse and logistics;
- Distribution of goods: strategic planning and marketing;
- Tax and insurance: tax and commercial law;
- Retail enterprises: organisation and management
- Data processing: office organisation and EDP

Initially the corporate teaching contents should be confined to the product groups of household goods and furniture, textile and clothing as well as toys. Emphasis should be given to issues such as consulting and sales, range of goods, storage of goods as well as work protection/safety, the protection of the environment and an economic use of energy. Due to the time limit attached to the project, a great number of formal problems which had to be taken into consideration during the implementation of a new occupational profile and/or its adaptation as well as the lack of endorsement of the responsible bodies such as the Chambers, the adaptation of the occupational profile of a »Retail Sales Person« could only be carried out in theory. At the end of the project, both the further adaptation of the occupational profile for the specific needs of the second-hand branch and its implementation had to be abandoned. Therefore no occupational profile in the second-hand sector could be identified so far.

In addition to the two qualification approaches for the German second-hand sector developed within the framework of the ESF-funded project, the sector analysis identified another qualification approach offered on a cross-company basis. The consultant *Daniela Kaminski, Marketingberatung/Kommunikation* offers a one-day workshop on sales conversations for second-hand entrepreneurs, as well as a two-day workshop on the foundation of second-hand establishments focussing on marketing, acquisition, range of goods, target group definition, unique selling point, calculation etc.

These two examples underpin that some first approaches towards a branch-specific qualification and training course are already in existence in Germany. Nevertheless there is still a long way to go for a definite implementation of this training in the occupational world. Qualifications in the form of initial and further training measures with a contents catering for the Second-hand sector could only be rudimentarily identified.

In Austria another example for a cross-company qualification measure in the second-hand sector could be revealed. The *Landesgremium Wien* (a branch association under the roof of the Chamber of Economy) regularly offers events for the qualification and further training of second-hand dealers. Excursions to flea markets are organised in order to facilitate the exchange of experiences between the dealers. In addition specialist group meetings are organised.

Further qualification approaches involving several enterprises can be found in Belgium. Due to the very well developed network structures and the great number of franchisers with several member enterprises, very different qualification approaches have developed there (cf. also examples in Chapters 2.3.3 and 2.3.4). The corresponding approaches are not accessible by all interested second-hand enterprises but only to those participating in the network. Nevertheless they offer qualification options which the companies per se would not have at their disposition. In general it can be stated that a networking of second-hand enterprises seems to exert a positive influence on the development of possible qualification approaches. By joining forces, the companies can even establish an academy for their members – as the Belgian example shows. This institution can then cover various needs for qualification. As the organisation of qualification measures is only beneficiary with the participation of several interested persons, the association of companies in a network is a good foundation for adequate measures.

Apart from the different qualification approaches in the Belgian second-hand networks and/or franchisers which are well transferable, there is also a cross-company qualification measure available in Belgium: a training course for a »Brocanteur« (flea market trader) in Brussels. The training is developed by the organisation *Bruxelles formation* responsible for the development of training courses for unemployed or young people with very low qualifications. The training is accessible to people with the lower school certificate. The programme is composed of three modules:

- Basic elements: Analysis of the different styles and classic collections, basics of the restoration of old items, knowledge of materials, basic elements of graphic art.
- Technical competencies: a deeper knowledge of the previously treated subjects plus some elements of legislation and practical information on how to develop a business.
- Practical activities.

After the training participants receive a »promotion social« (social promotion) diploma as a »Brocanteur« (flea market trader). The training is rather intensive and covers one year. It takes place on four days a week and encompasses 15 instruction hours per week.

2.3 Corporate qualification approaches, strategies and concepts

2.3.1 Nature, location and contents of qualification measures

According to the described variety in terms of business and work fields in the second-hand sector and above all in the light of a lack of uniform qualifications, the contents and the organisation of the in-firm qualification measures are very different – in the individual partner countries, within the companies of the individual partner countries and on European level. A second-hand department store requires other prerequisites for its employees

than a second-hand clothes store, a second-hand furniture store or the trade with used electrical appliances. In addition there are differences in the kind of existing qualification approaches between privately managed profit enterprises and the non-profit enterprises and charity organisations respectively. In general the respective corporate qualification approaches – if they exist – mainly depend on the corporate objectives and the respective corporate organisation and structure. Thus a privately managed profit enterprise first and foremost aims at making profit whereas the non-profit enterprises and charity organisations rather focus on social aspects. Therefore also the requirements for the competences of the persons employed in the second-hand sector are partly different. This heterogeneity results in the fact that the rudimentary existing qualification strategies are always orientated to the different needs of the various kinds of enterprises. Consequently they are mainly carried out in a need oriented and company orientated way. Apart from the corporate structure and a possible need for qualification of the employees the kind of organisation also depends on who is initiating the qualification measures. Also the qualifying personnel within the company exert a considerable influence on the nature of the qualification measures.

Thus no cross-national in-firm or special qualification concepts could be identified in owner managed profit enterprises – and above all in enterprises with a low number of employees (e.g. 2 to 6 persons engaged). Talks with sector experts and training institutions underlined that apart from some exceptions there are no special training courses for the second-hand sector. In case the personnel is further qualified, this is mainly envisaged according to a specific need. Possible qualification courses are mostly offered by external training providers (also cf. Chapter 2.4) and are not linked to corporate processes. These qualifications are offer orientated and take a limited period of time (e.g. seminars lasting a week, a week-end or a day). The courses are conceived to amend and deepen the existing know-how of the employees. The contents ranges from commercial issues, such as e.g. merchandise management, accounting, marketing, sales strategies up to issues such as logistics, transport, storage, disposition, processing of goods etc. Handicraft or technical qualifications are rare (e.g. the VDE inspection certificate required in Germany). The certificates earned within the framework of such qualification courses (if provided) are not confined to specialisations in the second-hand sector. Therefore the acquired know-how is also transferable to other sectors and fields of the economy (with the exception of the qualification as a »Brocanteur« (flea market trader) in Belgium. Specialist knowledge, however, is mainly based on experience and/or is acquired through »learning by doing«. Partly the required specialist know-how is also imparted by other employees who have been employed in the company for a longer period of time. Other ways of imparting are instructions by the owner of the enterprise or via coaching. These strategies for learning by experience, by targeted familiarization phases with the help of other employees or by a target oriented training-on-the-job could also be identified in larger profit enterprises or e.g. in the franchiser networks in Belgium. In larger enterprises or in companies who have joined forces in a network, there are additional in-firm qualification concepts. Two good examples can be found in Belgium: The Cash Converter network built up its own academy with comprehensive training developed by Cash Converter aimed at franchisees. Troc International as well developed a training addressed to the franchisees of the net-

work. The qualification in larger enterprises is managed internally, e.g. with the aid of in-house courses. On the other hand – and according to the need arising – the courses are also carried through by external training providers. The chosen nature and kind of qualification depends among other factors from the contents to be imparted. Thus the handling of Quality Management systems or cashier systems as well as internal corporate processes is imparted within the company (individual or group sessions according to the number of participating employees) while general knowledge (as described above, e.g. accounting etc.) can also be trained at external providers of further training.

A closer look to the organisation and the qualification contents as well as the environment where the qualification takes place in non-profit and/or charity organisations clearly reveals that the way of training does not considerably differ from the practices of the larger profit enterprises and/or networks of profit enterprises. If certain contents should be imparted within the framework of training, the courses can take place both internally as well as at external training providers according to the individual enterprise. The courses encompass nearly the same contents as those for profit enterprises. This is due to the fact that the know-how to be imparted strongly depends on the business fields and the offered range of goods respectively. These criteria are applicable for both profit and non-profit enterprises. As non-profit enterprises mostly have rigid hierarchies – such as e.g. the management level, the levels of instructors and foremen and the level of temporarily employed staff – the levels accordingly have different requirements and a different need for qualification. With regard to the management and the instructor and foremen levels respectively, a need for qualification could be identified. These needs are, however, not sector orientated but need orientated and very strongly geared towards the different and special tasks of the individual workers in the companies. The qualification courses encompass topics and emphases that can also be found in other sectors, e.g. personnel management, organisation development, conflict management, time management, PC courses, legal stipulations, specialist courses for the merchandise management systems, special course on cashier systems. If qualification courses are offered for the full-time personnel, the courses mainly deal with legal and formal contents, corporate restructuring or interpersonal issues. Generally the qualification measures are provided by the enterprises on a voluntary basis and they take place in external educational institutions. Recognised qualification structures for full-time employees could not be identified. It was shown that persons working in non-profit enterprises of the second-hand sector have acquired their know-how mostly through their work experience in the sector.

In general it can be stated that possible qualification measures in non-profit enterprises are mainly aimed at the most important target group, i.e. the temporarily employed staff (the target group of the disadvantaged). The companies focus above all on the social training of the temporarily employed staff and on their integration into the first labour market. Due to the comparably short duration of the employment (six months up to one year according to the country), the enterprises are facing special challenges. As the bureaucratic expenditure is high and with regard to the constant fluctuation of the personnel, a specialist training on-the-job is hardly possible within this short period of time and the motivation of the supported employees is also low. The employees themselves undergo a work training combined with a certain task through »training on-the-job« or

»coaching« in the enterprises to become »qualified aids«. Some employees are even given the opportunity to earn a school graduation. Apart from the in-firm qualification measures instruction courses are carried through in external training provider institutions. Experience knowledge again plays an important role. In the second-hand sector, the employees get training in the areas of sales, storage, clearing, cleaning and administration. If the respective company also runs a repair workshop, the trainees are introduced to simple repair tasks as well. Apart from specialist knowledge also further competences are imparted, the so-called soft skills. The most important objective is always the psycho-social and economic stabilisation of the persons concerned, to enhance their self-confidence, to reduce the educational deficits, to strengthen their stamina and their ability to handle conflicts[1]. As an Austrian enterprise stated, one third of the employees could be placed in the labour market, one third is ready to work and the last third is not yet fit for the labour market after the completion of the state-funded job measure.

An overview of possible different corporate qualification approaches in both profit and non-profit enterprises is given by the numerous case studies carried through within the framework of the national sector analyses. Chapters 5.3.3 and 5.3.4 will present a selection as examples.

2.3.2 Motivation for and organisation of qualification programmes

The initiative for the realization of qualification programmes is mainly done based on a need identified in the company. The profit enterprises mostly initiate such programmes on their own whereas the non-profit enterprises mostly follow a proposal of the executive or instructor level. However, the own initiative of the employees in non-profit enterprises must not be underestimated. The necessity for the realization of qualifications with different contents can have various reasons: e.g. the improvement of the quality of work, a better customer orientation or the wish to further professionalize the enterprise. A decisive incentive for the proposal and implementation of qualifications are above all specialist deficits. In terms of these deficits it can be stated that also enterprises in the second-hand sector have realized that there is a close relationship between the lack of specialist knowledge and good work quality and the professionalisation of their enterprises. This development can above all be identified in larger enterprises, networked companies or franchiser networks as well as in the non-profit area. Most of the qualification approaches and measures can be found there. This is due to the fact that these kinds of enterprises employ more personnel, that there are routine business processes and structures. The demand for professionalism in these enterprises is currently much higher than in the numerous second-hand stores managed by their owners.

Furthermore it should be noted that qualification plays an important role above all the numerous non-profit enterprises and charity organisations respectively operating and firmly established in the European second-hand sector. As the national sector analyses have shown, there is a comparatively high need for qualification in these enterprises due to the often low educational levels of the temporarily employed persons. As these enter-

[1] Eiersebner E. et al.; Job aktiv – Arbeit für Benachteiligte, Land Salzburg, Abteilung für Soziales, 2003, p.20

prises first and foremost aim at reintegrating these employees into the first labour market and as the trade with used goods – apart from other business fields – offers a good possibility to undergo an integration process, the support of these employees via qualification is decisive.

Apart from vocational-specialist deficits of the employees also the social deficits should be remedied in a target orientated way in order to qualify them for the first labour market. Accordingly it is not only important to impart vocational-technical know-how as in the fields of work or contents as mentioned in Chapter 2.3.1. Also the improvement of cross-occupational qualifications such as the capacity to act, autonomy, self-responsibility as well as communication and cooperation abilities should be the focus of the qualification measures. Again it should be underlined that although there is a need for qualification, this need is not exclusively and especially orientated to the characteristics of the second-hand sector. There is no qualification for a second-hand Specialist yet. The fields of topics for the imparted basic qualifications are among others:

– Key qualifications (ability to work in a team, communication training etc.), basics in mathematics, linguistic training for migrants, job application training, basics of EDP.

Further to these basic qualifications, a number of commercial and handicraft or vocational-technical qualifications and qualification courses in the field of transport are on offer. Among them are:

– Special knowledge on storage/storage logistics, special knowledge on retail, office management contents such as calculation, accounting, organisation of transport, safety training, lifting, carrying and packing techniques in connection with the transport of goods, processing of goods, refurbishing and repairs, licence to operate a fork lift, licence for the inspection of electrical appliances, bookkeeping, sales techniques.

The organisation of the qualification measures is similar in all non-profit enterprises. In general individual qualification plans are set up that have to be followed by the employees. The plans are adapted to the employees' strengths and weaknesses and contribute to an improving of their occupational integration. The practical skills are mainly imparted within the company with the aid of coaching and learning at the work place and in the work process. Theoretical basics such as e.g. PC knowledge, sales training, material science etc. can be imparted either in-firm in the form of seminars, introductions and workshops or in courses offered by external training providers.

Not only temporarily employed persons are qualified in the non-profit enterprises. There are also offers for full-time employees according their needs and the demand. An example from Belgium underlines the qualification activities of a big second-hand network for full-time employees in non-profit enterprises. In connection with the introduction of a quality management system, the network carried through KVK qualifications for their employees. Within the framework of the so-called EFQM-K2 model, the members of the network get support with the implementation and the continuous improvement of the system. This is done via workshops, individual guidance, forums to exchange experiences, and internet platforms. As far as the EFQM-K2 approach is concerned, the organization has a coaching offer for its members:

- Every two years a call for projects is launched amongst members for a coaching period offered by KVK consultants.
- The coaching is a combination of group workshops and individual coaching. The workshops stimulate the exchange of knowledge and experiences with the aim of increasing the motivation. The individual coaching has the objective of translating models and frameworks of the workshops into very concrete applications. There is always:
  - A workshop for the management to introduce the framework and principles.
  - A workshop for the operational staff.
  - Individual coaching of personnel on the shop floor.
  - The process is a learning process, i.e. in the course of the implementation the tools are continuously improved and new ones are developed.

The objective of this coaching is mainly the transfer of know-how and the development of the necessary skills to work autonomously afterwards. The approach of combining work group and individual coaching has proved to be very useful. This meant a strong commitment from both the management and the operational staff who were all involved in the process.

As the Belgian example shows, the interaction between company management and the employees with regard to the realization of qualifications and the resulting benefit is of great importance. This is not only true for Belgium but also for other countries. On the whole the sector analysis has shown that qualification programmes in companies are partly designed in a way that they exclusively aim at the further qualification of certain key persons (mostly full-time employees with an instructor function). These persons then act as multipliers and pass on their know-how to other company employees by coaching at the work place and during the work process.

2.3.3 Examples for corporate requirements, qualification needs and strategies in profit enterprises

The case studies conducted within the framework of the national sector analyses of the partner countries participating in the project can only highlight a part of the sector. They show, however, that there are no or – if any – very different qualification approaches based on corporate needs in the individual profit enterprises. A short overview of the respective results of the case studies is given below. Both managers and employees were interviewed on the requirements for the employees, the need for qualification and on possible qualification approaches and strategies respectively. Furthermore it should be stressed that the results are only relevant for the statements given by individually selected persons representing all persons engaged.

Germany

In Germany a total of three different profit-oriented enterprises were surveyed in detail. They encompassed enterprises specializing in the sale of different used textiles, CDs and sound storage media or electronic and electrical equipment.

Case No. 1

The surveyed second-hand enterprise for textiles mainly requires that the employees (4 to 20 persons) meet demands in the field of social competences such as friendliness towards customers, honesty and reliability. A certain degree of creativity with regard to the decoration of goods is also required. Furthermore the changing customer structures – e.g. the increasing number of customers with a migration background – results in linguistic barriers for the employees which have to be overcome. These requirements and many more result in a need for qualifications for both the employees and the management. While a better qualification during the familiarization phase – e.g. by coaching – is necessary on the level of the employees, the executive staff needs more qualifications in terms of the basics of business management. In addition there is a need for qualifications in the field of communication, personnel management and work organisation as well as in transport and the use of personal computers. There is no qualification plan as such. There is only a coaching of employees at their workplaces or during the work process. In order to cater for possible needs for qualification, the company plans qualifications modules in the long term.

Case No. 2

The employees (around 23) of the surveyed second-hand enterprise for CDs, sound storage media and play stations are mainly faced with requirements with regard to sales (e.g. customer orientation and consulting, advisory tasks, service orientation) as well as social competences and personal disposition (e.g. motivation, ability to work in a team, punctuality). With regard to specialist knowledge, above all know-how in the field of purchasing and sales are required. This mainly includes general commercial know-how but also product specific know-how (e.g. knowledge of the music market and its developments, merchandise knowledge, trends, pricing, sales techniques). As the employees of this enterprise have high educational levels, there is no need for action with regard to the handling of PCs. The same is true for product specific knowledge as the company exclusively hires personnel interested in the music branch and mastering the required know-how. The need for qualification is thus rather confined to certain basic knowledge and skills such as customer orientation and care, sales conversations, negotiation techniques during the purchase of goods, presentation techniques. In order to cater for the need for qualification, the enterprise only pursues a very limited qualification strategy. Thus the qualification of the employees is carried out by employees who have been working in the company for a long time or by the branch managers. The employees are intensively introduced into the work processes, the business processes and the handling of the merchandise management system and the cashier system as well as the systematic for the sorting of goods. This training is carried through during the familiarization phase of the new employee with the aid of work accompanying coaching and a checklist in order to systematize the qualification. There is a continuous controlling and – if necessary – support available. Additional qualifications in the form of modules or courses are neither undergone by the management nor by the employees. Nevertheless the enterprise is training apprentices for the occupation of a retail salesperson. The training course does not include any specialisation in terms of the trade with used goods.

Case No. 3

The employees (around 32 full-time employees and more than 100 temporarily employed persons) in the surveyed Second-hand enterprise for electronic and electrical equipment must mainly meet requirements in the field of social competences but also high specialist demands. While the disassembly of the appliances only requires low competences (such as material knowledge), very broad specialist knowledge is needed for the field of repair and spare parts network as the employees must handle a variety of different goods and brands. Above all a mathematical know-how and an interest in technology is crucial. Good knowledge of materials (including the handling of the appliances) is necessary for both the incoming goods and the sales departments. In addition the sales department requires knowledge about the presentation of goods (decoration), customer advisory tasks, pricing and the handling of software-controlled merchandise management systems. Persons employed in retail trading companies must additionally have logistical abilities. Very special abilities and knowledge is required for master craftsmen/instructors and foremen in terms of the trade with used electrical appliances. This is due to the complexity of the range of goods and the size of the company. Apart from specialist know-how this group of persons must also have pedagogical abilities and knowledge on personnel management and organisation. They must be able to qualify their employees and to instruct them during the work processes. In addition the position of an instructor requires knowledge in quality assurance. Apart from the qualification measures of three years undergone by some of the employees, there is a need for qualification above all in the field of social competences (such e.g. personnel management, instructor's licence). There is also a need for qualification in the field of repair concerning the handling of new appliances and new technologies. Due to its size the enterprise offers various qualification opportunities and proceeds in a very structured and professionalized way. Apart from regular apprenticeships such as retail salesperson or specialist warehouse clerk in a second-hand department store, information electronics and electricians for energy and building technology are being trained. There are qualification measures of three years consisting of several modules (so-called qualification modules) leading to different partial qualifications as well as to an external trade tests at the Chamber of Industry and Commerce. The qualification is directly carried through in the company by work related and experience orientated learning. The employees are supported by instructors. In addition the enterprise applies the instrument of facilitated learning and working groups with a focus on self-organized learning. With regard to further qualification of the employees, the enterprise relies on learning at the workplace and on the coaching by instructors within the work process. The qualification on the instructor and foremen level is not yet organised or institutionalized. The employees have to ask for it if the need arises.

Austria

In Austria, two profit orientated enterprises (one with emphasis on used children's brand clothing and one specializing in used electronic and electrical equipment and related product groups) as well as a professionally organized flea market orientated to traders in the second-hand market were surveyed in detail.

Case No. 1

The employees (two persons) of the surveyed second-hand enterprise for children's clothing are mainly faced with requirements in the field of social competences such as friendliness towards customers and a decent appearance. With regard to special knowledge, just knowledge on the merchandise, above all knowledge on the brand names of the goods on offer are necessary. There is no special need for qualifications in the surveyed case as the owner of the shop considers the trade with second-hand clothes as a temporary occupational interim solution. The knowledge of the employees is sufficient to run the shop. Therefore no special qualification measures are carried out and there is no qualification strategy. Nevertheless it should be stressed that the owner attached some importance to the fact that her prospective employees already have some experience with the handling of used clothes. A qualification measure for sales strategies was completed and the employees were familiarized with the pricing. This was done on site, in the shop and with the aid of lists.

Case No. 2

The employees (6 employees and 2 apprentices) of the surveyed second-hand enterprise for electronic and electrical equipment face requirements with regard to their social competence (above all sales talent, a polite contact with customers, competence etc.) and to their special knowledge with regard to the different product brands, their functioning and the handling of the electrical appliances. PC knowledge is required for the registration of goods, the pricing and the preparation of sales contracts. The employees should also be physically fit as they are partly handling very heavy items. The management does not see any need for qualification as long as there is no restructuring within the company. The employees, however, would like to have further qualifications in the fields of sales, appearance, sales conversations and better expression. Since the owner of the enterprise does not see a need for qualification, there is no special qualification strategy. Due to the lack of special qualifications in the second-hand sector, the employees acquire the required know-how on the goods during a self-learning process which forms part of their work. As multipliers they pass on this knowledge to other employees. In general any qualification in the enterprise takes place during the work process and based on the acquired experience. The two apprentices are undergoing training for general retail. Based on the range of goods and according to the owner of the enterprise, an apprenticeship of electrical retailing would make more sense. This is, however, only possible as soon as the enterprises exclusively concentrates on the trade with electronic and electrical equipment. Thus the training contents do not cover the need of the enterprise.

Case No. 3

This case concentrates on the survey of a flea market and the second-hand traders operating there for profit. It is necessary that the salespersons have a sales talent and a preparedness for communication as there is a very close and busy exchange with customers. As the clientele often encompasses a lot of foreigners (among others tourists), additional language skills are requested. A good physique is also required as the traders often have to lift

heavy merchandise and must work in all weather conditions. Apart from social competences and physical fitness, the traders also need specialist knowledge of used goods (e.g. merchandise knowledge, value of the items) and pricing as well as knowledge in PC handling if they want to remain competitive. As the flea market is composed of different individual traders, a possible need for qualifications must be individually assessed. In general there is a lot of qualification potential in the traders and salespersons. A lack of information sources (many of the retailers do not even have access to the Internet) and of qualification offers, however, represent an obstacle. As there is no uniform qualification strategy, the traders acquire the necessary know-how on their own and with the aid of different strategies. In general the traders are keen on keeping up to date with regard to the goods on offer and to an extent their knowledge of used goods. This is realized through an exchange of experiences and conversations between the traders and sales persons, via specialist literature and catalogues on the different goods. The specialist knowledge necessary for the sale is continuously acquired by observations and experience. Thus many traders were also customers of traders of second-hand goods in former times). Apart from the acquisition of know-how with the aid of different sources of information, many traders also take part in visits to foreign flea markets in order to explore the sales strategies there.

Finland

In Finland, two very different profit orientated enterprises were surveyed. One of the enterprises is an exclusively profit orientated enterprises specializing in the trade with used books. The second enterprise is basically a non-profit enterprise with a profit oriented business branch – the trade with used textiles. This was examined in detail within the framework of a case study.

Case No. 1

In the analysed second-hand enterprise for used books the requirements for the employees (6 employees) include good social skills for customer service. Furthermore a good basic knowledge, experience and interest in literature and how to classify books is needed for the sale as well as for the acquisition of books. The personnel also has to know how to place books and how to operate the cash register. On the other hand managers need to have good organizational, marketing and financial planning skills. In this business fields connections to other book store keepers are important as they also trade with each other. The need for qualification arises according to the requirements for the employees and the management. Generally commercial skills like sales and marketing skills, entrepreneurship and customer service have to be trained, and there is a need of qualification in acquisition and pricing of books. Because of the minor need for qualification, the enterprise does not have a special qualification strategy. In this kind of business field the most important skills are learned on-the-job and by reading and following the trends of literature. The company provides only initial in-firm training for new employees. Nevertheless the qualification of employees is mostly up to themselves. They are responsible to acquire the know-how, e.g. by reading books. The employees are introduced to other work tasks such as placing books and using the cash register. They are trained by learning-on-the-job. This learning is

a step-by-step process and the employees take over more responsibility as time goes by. Altogether the employers do not provide any courses for the employees.

Case No. 2

In the profit orientated business field of textiles of the analysed non-profit enterprise (association) the requirements for the employees (65 out of a total of 130 employees are working in the second-hand store) include different kinds of requirements depending on different tasks. For the sorting task the employees need some kind of knowledge about the materials beforehand, for example training in the textile field. For other work tasks like putting clothes into bags to send them on, employees only need a good physical condition and social skills to get along with the co-workers. Drivers for the collection of clothes need to have driving experience as well as a good physical condition. Face-to-face fund raisers must have excellent social skills and they have to be familiar with talking to strangers. The sales staff needs sales experience, knowledge about materials and sizes and must be service orientated and creative for the decoration tasks. Many of them have either a commercial or even also a textile education. Store managers have to be professionals in sales. They need to have good organizational skills as they control the operative work. The coordinating manager needs overall knowledge about the recycling business. She needs to be ready to cope with different kinds of tasks which may suddenly occur and adapt to changes in the business as well. She needs to have organizational and social skills as her work also includes the cooperation with representatives of other organizations. As the employees have quite good qualifications and as the employment situation in general is quite good at the moment, the need for qualifications is limited to a few aspects. So the enterprise makes a lot of efforts for the working welfare of their employees. There is always something to learn about the materials and the value of goods resulting in a need for adequate qualifications for the sales staff and the employees who are sorting the clothes. Also the store manager needs material training as she has to impart the information to the employees. To cover the needs of qualifications the enterprise occasionally provides in-firm training for new employees by the store manager and further training is provided, e.g. on material, valuable materials of textiles or customer service training and pricing. However, the staff acquires most of their knowledge by experience. Prior to starting with their work, new employees are sent to the sorting centre in order to be able to better cope with customer questions. Training on effective and ecological driving is provided for drivers collecting clothes. Beside this kind of qualification the company also runs a working welfare program which is part of the personnel plan. Training can be organized based on the employees' needs for qualifications. However, there is no systemically planned qualification strategy for the employees. There is no special program of several months for the qualification of employees for their tasks. Training is first and foremost offered to the store managers who then pass the information on to the employees of the second-hand store. This is how the recent material training was realized. In-firm training is also provided for the management but there is also no special qualification strategy.

Belgium

In Belgium two very different profit orientated companies were surveyed. One enterprises sells used books and sound storage media, the other is a franchiser dealing with sound storage media but also with small electronic devices, musical instruments etc.

Case No. 1

In the analysed second-hand enterprise for used books and sound storage media goods the requirements for the employees (20 employees) are not really specified because the company employs people with diplomas as well as people with very little education. The experience of the enterprise shows that education is not a key element. What seems to be desirable is that the employees have a good general knowledge and common sense and they are able to take over responsibility quickly, they are customer oriented and understand the business. Another requirement is the ability to assign correct prices to the goods.

Furthermore the staff must be versatile with a lot of interests and able to change between the departments. Compared to the employees it is difficult to explain the requirements for the management level. As the managers have different experiences they have no specific profile. A need for qualification is thus not obvious. A specialised training for general needs is not necessary. The enterprise is convinced that the employees can learn more by doing their jobs than by undergoing special training courses. In order to satisfy the need for qualifications the staff are trained directly in the shop. This underlines the philosophy of the enterprise that learning-by-doing and experience is the best forms of qualification. The employees can progressively learn all the different tasks by observing colleagues and via the coaching provided by the persons responsible for the department (managers also play an important role in the staff's capacity building). The training is thus informal and the employees get support of their colleagues whenever it is needed. It is a constant and progressive learning process while the employees rotate between different departments. No course offers are available for this kind of training.

Case No. 2

No special requirements for shop managers and other employees could be identified in the analysed franchiser company (approximately 100 employees). As a rule, the shop manager is a person who has already acquired experience in the field of sales/trading. It must not be underestimated that around 150,000 € must be calculated as overall investment required to open a Cash Converter shop. People launching an initiative of this dimension need to be motivated and must have a solid business and financial plan. Furthermore shop managers are often people with a strong background on business. Some of them are indeed responsible for two or more shops. On the other hand the staff working in the shop do not have a special profile apart from being customer orientated, capable of working in a team, well mannered, well presented, able to listen to and assisting the clients. No particular education background is demanded. The staff must be able to learn how to assign a good price to items, how to value them, to determine the time to take a certain item from the shelves, how to organise special events to get rid of stocks, etc.

Generally there is no special need for qualification. Nevertheless the franchising network has its own training modules developed on the basis of experience gained in 20 years of operation. The interviewed person could not give detailed information on the contents of the modules (only a general overview) because this is deemed confidential. The qualification of staff is developed directly by the franchising network with the assistance of a consultant specialised in vocational training. An Academy was also created. The training courses are organised three times a year for an average of 10 to 15 persons and involve the whole shop staff via a rotation system. The group is composed of persons with experience and those attending the training for the first time. The training is developed around two main chapters: purchase and sales. The elements of the purchase module are: perception, how to buy, purchasing mission and objectives, rules of purchasing, do's and don'ts when purchasing goods, understand the needs of the clients and negotiation techniques. The elements of the sales module are: Objectives, to determine needs, advertising, find good arguments for selling goods and how to close a sale. Most of the employees are generally people who are interested in different items such as e.g. instruments, hi-fi, sports gear etc. Thus they learn because they love their jobs. They keep themselves informed by observing the market in terms of new technologies etc.

United Kingdom

Only one profit oriented enterprise dealing with used books was surveyed in the United Kingdom because the structure of second-hand stores does not differ in this form. In addition the most significant part of the second-hand market in the UK is covered by charity enterprises or organisations respectively.

Case No. 1

In the analysed second-hand enterprise for used books the requirements on the employees (3 employees) are on one hand social skills like honesty and reliability and on the other hand they need effective people skills and effective communication skills for dealing with the public. Furthermore it is necessary to have knowledge in customer service, sales skills and subject knowledge in relation to book titles and the classification and categorisation of books. The outcome of this is that there is maybe a qualification need about book knowledge or social or people skills. There exists no official qualification strategy. The nature of training is carried out on the job. In addition part-time staff are not required to have any formal educational or vocational qualifications. Given the nature of the work it is stated that this is unsurprising as training is very much work based and »on the job«, carried out in an informal, mentoring type way. And in the position of the business proprietor his background in the second-hand Sector bases on retail experience rather than formal education, training and qualifications.

Slovenia

Due to the fact that the Slovenian second-hand sector is still comparatively underdeveloped, only profit oriented enterprises were surveyed there. This is also due to the fact that there are no non-profit enterprises in the second-hand sector that could be compared to

the numerous enterprises of this kind in Western European countries. Overall five enterprises operating in the fields of clothing, baby equipment, CDs and furniture were analysed.

Case No. 1

In the analysed second-hand enterprise for used clothes the main and most important requirements for the employees (5 employees) are social and people skills. In detail these are kindliness, neatness, flexibility, readiness to learn, reliability as well as knowing and remembering the customers and their preferences with regard to clothes. As the currently employed staff is working very well as a team, any new employee is additionally required to fit into the team. In order to improve the success of the company, various qualification needs were listed. In general the most needed skills and knowledge are: Marketing knowledge and strategies, knowledge of textiles and textile materials, fashion trends, communication psychology and applicable computer skills. There is no formal qualification strategy in order to satisfy the qualification needs. However, this does not mean that there are no ambitions. On the contrary, there are many interesting exchanges of experience between co-workers. According to the interviews, the exchange of experience is one of the most important means of knowledge transfer and most beneficial as well. The employees are free to propose courses and seminars according to their interests.

Case No. 2

In the analysed owner-operated second-hand enterprise for used infant equipment the important requirement for the business is customer relations. The customers have to be accurately rated by the salesperson as well as he/she has to apply an adequate communication strategy. Furthermore the salesperson needs to adapt to the requirements of the customers. In the near future, there is no strategy present that involves employment of new staff. So the owner sees no need for qualifications, also for himself. The company is struggling for the market shares, but the business is slowly losing ground because of the discount sales of other shops which already offer low cost goods. It is more crucial that the mentality of the buyer changes and that the buyers lose their prejudices regarding »inferior« second-hand goods.

Case No. 3

Only two employees are working in the analysed second-hand enterprise for used CDs. The most important requirement is customer relations. Similar to Case 2, the customers have to be accurately rated by the salesperson and he/she has to make use of a proper communication strategy. The salesperson needs to adapt to the requirements of the customers. Furthermore there is no need of qualifications, because the enterprise does not plan to hire new personnel. The owner thinks that his business reflects his lifestyle, and he is happy with it. This is also the reason why there is no qualification strategy.

Case No. 4

Only two persons are employed in the analysed second-hand enterprise for used furniture. The most important requirements are good appearance like being well dressed, tidy etc. and an intensive and professional customer relationship. Because the enterprise does not want to expand their staff in the near future and the manager is pleased with the work of his salesperson, he does not see any need for additional qualifications. This is also the reason why there is no qualification strategy.

Case No. 5

In the analysed owner-operated second-hand enterprise for used furniture (the owner sometimes hires short-time workers) the important requirements for the business are social skills like reliability, punctuality and accuracy. As for the short-time workers, the most desired skills are skilfulness, dexterity, physical strength, reliability. In comparison to Case 4 there is a need for qualification in this enterprise. In general the most needed skills and knowledge is: Basic marketing knowledge and marketing strategies (the seminars and educational programmes are expensive), exchange of experience with similar companies, communication psychology and customer relations, organisational skills and appropriate computer skills. Because it is only an owner-operated enterprise there is no kind of qualification strategy.

Bulgaria

Due to the fact that the Bulgarian second-hand sector is still comparatively underdeveloped, only profit oriented enterprises were surveyed there. This is also due to the fact that there are no non-profit enterprises in the second-hand sector that could be compared to the numerous enterprises of this kind in Western European countries. Overall the survey covered two enterprises in the field of used clothing/textiles, one enterprise operating in the field of used electronic and electrical equipment and two enterprises operating in the field of used furniture.

Case No. 1, Case No. 2

As the requirements on the employees as well as the need of qualification and the qualification strategy are nearly the same Cases 1 and 2 are summarised below.

The first analysed second-hand enterprise runs shops and one big store for used clothes with a total of 15 employees that have different working tasks like driver, buyer, sorter, ironer, manager and labourer. In the second case the analysed second-hand enterprise for used clothes and a few other used household goods has 12 employees (driver, buyer, sorter, ironer and manager). In both cases only a few important requirements for the employees could be identified. Thus the employees have to complete their professional engagements conscientiously, they must be disciplined at the place of work, observe the working time, they must not damage the equipment they are entrusted with and protect the goods they are entrusted with. As for Case No. 2, the employees have to inform the manager in the case of conflicts. Altogether there are no demands for the employees in

terms of special know-how, e.g. about the goods they sell or commercial contents. On the other hand the manager of the enterprise is responsible for the organization and the monitoring of the overall work in the enterprise. The requirements for the manager are higher than for the employees. Besides organisation the managers need general commercial know-how. Because of the low requirements for the employees there is no major need for qualifications. The employees only need qualifications in foreign languages whereas the managers or the owners require qualifications in effective organization of the working process, price calculation, marketing and personnel management. No qualification strategy could be identified at all. All know-how needed by the employees is acquired by learning-on-the-job.

Case No. 3

In the analysed second-hand enterprise for used electronic and electrical equipment the requirements for the employees (two electricians and one manager) are very specific according to the goods they sell. Thus the employees have to follow special rules and they need discipline. The most important requirements they need is technical knowledge. They must be able to handle servomechanisms and machine parts and should keep and handle them conscientiously. Furthermore they must have knowledge about electrical installations. In the future, the need for qualifications resulting from the requirements for the employees will be electronic and electrical know-how due to the rapid development of technology. The manager also needs qualifications in effective organization of the working process, price calculation, marketing and personnel management. No additional qualification strategy could be identified in this enterprise. The only way to qualify the employees is to send them on special courses, but this is too expensive for the enterprise. The only alternatives are state subsidies.

Case No. 4

In the analysed second-hand enterprise for used furniture the requirements for the employees (eight employees, most of them craftspeople) are the same as in Cases 1 and 2. Thus the employees have to complete their professional engagements conscientiously, they have to be disciplined at the place of work, observe the working time, must not damage the equipment they are entrusted with, protect the goods they are entrusted with and inform the manager in the case of conflicts. Furthermore the employees need experience with furniture underpinned by the different kind of the employees' occupations like upholsterer, woodworker/joiner. On the other hand the buyer and the salesperson need commercial skills. The manager of the enterprise is responsible for the organization and the monitoring of the overall work in the enterprise, so that his requirements are higher than those of the employees. Besides organisation skills, the managers need general commercial know-how. The need for qualifications is the same as the requirements for the employees and the manager of the enterprise is deeply convinced that qualifications are needed. Anyway there is no qualification strategy in this enterprise. It seems that the manager prefers training courses, but they are too expensive for the enterprise. The most important and required skills are acquired by learning-by-doing.

Case No. 5

In the analysed second-hand enterprise for used furniture the requirements for the employees (six employees) are to complete their professional engagements conscientiously, be disciplined at the place of work, observe the working time, do not to damage the equipment they are entrusted with, protect the goods they are entrusted with and inform the manager in the case of conflicts, give advice and support to the customers and record defects by entering them into the records-book. Furthermore they need experience with furniture and commercial skills. The manager of the enterprise is responsible for the organization and the monitoring of the overall work in the enterprise. His requirements are thus higher than those of the employees. Besides organisation skills the managers need a general commercial know-how. The need of qualification is the same as the requirements for the employees and the manager of the enterprise. There is a need of well-educated and skillful employees. Furthermore in this enterprise the management/the owner of this enterprise are experienced in qualifications. Thus the enterprise has carried out qualification courses within the framework of the social programmes in the past (2000 to 2005). In this period, training courses were organized for socially marginalized people, young people that had just completed their secondary studies, and long-term unemployed persons. The programme was implemented in co-operation with the Labour Office. The Labour Office proposed the staff that were to be trained in carpentry, furniture production, upholstering. One of the difficulties, however, was to give the trainees a reason for undergoing the requalification course. This was due to the fact that the Labour Office is not responsible for ensuring a job after the training. Another difficulty was that the trainees mostly came from minority groups and that they attended the courses not out of personal interest but as a result of an agreement (on training attendance) they signed with the Labour Office. It is a fact that these programmes are allocated smaller budgets. Generally the trainees are trained more in theory than in practice as there is a lack of machines, tools and equipment. Altogether the employees often learn necessary tasks by learning-on-the-job because there is neither a possibility to finance courses nor funding programs for qualification.

2.3.4 Examples for corporate requirements, need for qualification and qualification strategies in non-profit (social) enterprises

The case studies conducted by the participating partner countries within the framework of the national sector analysis only represent an excerpt of the sector. They show, however, that there are only few and quite different in-firm qualification approaches in the individual non-profit enterprises. The following chapter provides a short overview of the corresponding results of the case studies. Managers but also instructors and foremen respectively as well as employees had been interviewed on a number of corporate factors and on the requirements for the employees, the need for qualifications and possible qualification approaches and strategies. Furthermore it should be stressed that the results are only relevant for the statements given by individual selected persons representing all persons engaged.

Germany

A total of three different non-profit enterprises were surveyed in Germany. Among them were two enterprises with a focus on used textiles and clothing along with other different used goods and one enterprise concentrating on the sale of used furniture.

Case No. 1

The employees engaged in the surveyed non-profit enterprise (total around 300 persons engaged) dealing among others with used textiles are faced with requirements in the field of social competences, such as motivation, ability to work in a team, punctuality and ability to handle conflicts. The specialist requirements for the individual fields of work are very different. While there are special requirements for persons working in the pre-sorting department of incoming goods, the handling of the merchandise management system needs employees able to handle a PC. These requirements are already highlighted in the job advertisements. Employees working in the goods receiving department need above all organisational skills, a high customer orientation and friendliness, an overview of the storage capacities and they need to assess the value of the goods and their resale value correctly. Furthermore the employees in the transport department need a driving licence and good physical fitness. They must only be able to understand and correctly implement their work processes. In the field of processing of used electrical appliances, at least one of the employees needs the VDE licence for inspection. The salespersons should have PC knowledge in order to handle to cashier system and the merchandise management system, they should know the brand names, the materials and the fashion trends and they should be creative and able to determine prices. The requirements for the position of an instructor are much higher due to the demanding tasks. A specialist training makes sense – e.g. as a salesperson in the field of textiles and occupational experience as a head of department or head of branch. He/she should above all have organisational skills and must be able to guide personnel and to solve conflicts. Occupational training is also helpful for the position of a foreman/woman. He/she should have specialist competences in terms of displays, registration of goods etc. The employees in these senior positions must be able to work on their own and must have organisational skills. They have to guide the personnel and to master all operative tasks on the level of the temporarily employed persons. The highest requirements are found on the management level. These employees often have graduated from a university and have to master all skills necessary to manage an enterprise.

The need for qualifications with regard to the temporarily employed persons above all results from the increased requirements for the employees and from their decreasing competence levels. As even the simplest tasks can no longer be mastered, there is a general higher need for qualifications and instructions. In detail there is a need for qualification in material science, PC knowledge, fundraising and the handling of customers as well as organisational skills. The foremen also need more qualification in EDP as the registration of goods is increasingly done electronically. In addition there is a need for qualifications in personnel guidance. There is only a limited amount of in-firm qualifications as the majority of the employees are only working there for six months.

There is neither a qualification strategy nor special instructions. A qualification course is only envisaged if the training process is not too complex compared to the requirements. A qualification is mostly realized by induction and coaching during the work process carried out by employees mastering these tasks and acting as multipliers. The qualification via multipliers is above all practiced for the handling of the merchandise management system. As the employment measures usually overlap for four weeks, one employee with experience in training is usually assigned to the new employees. Apart from this there is no special qualification for foremen and instructors. An informal exchange of experiences takes place once a month discussing experiences with issues such as e.g. conflict avoidance, problems with addiction, group processes and communication. The topics for this experience-based learning are determined once every year. The qualification of the full-time employees is done on demand or through participation in workshops of the BAG Arbeit (labour association). The employees are responsible for their own further qualifications and the training measures have to be applied for. There are no offers provided by the management.

Case No. 2

The surveyed non-profit enterprise with a total of 20 full-time staff and around 260 temporarily employed persons is dealing with textiles amongst other things. The requirements for the persons engaged in this business field are first and foremost social competences: friendliness, honesty and reliability were highlighted in the interviews. Certain creativity is required for the decoration of the sales rooms. Increasing numbers of customers and a change of the clientele structure result in high requirements for the employees. Above all the handling of the increasing number of repatriates of German origin and the linguistic and cultural difficulties resulting thereof represent challenges for the employees. In addition the employees must have special skills in terms of customer service as the number of customers who are specifically seeking used textiles due to their better quality compared to cheap new products is continually increasing. Special requirements for the full-time staff were not named. In order to cater for the need of adequately qualified employees the company tries to get suitable personnel from the labour administration by describing the requirement profiles in detail.

In general there is a need for qualification above all with regard to customer care, the cashier system, sales instruction, handling of difficult customers, material science. In the near future, an online-trade line will be implemented which is expected to result in a need for qualification in the handling of PCs. Apart from a need for specialist qualifications also a need for the imparting of key qualifications and social competences of the temporarily employed persons was identified. In order to cater for this need within the company, full-time employees are partly offering qualification in the form of seminars. A target-oriented planning of qualification and personnel development is, however, inexistent. As the most important target of the temporarily employed persons is the reintegration into a work routine and due to the fact that they only work for the enterprise for a very limited time, these persons are mainly qualified via learning-by-doing and coaching at the workplace or during the work process. Other qualification measures are also offered as

soon as the instructors identify a certain need and provided the corresponding qualifications can be financed.

Case No. 3

The surveyed non-profit enterprise deals amongst others with used furniture and employs a total of 30 full-time staff and around 120 temporarily employed persons. The requirements for the persons employed in this business field are various. Those working in the transport department must have a driving license and should be physically fit. The work also requires handicraft skills as the employees must decide on-site whether the used furniture is still good for reselling. The requirements for the employees in the goods receiving and the sales department can be found in the field of social competences (e.g. customer friendliness, discipline) and in the field of specialist know-how. Thus the employees must have certain know-how on the epochs (age) of origin, material science, the workmanship quality and the saleability of the goods. Knowledge in pricing is an advantage. The department for the refurbishing of furniture above all demands handicraft skills. The executive employees must have commercial, business management and organisational abilities. Furthermore they should have skills in financial planning, controlling and personnel guidance, above all the solution of conflicts. They must be able to deal with a number of problems (e.g. drug problems, crime rate) of the temporarily employed persons. Although the requirements for the employees are manifold, there was hardly any need for qualifications at the time of the interview. The management only underlined that an additional external exchange of experiences with other companies of the same sector would be desirable.

In order to meet the required demands for the temporarily employed, the enterprise pursues a concrete qualification strategy. As the main objective of the enterprise is the integration of the temporarily employed persons into the first labour market, a »Working Group on Recycling« was founded in 1990 and offers training, re-training and qualification measures. A special department was launched for the concept and the implementation of the different measures within the framework of the range of tasks in the company. This encompasses a vocational training or re-training for the occupations of an office clerk or retail salesperson, supplier and disposer (specialisation waste), the qualification of a recycling specialist and a service and production assistant as well as practical qualification modules such as sales and cashier courses, basics in EDP or the forklift permit. Since 1994, additional qualification courses are available in the bicycle recycling workshop. Since 1993, there are qualification courses for the (re)integration of long-term unemployed persons and immigrants focusing on imparting key qualifications such as the German language with special measures called »language and occupation«. These measures are carried through in close cooperation with the local responsible authorities. Apart from a number of qualification possibilities the temporarily employed are also trained on the job or during the work process with the aid of coaching or a handbook with all detailed processes. Continuous vocational training is not process controlled by the enterprise and is mainly based on the employees' own initiative. They can coordinate their proposals with the management. Basically existing abilities and interests of the employees which may be directly or indirectly useful for the enterprise are supported. The enterprise is a member of a

variety of special societies, associations, Chambers of Commerce etc. and makes use of the offers and incentives of these institutions in order to benefit from the current developments and novelties – also in the field of further training – for the recycling stock exchange and the second-hand sector.

Austria

Two different non-profit enterprises were closely surveyed in Austria. One enterprise deals with used electronic equipment, the other concentrates on textiles along with other goods.

Case No. 1

The surveyed non-profit enterprise deals with used electrical appliances and employs a total of 12 full-time staff and 64 temporarily employed persons, 20 thereof are trainees. The latter are above all required to have social competences and specialist know-how in some areas. Generally no vocational training is necessary for the temporarily employed. They should only be interested in technical issues – »good hobbyists«. Electronical prerequisites are necessary only for the field of »brown goods« (entertainment electronics). The temporarily employed in the customer area must above all have knowledge of EDP and should have technical and social advisory skills as they keep a close contact with the customers. Key employees (full-time employees) working in the technical department need technical qualifications (apprenticeship, journeyman or master examination) as well as good social competences as they act as an »interface« to the socio-pedagogical department. Furthermore these key persons must meet various requirements during their work on numerous tasks in the technical department: problem solving in case of difficult repair steps and in case of complaints, knowledge of materials, brand names, spare parts and equipment as well as work organisation and organisation development. They must also be able to carry through in-company instruction courses (training of technicians and salespersons) and should have knowledge of pricing, quality control and the handling of customers. Key employees working in the socio-pedagogical area are exclusively social pedagogues or social workers who master the required abilities for their field of tasks based on their education and training.

Currently the most important need for qualification is due to the technical changes in the field of EDP competences in the future. It will be very important to maintain the repair know-how. As the main objective of the enterprise is the reintegration of temporarily employed persons into the first labour market, the enterprise pursues a corresponding qualification strategy mainly encompassing the establishment of social qualifications such as punctuality and regular attendance in the enterprise etc. The specialist qualification of the temporarily employed is above all done via instruction as the repair know-how is mainly mastered by the key employees. Every three months, the enterprise carries through a theoretical course (electro-technology and repair). The course takes four weeks and encompasses 1.5 days a week. Based on the employment time of an average of six months, all temporarily employed persons can attend this course. A certain »further training fatigue« was identified in key persons. Nevertheless the need for qualification for so-called

»soft skills« is catered for – e.g. through further training on the issue »handling of transit workers by key persons«. In addition qualifications are only encouraged by the management as soon as the market performance identifies a need for further training: the better the profit situation the lower the need for qualification).

Case No. 2

The surveyed non-profit enterprise deals amongst others with used textiles and has 30 full-time employees as well as 21 temporarily employed persons, seven of them are trainees. The requirements for the staff working in this business field are quite different. The demands for the temporarily employed are manifold with a focus on social competences such as self-confidence, regular working times, responsibility, motivation, punctuality etc. Furthermore the staff needs to be physically fit, they must be able to carry out simple unskilled work tasks and fit into the work processes. The employees working in the sales department must be able to determine prices, display the goods and they should know the brand names and the value of the goods. With regard to the full-time staff, they are required to have an occupational education (e.g. dressmaker, salesperson and/or a socio-economical training). The employees should be able to solve problems and to guide personnel. Due to the fact that they are responsible for a great number of temporarily employed persons, they should also be able to work under pressure. A need for qualification could be identified but only defined in a limited way as the company has neither documented the individual work processes nor works with a QM-system in order to exactly assess the need. A need for qualification was above all seen in terms of market observation for pricing and customer orientated behaviour. Due to the short period of employment of the temporarily engaged persons in the company it has turned out to be difficult to motivate these persons or to cover a need for qualification which is actually present. Therefore the enterprise pursues two differently orientated qualification strategies. The temporarily employed are first and foremost individually coached. As most of these persons have a deficit in their personality structure, the objective is to give them support. The coaching should help these persons to fit into the daily working life. They teach punctuality, reliability, stamina with their work and their self-confidence is enhanced. Outdoor training is on offer for their additional support. As the employment time of just six months is very short and as the focus is on their reintegration into the first labour market, a vocational qualification is hardly possible. Thus these employees are assigned simple unskilled tasks (e.g. cleaning, folding of clothes) and coached by work instructors at the work places. Furthermore several educational measures – both in-firm and external – are offered such as e.g. courses in German language, driving licence, forklift licence, course for stock-keeping and a PC licence. With regard to the full-time staff, the job advertisements already require an adequate occupational profile in order to recruit well qualified people. An additional training of this group is not envisaged. However, if the employees demand or have a need for certain training, the management offers further training courses in the form of seminars on issues such as sales conversations, apprenticeship training, coaching and outdoor training. This offer is amended by courses such as gymnastic exercises for a strong back and correct lifting or carrying of heavy items.

Finland

In Finland three different non-profit enterprises were surveyed in detail. One enterprise focuses on dealing with used textiles, the other two deal with a range of products from electronic and electrical equipment to furniture and textiles.

Case No. 1

The analysed non-profit enterprise which is specialized in used textiles besides a few other goods does not have any special requirements for the employees (in total there are about 400 people engaged in the organisation) in the recycling department. The main requirements are social skills. The staff have to adhere to regulations, for example, coming to work punctually and willing to learn something new. Furthermore a commercial background is an advantage although this is not a prerequisite. One of the most important aims of the enterprise is to place the employees into the first labour market after work in the recycling department store. Therefore there are not many requirements for the employees. They are already asked in the first interview to fill out a form about their future hopes and development needs so that the enterprise can react to their wishes. For the more demanding positions of the store manager, store attendant and work instructor the applicants' education and experience as well as their personality are the most important criteria for the assignment to their tasks. They need to have good organizational skills as they control the operative work. For the task of work instructor social skills are especially required as his/her responsibility is to plan the employees' future employment paths and cope with their social problems. Everyone in management needs to adapt to changes in the business and be ready for all kinds of tasks which may suddenly come up. The main needs of qualification regarding the temporary employees are social skills. As the temporary employees have been long term unemployed, many of them have a low self-esteem that must be reinstalled by the work experiences. Furthermore there is a need for qualification in customer service and in PC-knowledge. Altogether no comprehensive qualification exists to cover the needs of qualification. Most of the qualification for employees in the recycling department concentrated on preparing them to work in the first labour market, because they are only six month in the enterprise. All new employees will be introduced into the organisation's activities and then familiarized with the work tasks and the quality criteria for the sorting of clothes (All employees start in the sorting department). During their first weeks, the employees are assigned a tutor who gives advice if needed. Furthermore the company has established an annual plan in the form of a »year's clock« for different kinds of training measures offered to the employees. There is training e.g. on customer service, waste management, fire safety, first aid and life management. The company also plans to have a PC-training for employees. For the management there is no special qualification strategy, i.e. there is no planned programme to qualify the management for their tasks. However, the employer organizes training measures several times a year, mostly on marketing, management issues or skills in the commercial field. The management has also been offered an opportunity to look for suitable training to be carried out along with the work.

Case No. 2

In the analysed non-profit enterprise which is specialized in used furniture as well as in electronic and electrical equipment, textiles and household appliances the basic requirement for the employees (about 40 to 50 employees in total, 9 of them have permanent contracts) is to get working routine and experience. As already said, there are basic tasks which can be learnt at work but there are also more demanding tasks with higher requirements. Employees working at the reception desk and in the recycling and work centre need customer service skills and good social skills. At the reception desk the employees are required to have a basic understanding about the delivered goods. They must decide whether the goods are worth repairing or whether they should be disposed of. In the transport department drivers are required to have driving experience. As they are in contact with customers they need customer service skills as well. They also need to establish the time tables and determine their driving routes, so they need to have basic organizational skills. The sales staff working in the recycling and work centre needs some knowledge about materials of textiles as customers might want to know something about their care. And they need to have some knowledge of electronic and electrical appliances, if questions are asked by the customers.

Especially the foreman in the sales department needs to be a professional in the sales of electronic and household appliances. He also needs to have organizational skills as he is coordinating the operations in the store. In the work shop professional skills are needed for the repair of the appliances. The disassembly of appliances demands knowledge about the valuable materials. As for the repair of furniture, the operative instructor needs to have a vocational training. The work instructor who is preparing the employees for their later work needs good social skills. As many of the employees have been long term unemployed before working in the recycling and work centre they might lack social skills and customer service skills. In this regard they have a need for qualifications in reception, in transportation and in sales. Furthermore non-contract employees in preparatory measures need qualification for their work tasks. They need more instruction for their work than before as they are all long term unemployed hired with the aid of a special labor service office instead of a normal labor office where applicants encompass all job seekers. In preparation for the work project, employees need more time to get used to the working routines and more instruction even in basic work tasks. In the future it is likely to become difficult to find professional repair personnel for new household and electronic appliances which easily break down. Modern washing machines with their computerized functions are more difficult to repair than their old predecessors. With regard to this development, there is a high need for qualification in special technical know-how. As the employment contracts are very short – six months on average – a comprehensive qualification strategy does not seem to be obsolete. The qualification of the employees is mostly carried out by learning-on-the-job and learning by observing the more experienced personnel. The employees are introduced to regulations and the policy of the enterprise as well as to their work tasks and employees' responsibilities. During the first few weeks, new employees are being watched more closely whether they manage their tasks and adapt to their working environment.

Furthermore the enterprise has offered some training e.g. how to lift things safely without hurting oneself. In the near future, professionals from other recycling enterprises will come to the company to tell the staff something about how to recycle textile materials, how to re-use them and how to reduce waste. The work instructor leads regular discussions with the employees about their training opportunities. One opportunity is to acquire a vocational degree via an apprenticeship contract. At the moment there are three employees holding this kind of contract. It includes training periods in a vocational school and working periods in the enterprise (Association). There are also more demanding tasks, e.g. the repair of appliances. Employees assigned with this task need to have vocational training as a prerequisite. There is no special qualification strategy for the management although they would be in need of qualifications in organisational skills and personnel management. They have also been offered training opportunities by the Association. The development manager is e.g. currently pursuing a special management degree. In any case the training mainly depends on the persons' own motivation and their activities to qualify themselves.

Case No. 3

In the analysed non-profit enterprise, which is specialized in used electronic and electrical appliances as well as in used textiles and furniture, the most important requirement for the employees (about 120 employees in total) is self-motivation for this kind of work, getting along with other people and not doing harm to their environment. These requirements are applicable for all tasks in the company. There are, however, more requirements for employees taking over more demanding tasks, e.g. the repair of appliances. Employees who are in contact with customers like salespersons, receptionists of goods, pick-up drivers, need good social and customer service skills. In the second-hand store skills in sales and displays are appreciated. The requirements for the project designers, managers, the foremen and work instructors are of course higher. They have to have good organisational skills and social skills. Managers and project designers must be able to handle economic affairs. Foremen and work instructors need some knowledge of recycling activities. A need for qualifications for the employees who are long term unemployed people was not stated. It is quite important for them to just get used to the working life. A need for qualifications could be identified for the employees who are immigrants. They need qualifications in speaking the Finnish language. For some tasks such as repairing activities a need for qualification in professional skills is required. It depends also on the motivation of the employees whether they want to further develop their skills during the work process or not.

As the aim of the enterprise is to offer long term unemployed people an opportunity to get used to the working life, the enterprise has no special strategy to qualify employees for their work tasks. Considering the limited period of time they are working in the enterprise, a thorough qualification does not make sense. Also most of the tasks can be learnt quite easily by learning-on-the-job. However, there are also more demanding tasks where the employees need to have professional skills as soon as they are assigned their work task, e.g. the repair of TV sets. Project designers, foremen, managers and work instructors need to have basic organizational skills and good social skills. Nevertheless there is no special

qualification strategy for them. The only qualifications offered in the enterprise are some language courses for immigrants, fire prevention training sessions, courses for the task of dismantling and driving courses for work in the transport department. Also the enterprise offers the opportunity to get a certification in hygiene (needed in the food industry). No major changes could be identified in the qualification structure for the future.

Belgium

In Belgium, three different non-profit enterprises were surveyed in detail. One enterprise specialized in dealing with used textiles. The other two enterprises offer a wide range of products and used goods from textiles to furniture and electronic and electrical equipment. In case of one enterprise only the field of electronic and electrical equipment forms part of the survey.

Case No. 1

In the analysed non-profit enterprise specialized in used textiles, different requirements for the employees (280 people engaged) were identified. The desired qualifications of people to be recruited are mainly linked to previous experience in sales with some artistic background as an asset. The employees need creativity because they have to decorate the shop and they need various social skills. They have to be friendly, customer-oriented and capable of attracting new clients. Generally they need a good sense for the handling of clothes, they should be able to follow trends and fashions and be able to observe how people dress. Furthermore they need to be at ease with the cash register after a short period of time (they do not need computer knowledge) and they have to know how to iron, as all clothes are ironed before being put on display. The shop's supervisor has to be capable of understanding the entire process of collection, selection and sales. The educational background is not extremely important but the person needs to have some experience in positions at the different levels of the chain. The supervisor needs to understand all the aspects of the second-hand clothing business, e.g. how to find the best location for a shop, how to present the items for sale, how to price items and how to deal with clients. He/she need knowledge on marketing developments and the training of employees. Furthermore he/she need knowledge in commerce along with good organisational skills and how to deal with customers respectfully. A good shop keeper needs to be able to forecast the future developments and follow the fashion trends and he/she needs to know the new brands (there are new ones almost every day). Thus the shop keepers need knowledge in seasonal selection, ironing, pricing, window dressing, proper display of the clothes on the shelves, dealing with cash, organising special events and managing the stocks.

The most important need for qualifications for the employees is training measures in the field of window dressing as well as in finance and human resources. Also they need training in social skills, how to deal with customers and knowledge of the specific typology of customers. To cover the requirements and the need for qualifications the enterprise pursues a qualification strategy. On the one hand the company developed an in-house training course (three weeks' course) to impart the basic skills for selling clothes to the em-

ployees and to teach them how to be customer-orientated. On the other hand all expertise and knowledge is basically acquired by working in the field. New employees receive tutoring and coaching in various shops. The personnel is thus trained in a way that they learn and understand the entire process, starting from the technical aspects of selecting clothes (an activity which is extremely important as will be explained later), to some administration tasks, how to deal with finances, human resources and customers. In the course of these activities, the employees get a good overview of the enterprise and they are capable to understand the type of business. The whole learning process takes at least one year, because after this period the employee has gone through the four seasons once and has understood how to make use of the various items on sale. The reason why the company uses this qualification strategy is justified by the lack of any specialised external vocational training.

Case No. 2

In the analysed non-profit enterprise which specialises in a variety of products, the research concentrated on the electronic department (190 people engaged in total, 26 employees in the electronic department). The only requirement for the employees is that they have to be trained in the *»Horizon«* training centre and come to the enterprise directly after the training. People suitable for *»Horizon«* have to be older than 18. It must be stated that most of the people participating in the training come from marginalized groups or are unemployed. In order to start work in the enterprise they need basic knowledge about electronic and electrical equipment as well as social skills. Because the employees are very well trained, when they start work there is no need of more technical qualifications. However, the employees do need training with regard to the collection of additional used equipment. What is collected today is not enough for a sustainable business. Only a small part of the collected items can be re-sold according to the criteria set by the ElectroREV quality label. The problem is to find a way to access this part of the market which so far is not part of the enterprise's range of activities. With regard to the qualification strategy, the enterprise developed its own training centre »*Horizon*«. The trainers are external consultants with expertise in the field of electronic and electrical equipment. The *Centre »Horizon«* provides training through work. In general an average of 20 people is attending the courses. The training lasts one year and is focused on repair of small and big electric and electronic appliances. Altogether the trainees receive both theoretical and practical education. After one year the participants receive a certificate that is legally recognised by the Belgian education authority. Furthermore almost every graduate finds a job once the training is over. Some of the trainees are retained at the enterprise if there is a need, but most of them easily find a job somewhere else. This system gives a lot of satisfaction because there is a win-win situation. On the one hand most of the trainees get a job very easily at the end of the course and on the other hand the enterprise can cover their need for qualified employees.

Case No. 3

The employees working in the analysed non-profit enterprise (250 full time employees, 40 of them in the management), which deals with a wide range of goods (from textiles and

furniture to electronic and electrical equipment), do not need to meet a lot of requirements. Because of the focus of this enterprise to create jobs for disabled people (e.g. with psychological problems, social handicaps, ex-prisoners etc.) the working in such a social workplace differs from work in the traditional labour market. Altogether the employees need a few personal characteristics. They need to be motivated for work and they must be able to deal with rules, authority and diversity. Furthermore there are some specific job requirements. The employees must be able to sort goods (check if goods are reusable or not), place goods in the shop, clean and price the goods and assist customers. The responsible person for the re-use shop has some more requirements like knowledge about shop management and personnel management. Furthermore these employees have to achieve commercial objectives and carry out personal coaching. Because the disabled employees neither have a lot of competences nor a high vocational education, the need for qualifications is substantial. On the one hand they have to be trained in social skills and on the other hand they need different kinds of practical training.

To cover the requirements of the employees and the need of qualification the enterprises pursue an integrated qualification approach with specific attention to each employee. They offer e.g. general education (language, computer basics, reading, writing, basics of mathematics etc.), specific job related training, functioning of syndicates, safety and well being (e.g. first aid, defensive driving etc.) and reception of customers. Furthermore they propose different programmes on numerous issues at different levels (e.g. internal, in cooperation with other local organisations or by the KVK network organisation) for the management as well as for the workers. The programmes they offer can be divided into coaching of the target group, technical training, ICT, management skills and prevention and well being. While one part of the training is offered as a programme, the other part is trained at work. The instructor supervises and supports each employee individually and on a daily basis.

United Kingdom

In the United Kingdom three different non-profit enterprises were surveyed in more detail. One enterprise deals with used furniture, the other two enterprises deal with a range of products from textiles, books and CDs to toys etc.

Case No. 1

In the analysed non-profit enterprise specializing in used furniture, different requirements for the employees (in total there are 11 paid staff and about 25 to 30 volunteers) are identified. The requirements for the general employees are especially the necessary practical skills for the function they carry out. It is required that they do their work with conscientiousness and reliability. The practical skills they need cover knowledge about furniture recycling (e.g. varnishing), repairing, assembly and dismantling furniture. On the other hand the requirements for managers can be summarised as numeracy, organisational skills, »people skills«, prioritising and time-management. The requirements for administrative staff can be summarised as reliability, organisational skills, time-management and the ability to work under pressure. Furthermore they need knowledge in finance, wages, budget-

ing, cash-flow etc. There are special requirements for commercial know-how as well as people skills. If these requirements are considered, there are only a few needs for qualifications. But they were not explicitly mentioned in the interview. In this enterprise a qualification strategy doesn't really exist because the manager and the administrative staff are qualified as is necessary for their positions. However, the administrative assistant recently had I.T. training to assist her in her work. Furthermore the organisation regularly offers work experience to trainees if it is needed. It was indicated that trainees, particularly of school age and just above, can vary in their levels of ability, commitment and reliability. The general consensus was that there would be little call for qualifications beyond practical vocational ones such as National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ), but that some form of on the job training pack would be a welcome addition.

Case No. 2

In the analysed non-profit enterprise, which is specialized in used textiles, books, bric-a-brac etc. different requirements are identified for the employees (3 full time staff and about 45 volunteers). The requirements depend on the different employment levels as well as on the different work tasks. The requirements of the general staff and the volunteer sales staff are customer care, retail skills including displays, pricing and antiques, people skills, basic first aid and basic health and safety knowledge. Otherwise the development officer who is acting as a deputy manager needs knowledge in fund raising, day to day accounting, managing the volunteers and developing retail displays. Furthermore she needs qualifications in business and accounting and experience in the voluntary sector. The managers work on the highest level in the enterprise, therefore they need more and higher qualifications. They have to be multi-skilled professional persons. The requirements of them are a wide variety of skills, especially management and people skills. Furthermore they need motivational and organisational as well as retail skills. And they need knowledge in customer care, legislation, business and finance, IT, time-management and counselling. Regarding the need for qualifications there is no demand for formal qualification for the volunteers. However, there could be some need for a flexible training package that could be delivered relatively easily in the workplace. (The research revealed that some of the volunteers do not want training and would consider leaving if this became a requirement.) At the moment there is no formal qualification or qualification strategy in this enterprise, although different skills have been required. The employees and the volunteers rely heavily on experience in carrying out their retail function. New volunteers are mentored in an informal way by those with more experience. Furthermore some training is already carried out in-house in areas such as retail skills, communication and cancer related issues (because many of the volunteers are females who have in some way been touched by cancer). Also for the management there is no need for qualifications or any qualification strategy, because they are well qualified professionals. Both are still continuing studies in areas like business studies and counselling.

Case No. 3

In the analysed non-profit enterprise, which is specialized in used clothing, books, CDs, toys etc. different requirements are identified for the employees (32 shop personnel in

addition to volunteers). The requirements of the employees the enterprise is searching for are on one hand practical skills and on the other hand customer skills. The practical skills include the knowledge how to prepare goods for sale and how to grade items to their saleability. Furthermore they need people skills and they need reliability and trustworthiness. On the other hand there is a wide range of requirements and qualifications for the managers. They are often quite highly qualified in the field of management and retail. Although much work, even at the shop management level is carried out within the shop itself. There is no need for qualifications for the voluntary unpaid staff. Because of their age (most of them are retired individuals in the 60+ age group) qualification is neither necessary nor desirable. And also the managers need no qualification, because they are highly educated. Because of the employment situation of this enterprise no qualification strategy exists. So that the requirements of the employees are satisfied the managers encourage the skills of the employees. If there is any kind of training needed it is very much work based and »on the job« and carried out in an informal, mentoring type way.

2.4 Relation between enterprises and education and training institutions

In general it can be stated that there are hardly any commercial or purpose-orientated relations between the profit enterprises in the European second-hand sector and education and training institutions (e.g. further training institutes). This can be justified by the fact that the companies and their owners respectively have no educational mission and often do not consider systematic qualification as necessary. Training institutions are only consulted by the employees as soon as a clear need for action and/or qualification was identified within the enterprise. These approaches depend on the qualification offer of the corresponding training providers. Another reason for the just need-orientated and selective connections to training providers is the insufficient or even nonexistent offer of qualification courses specialising in the needs of the second-hand sector. With regard to non-sector-specific contents (e.g. general commercial or handicraft contents) there is a number of training institutions offering these qualifications in the form of seminars, courses or workshops, e.g. the Chambers of Commerce and Handicraft, commercial academies and further training providers. Qualification offers with a special focus on the sector, however, are only available in a limited number of countries such as Germany and Austria. These courses are rare and mostly demand-orientated. In Germany only one company consultant agency with an offer of corresponding further training measures for second-hand enterprises could be identified. In addition there are special symposiums and workshops organised by different associations of the recycling sector. Second-hand enterprises are welcome to take part in these events (e.g. *BAG Arbeit*). In Austria, the *Landesgremium Wien* (association affiliated to the Chamber of Commerce) regularly carries through continuous training events for second-hand dealers as well as a yearly specialist day.

Contrary to the profit enterprises in the second-hand sector, there are clear connections between non-profit enterprises and providers of education and training in some European countries (e.g. in Germany and Finland). The contact with external training and qualification providers is different according to the individual enterprises. Whereas some enter-

prises take up the corresponding offers of several training institutions, other enterprises are only closely cooperating with one of these providers. The shaping of the relationship between the enterprises and the training providers depends on the offer and the demand for certain qualification measures. As already mentioned above, the majority of the qualifications is not exclusively geared to the second-hand market.

A good example of the cooperation of educational institutions with non-profit enterprises could be identified in Finland. Many Finnish enterprises carry through different kinds of training during the work process but there were no other specific vocational training models besides the Bovallius foundation. This institution operates a vocational school and a social enterprise – Bovallius Palvelut Ltd. Both institutions work together. The students can be trained in Bovallius Palvelut Ltd. for a certain period of working time. After their graduation they find employment there (Interview Korhonen 12.3.2007).

The very close cooperation between non-profit enterprises and training institutions is generally not based on the orientation to the second-hand sector but is due to the overall good standing of the non-profit enterprises. These enterprises are also active in other sectors such e.g. recycling, vocational preparation, services etc. Due to this wide range of activities they already have a close relationship with training institutions.

3. Operating processes and tasks in the second-hand sector

The results gained in the context of the national analyses provide a first overview of the structures and the way the second-hand sector in Europe is set up. Following up on these results, the QualiProSecondHand project carried out more detailed studies on working processes and tasks in all countries participating in the project by means of professional, scientific case studies. The empiric results will be presented in detail in the following chapter. These form – together with the training and qualification structures available which are described in chapter two – the basis for identifying sector-specific qualification needs and consequently for developing sector-specific qualifications.

In the sector analysis it turned out that the second-hand sector in Europe is characterized by a wide range of business areas as well as types of goods. Nevertheless, significant differences are found with regard to their importance within the sector. Electronic and electrical devices (including computers and office equipment), textiles, furniture and household goods, books and audio media were identified to be the most important areas of business in Europe or the partner countries of the QualiProSecondHand project, respectively[1]. Thirty-five case studies were carried out in these areas of business which are classified as follows (see table 1):

Area of Business	Case studies	Countries	Non-profit businesses	Profit-oriented businesses
Books/CDs	6	5	1	5
Electronic and electric devices	8	5	2	6
Furniture	9	7	4	5
Textiles	12	7	6	6

Table 1 Overview of the case studies carried out

As a result of the case studies carried out, the core working processes and tasks will be presented in chapters 3.1 to 3.4 separately according to the respective areas of business. Moreover it was found that the tasks, sub tasks, their completion, the instruments and methods applied partly differ from each other also within the individual areas of business. This means not all tasks are relevant in every one of the businesses involved. In order to get a full picture of the tasks relevant in the second-hand sector, all of the ones identified will nevertheless be described, without making the claim that they will also appear in all case studies.

In the businesses, tasks are often completed by several groups of employees each of which bears different dimensions of responsibility. In order to differentiate, three levels will be assumed for describing the extent to which these tasks are completed by the respective group:

[1] The areas of business have been described in detail in the context of the sector analysis.

- lead worker/trainer level
- general staff member level (amongst others semi-skilled and unskilled individuals)
- management level (amongst others management, persons responsible for staff in general)

The lead worker/trainer level covers all groups of staff members that are formally qualified, e.g. carpenters, sales assistants or electronics and telecommunication technicians (in the past: radio/TV engineer) who occupy a job consistent with their qualification and who partly instruct or train other staff. The tasks completed by lead workers or trainers require a lot of professional skills and generally can only be completed having the respective education. The general members of staff level (often semi-skilled or unskilled individuals) pools all groups of people who have no formal qualification or one that has nothing to do with what their job in the sector is. Individuals taking part in qualifying measures supported by job management who work in this context in not-for-profit businesses are grouped in this level, too. The tasks they complete are often not very challenging, do not require any formal qualification and are mostly completed in the presence of the lead worker or trainer who also bears responsibility. The management level groups all people who bear responsibility for leading tasks and who complete challenging tasks in the area of organisation and management. Being able to complete such tasks it makes sense to possess a trade qualification. In this context, commonality and type were seen to vary (from an academic degree to a trading clerk education to vocational trainings in the field).

Defining the three levels (lead worker/trainer, general staff member and management) is necessary because the different groups are often all involved in the completion of the different tasks. The definition is also made to differentiate the individual tasks in addition to this. Furthermore, country-specific differences play an important role regarding the different levels of the persons employed. In the countries of Eastern Europe for example, in which most businesses are rather small and oriented to profit, it is the owner managing almost all management tasks, the lead worker tasks and the general staff member tasks in one person parallel.

In some of the Western European countries however, these levels and the responsibilities are much differentiated in e.g. the not-for-profit businesses. There, people who participate in supported qualifying measures (and are supported for being disadvantaged) often work on the general staff member level. These examples illustrate that the distinction made between the three levels is an analytical one reflecting the level of requirement when there is a task that has to be completed. In order to use the identified tasks for developing qualification processes it is inevitable to narrow them down and define them as accurately as possible. Only by defining the tasks adequately is it possible to develop an appropriate qualification oriented on what the needs are, for all groups of employees.

The analysis of the core tasks within the areas of business clearly shows that there are processes and tasks relevant in all areas of business as well as area-specific ones. The processes that are relevant in all areas as well as the tasks related to them will be described in chapter 3.5. Descriptions are kept rather general on purpose in order to be able to make global statements. The area-specific processes and the tasks related to them are de-

scribed in chapter 3.6. Peculiarities and differences of the various areas of business will be made the subject here.

3.1 Core working processes and tasks in the business area of »furniture«

All types of used furniture are accepted, collected, purchased and partly also refurbished or restored, resold or disposed in the business area of »furniture«. Figure 1 provides an overview of the core working processes of this area of business.

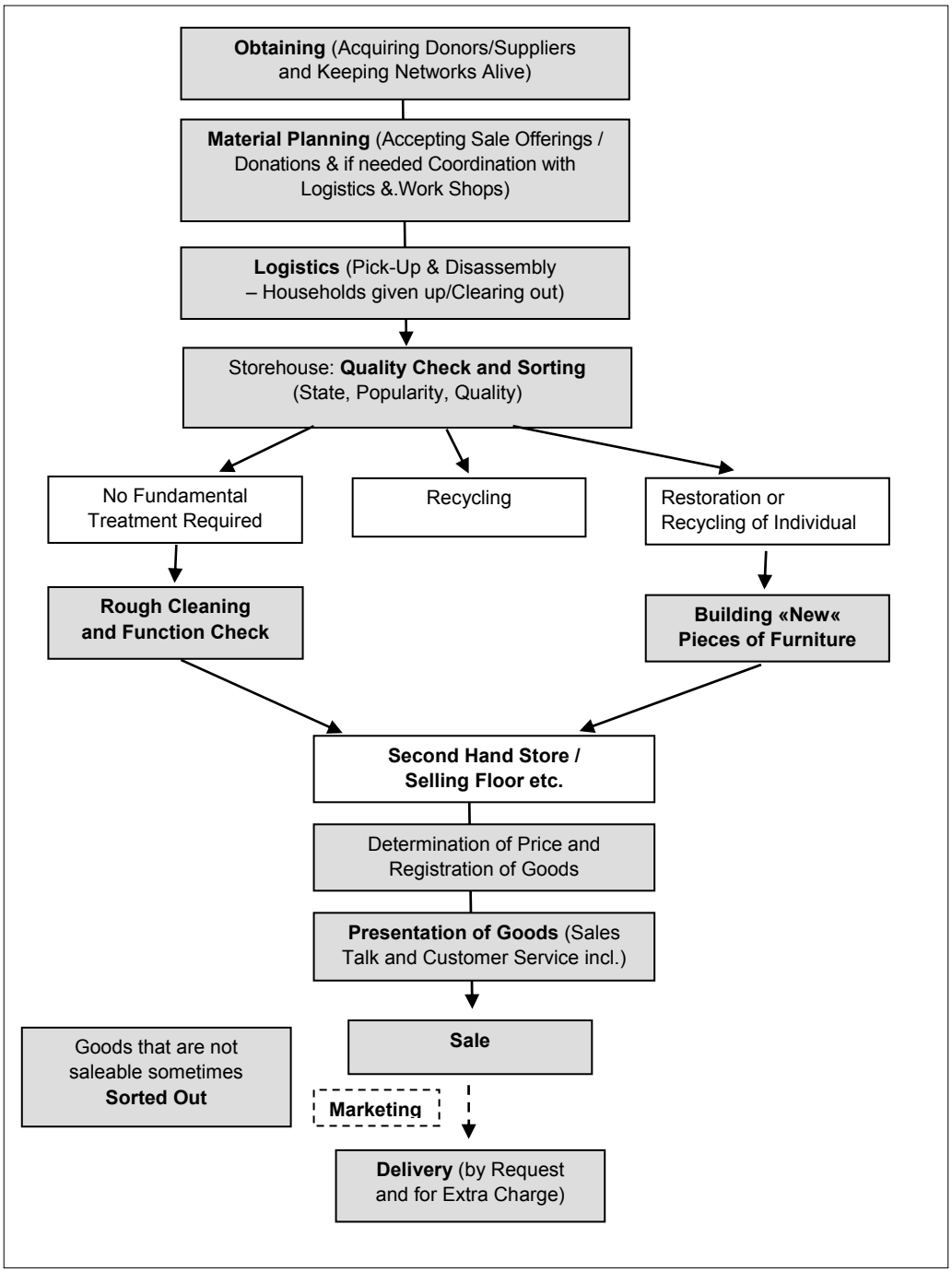

Fig. 1 Overview of the operating processes in the business area of »furniture« in the second-hand sector

Acquiring donors/sellers as well as maintaining networks alive ranks first in consideration of the different working processes and tasks of the area of business. Acquisition aims at obtaining donations or selling offers of the highest quality possible. Material planning comes second. Here, donation inquiries are accepted and coordination with logistics and the furniture repair shops takes place. Logistics organises and deals with collecting and disassembling the furniture for transport if this is necessary. After that, the quality of the furniture is evaluated at the point of delivery and is sorted according to certain predefined criteria. Therefore, a piece is assessed with regard to the condition it is in, the effort which has to be made to repair it and its resale value. Also, a decision about the further steps is made. Depending on the business, up to three categories exist:

a) the item does not require fundamental treatment (repairing or fixing)
b) the item is disposed or
c) individual parts are reused for building new furniture.

Profit-oriented businesses only accept goods which achieve a good resale price (if needed, the product is restored, but these costs have to be included in the calculation). Thus, in these businesses the furniture disposal category does not exist.

If a donated piece of furniture does not require fundamental treatment, it is roughly cleaned and its functions are tested. If only individual parts of the piece are reusable they are used for building new furniture in the carpentry section. In some of the businesses the furniture is restored from scratch in this part of the process. At the end of the process chain the furniture is ready for being sold. Here, the price is fixed and the goods are registered. Furthermore, the way the goods are presented and customer service are part of the sale. Finally, the sale as such has to be entered into the point of sale system. Further on, it has to be mentioned that the furniture on offer is sorted out again after a certain time on the selling floor (e.g. four weeks) in some businesses. Other businesses, in turn, deliver the furniture which has been sold on request and for some extra charge. This service characterizes the last part of the working process.

The processes identified are closely related to certain tasks which describe these processes in a more detailed way. In the framework of a much more detailed analysis of the working processes identified, nine core tasks were identified:

1. The task »obtaining donations« aims at campaigning for used furniture to be handed over to the business to make sure there are products on offer. The task is also aimed at acquiring new customers to make sure products are actually resold. This is mostly a secondary aspect, however, because it is generally not a problem to sell second hand furniture. Special attention is given to the people handing the goods over, i.e. the suppliers of furniture because the quality and sales potential of the product range depend on them. Possible advertising efforts which members of staff could take care of by organising and designing them are newspaper or internet ads. There is also some advertising through the radio, with flyers or leaflets as a more common medium however. Therefore destination, target groups and type of advertisement have to be chosen and coordinated and also the implementation has to be initiated. Some businesses organise cultural events in order to promote their business and to cultivate the image of it. In order to complete this task, it is inevitable to keep networks alive in the long run as

well with regard to organisations and commercial institutions as with regard to direct personal contacts.
People responsible: The main responsibility for the task is with the management. Employees of general staff level take care of subtasks when asked to do so and are being supportive in doing the preliminary work. Such subtasks involve e.g. participating creatively in the development and brainstorming process for the type, the content and the design of an advertisement, helping to organise and carry out events as well as helping to keep networks alive and taking care of personal contact with the suppliers when they hand in furniture.
Peculiarities: One business in Germany even established its own award ceremonies (design award for furniture) for advertising purposes and in order to cultivate its image.

2. The task »planning the pick-up of donations« involves accepting donation inquiries on the one hand, and coordinating these with logistics and the workshops, on the other. When an inquiry comes in, the member of staff has to identify the product's destination, what the material it is made of and its size in order to coordinate capacities with the workshops afterwards. Furthermore, donation inquiries are coordinated and passed on to transport by means of an order document (if available in the business). In the context of this task, the employed work mainly with a telephone, a computer (e.g. they maintain a data base of customers and/or an acquisition system for the orders) and order documents.
People responsible: Normally, people coming from the management and the lead worker level are responsible for this task and complete it as well.
Peculiarities: The task was not identified in Bulgaria and only identified partly in Slovenia. Due to the fact that in Slovenia the furniture is generally not reconditioned, coordination with the workshops is not part of the task.

3. Planning the pick-up of donations is thus followed by the actual pick-up. The next task is therefore called »picking up furniture donations«. It involves transporting the used furniture from the supplier to the business. The basis for completing the task is the order document or the order, respectively which the one doing the job gets from planning (see task 2). He/she picks up the used furniture from private households that are given up, business liquidations, clearing out etc. after having looked at and evaluated it and disassembles it on-site before loading it if needed. Therefore, conventional tools like e.g. electric screwdriver, pliers or a hammer are provided. The goods have to be loaded in a space-saving and the most gentlest way possible in order to protect them. Afterwards, they are secured for transport. It is absolutely necessary to use the tools for loading and transport (e.g. forklift truck, hand forklift truck, strap equipment) in a reliable way taking into account all safety aspects. For transport itself, it is important that the vehicle (truck/transport vehicle) is registered and worthy for the road, that all in-house standards are met and that it is driven in a reliable way. When unloading the pieces, they should be taken good care of in order to not get damaged. The employee is responsible for the order documents being dealt with properly and has to coordinate himself with the ones responsible for the processes prior to and following his/her field. It is either the ones responsible for planning within the business or the employee himself/herself to deal with planning the route. In several businesses navigation systems are provided. The employees are required to have good manners and orientate themselves strongly towards service.

People responsible: Depending on the business, this task is either completed by lead workers (trained drivers) and/or semi-skilled or unskilled individuals. The one doing the job has to have the right to drive the corresponding vehicle of transport (truck licence, if needed) because it is a legal precondition.

4. The ones completing the task »accepting furniture« have to focus on examining the pieces' quality and sorting them according to certain criteria like the condition they are in, their popularity and their property. If the business disposes of a warehouse the used furniture is stored there temporarily after unloading. By means of a function check (drawers, doors etc.) and completeness check the furniture's resale value and the cost for repairs are estimated. After evaluation a piece is sorted according to the following categories: disposal, rough cleaning and reuse of individual parts. Experience and skills regarding the assessment of furniture, the expenses for repair and the possible resale price are inevitable for completing this task. It is absolutely necessary to have comprehensive knowledge of business and working processes as well as technical knowledge of materials, assembly and possible weaknesses of furniture and knowledge of the market. In addition to this, helpful devices of transport (forklift truck, hand forklift truck, sack barrow) have to be operated reliably and safely and order documents (if available) have to be dealt with properly.
   People responsible: Responsibility for this task is mainly with those working on lead worker/trainer level because technical skills are required. General staff members (e.g. semi-skilled and unskilled individuals) are involved in completing it as well especially with regard to operating tasks.

   Peculiarities: It was not identified in Austria that costs of repair were calculated. There are hardly any repairs in not-for-profit enterprises. Furthermore, the recycling of individual parts did not play an important role in the UK.

5. The »preparing furniture which is not used for disposal« step follows right after the sorting. If pieces were assessed to be unusable, they are disassembled manually for future disposal. Air torque screwdrivers and standard tools (hammer, screw driver, pliers) are provided for the disassembly and have to be used reliably by the employees, taking into account safety regulations. For sorting, wire metal boxes or containers into which the different material types are grouped are provided. Sorting is to be performed according to the respective legal requirements and in a reliable way. Members of staff are provided an operational manual in some of the businesses in which the work steps and legal framework conditions are pointed out.
   People responsible: Due to the fact that the requirements for this task are not very challenging, general staff members are responsible for it. Technical skills only play a minor role.
   Peculiarities: In Bulgaria and Austria, the use of such manuals was not identified for this task.

6. The task »cleaning and restoring furniture« aims at roughly cleaning the pieces which were delivered being in a good state, at testing their functions and at repairing them, if needed. The member of staff cleans the piece roughly with cloth, brushes and, if needed, with normal detergents. While doing this he/she also tests its general functions (drawers, doors etc.). After another, more detailed test all the components identified being in need of repair are reconditioned. Depending on the business, either only very simple repairing or more demanding work like furniture restoration are part of this task. If repairing is simple the missing parts (e.g. handles) are replaced or bro-

ken ones are exchanged. In final verification, the employee makes sure the piece is in good order by carrying out a general check. Some businesses provide a handbook in which the individual steps and the procedure of this check are described.
People responsible: The task is mainly completed by the lead worker/trainer level. The reason for this is that its completion requires a lot of technical skills (for the repairing and the restoration). General staff members complete only particular subtasks when being asked to do so by the lead worker/trainer.
Peculiarities: In Finland, handbooks for completing this task are not provided in the analysed businesses.

7. The task »building new furniture« implies that new shelves, seating or other furniture are made when commissioned using second hand furniture components. Therefore, the old pieces of furniture have to be disassembled first taking special care of not damaging the parts that are planned to be reused. Tools to work with are mainly the classic ones from carpentry. Components which cannot be used anymore are collected on shelves and in wire metal boxes and are disposed afterwards. For the disposal of these pieces, a forklift truck is provided. Then, a »new« piece of furniture is created from the various, reusable second hand components. The ones completing this task have to first develop an idea and then the design and later implement it. The precondition is to be able to handle the tools reliably. Moreover, the people completing the task have to sometimes realise customer orders. The steps implemented are finally documented.
People responsible: The task is guided and/or completed by a lead worker/trainer who is technically qualified (mostly carpenters or upholsterers). General staff members (e.g. semi-skilled or unskilled individuals) complete simple subtasks.
Peculiarities: The task was identified in five of the countries involved. It was not analysed in the UK and Finland.

8. The task »selling the furniture« involves that first, the product has to be registered and the price has to be fixed. The product is classified according to in-house standards, registered in an EDP system (the product, its price and the time it is on sale in the shop are documented) and labelled with a price. Furthermore, it is also part of the task to place the goods decoratively in the sales room. Parts of the selling process are also sales conversation and customer service. People completing this task have to be open-minded and oriented towards customers and service by all means. Especially pricing the goods (assessing and calculating their quality and demand) and customer service are challenging requirements. In some businesses, products that could not be sold are sorted out after a certain time predefined in-house (e.g. after four weeks max.) and are transferred to disposal.
People responsible: It is not essential to have special knowledge for selling furniture, although it is an advantage, if there is special knowledge. The task does not require previous knowledge which means general staff members (e.g. semi-skilled and unskilled people) complete it. Lead workers/trainers supervise the process, they need special knowledge.
Peculiarities: Not all of the companies analysed worked with EDP-aided systems. In Bulgaria and Finland, EDP systems were not used. Furniture is not sorted out in the UK.

9. In some of the companies, the »delivery of sold furniture« is part of the working processes. If desired by the customer, the pieces bought are delivered for an amount of money that reflects the expenses. Goods are loaded and secured for transport ac-

cording to the regulations of loading and transport. The following devices are provided for it: Truck/transport vehicle, forklift truck/hand forklift truck and strap equipment. The driver has to coordinate him-/her carefully with material planning as he/she gets the orders from there. In some countries, a navigation system is provided for the driver. All regulations for loading have to be abided by and the goods have to be transported carefully in order to protect them from being damaged. It is a precondition that the employed is able to handle the tools for transport and loading reliably. Order documents, if used, have to be filled in appropriately.
People responsible: Depending on the company, the task is either completed by lead workers (trained drivers) and/or general staff members (semi-skilled or unskilled individuals). The one doing the job has to have the right to drive the corresponding vehicle of transport (truck licence, if needed) because this is a legal precondition.
Peculiarities: It was identified that in Finland order documents were not used. Navigation systems were not identified as being used in Slovenia and Finland.

3.2 Core operating processes and tasks in the business area of »books and CDs«

The area of business »books and CDs« involves the purchase and sale of such products as books, CDs, DVDs/videos and partly also records and games consoles/computer games. An overview of the core operating processes of the area of business is presented in Figure 2. At the beginning of these processes there is marketing and purchasing or the acquisition of goods, respectively besides general administrative processes that exist in every area of business. Goods are purchased in two different ways in the field of books as well as in the field of audio media. On the one hand, products are bought directly in the shop itself from private sellers and on the other hand, larger amounts of goods are picked up at a time from e.g. liquidations or private collections. Whereas goods in the shop itself are bought directly by the sales staff, larger amounts are acquired by members of staff who know the market and the source of supply extremely well. In general, material planning is closely linked to the acquisition of goods which are purchased in a greater number. Besides carrying with the suppliers and watching the market, purchasing has to be planned logistically and transport has to be organised.

The ones responsible for purchasing verify the quality of the goods before actually buying them no matter what way they are acquired. Books and audio media are checked for damage, dirt and completeness. Finally the purchasing price is fixed depending on the state the goods are in.

After having purchased and glanced over the goods they are pre-sorted in view of the working processes to come. Intact items go directly to sale. If larger amounts of goods are bought or if there are many items of the same product in stock they are stored temporarily provided they are intact. In turn, goods with small deficiencies are first of all reconditioned. Reconditioning is mainly done in the field of audio media. Goods are visually verified and then technically (e.g. CDs are rubbed clean) and optically (e.g. CD covers are exchanged) prettified. In the context of second hand books, however, cleaning their covers is what is done maximally to prettify the product, for deficiencies like damaged or missing pages cannot be done away with. As soon as the goods are reconditioned they are

directly transferred to disposal or, again, are temporarily stored appropriately. In sales various tasks come up which are very closely related to others. Thus, goods are registered after certain defined criteria here and selling prices are fixed. After that, the goods are displayed and arranged in the shop (mostly according to certain predefined criteria like e.g. different styles of music for CDs or groups of subjects for books) in order to then sell them there is no need to say that customer service is included in the selling process.

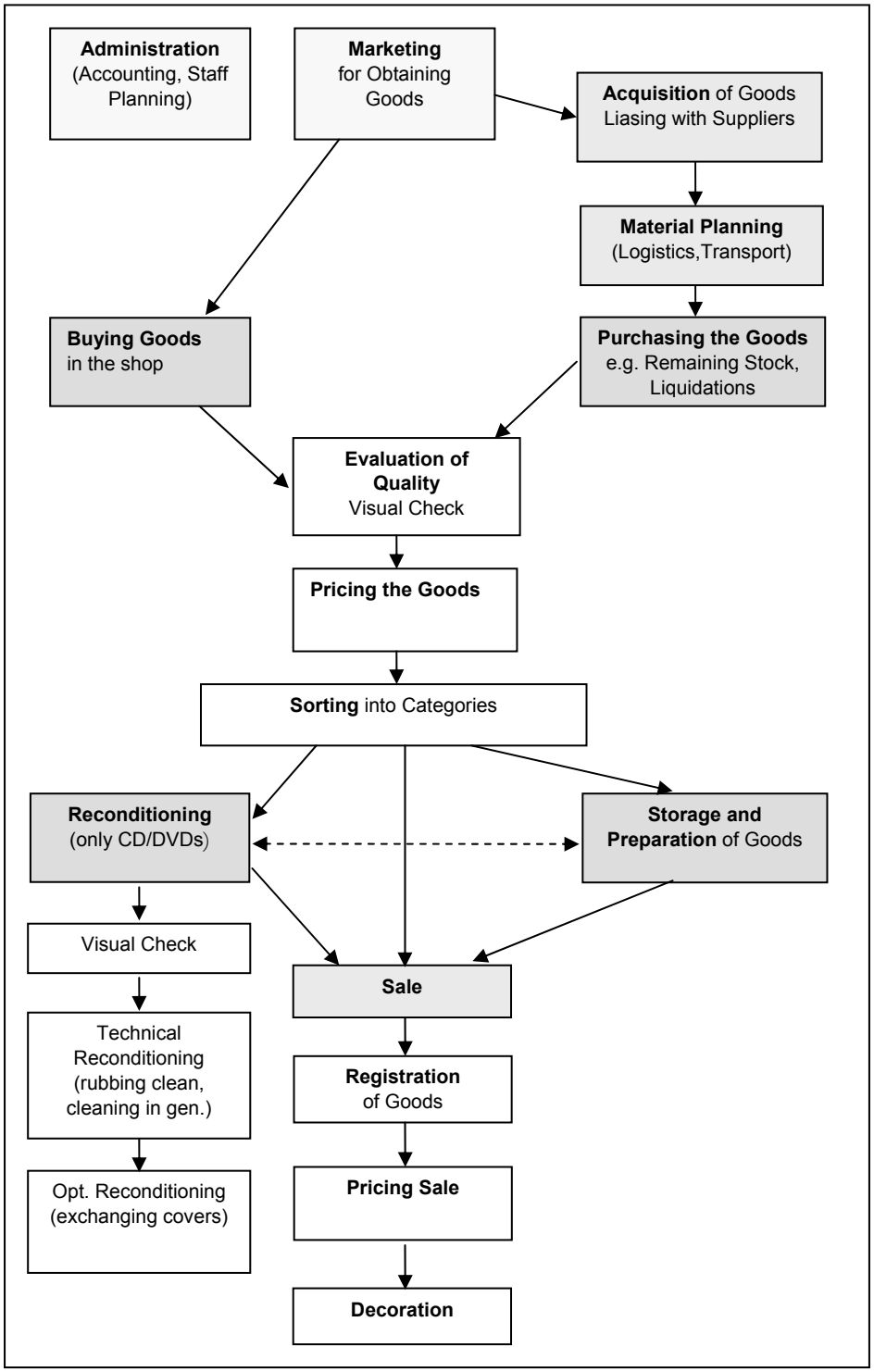

Fig. 2 Operating processes in the business area of »books/CD« in the second-hand sector

The result of the more detailed analysis of the working processes identified is a list of six working tasks which present the core working tasks in the area of business of »books and CDs« in the second-hand sector:

1. First, we identified »staff planning or administering commercial tasks«. This task involves the activity of organising the members of staff on the one hand. By planning staff carefully, processes between the different fields of work like purchasing, storage and sales are more likely to operate smoothly. Working plans, tasks and times are co-ordinated and fixed with the members of staff. In addition to this, new staff members are selected and the training process is organised or taken over by experienced members. Handling the commercial tasks of administration is as well part of the task. The aim is to deal with e.g. money that is coming in and going out, and payroll accounting quickly and correctly. Up-to-date PC systems for accounting, tax declaration etc. are used in order to prepare the relevant commercial documents. It is important to have excellent commercial knowledge, good organising abilities as well as communicative skills for completing this task.
   People responsible: The task is completed mainly by staff working on management level due to the rather challenging requirements.

2. The task »advertising efforts« on the one hand aims at acquiring new suppliers (private individuals or commercial customers) who provide the business with goods and, on the other hand at winning new customers who buy the goods on offer. Moreover, existing good relations with customers and suppliers should be tightened. Purchasing and selling the goods is assured by making advertising efforts in different media. The working task involves the organisation and the design of newspaper ads, internet commercials, poster advertising and in some cases even radio and cinema advertising.
   People responsible: This task is completed mainly by staff working at management level due to the rather challenging requirements. Simple subtasks are completed also by general staff members (e.g. semi-skilled and unskilled individuals).

3. The »acquisition of suppliers« aims at providing a choice or range of products which is orientated on the demand. In acquisition, various media (trade journals, newspapers, advertising and internet) are studied for adequate sale of goods, for liquidations or sales from remaining stock. Or familiar suppliers are called. It is necessary to watch the market continuously in this regard. Available offerings have to be balanced with the current range of products (e.g. to clarify whether there is a demand or not). The task involves also getting in touch with suppliers and maintaining the relationship. To complete it successfully, soft skills are required on the one hand and on the other, it is also important to be strongly orientated towards and pay the customer a lot of attention.
   People responsible: In the second hand businesses management usually complete the task.

   Peculiarities: This task was not identified in the UK.

4. The task »Planning of incoming goods« follows the acquisition process and involves receiving supplier offerings, supplier visits, organisation and realisation of transport as well as processing the orders. Supplier data is saved by means of up-to-date PC programs or in a handwritten way. The offerings are – after having identified them in newspaper advertisements, on the internet and so on – verified via the telephone and supplier visits are agreed upon and coordinated where appropriate. The order is

processed at the supplier if the product on offer suits the product range (see task 5 »purchasing goods«). Finally it is transported to the shop.
People responsible: This task is completed by individuals of the management level and in parts also by those of the general staff level (depending first and foremost on their capabilities).

5. The task »purchasing goods« involves a quality check of the goods on offer, fixing the purchasing price and sorting the CDs/DVDs or books, respectively. The purchasing person has to decide whether the goods are of interest to the company, what their quality is, what the market prices of the goods are and what price span would be realistic for purchasing taking into account all criteria. The process of purchasing is a key task within the working task. The amount and the type of the products a second hand business offers depend on this task in the end. The price is determined depending on what the result of the quality check is. Every piece on offer is evaluated (if possible piece by piece) by taking a look on it, by checking it for completeness and by verifying the ownership. When the goods are bought they have to be evaluated. It has to be clarified whether it is an individual item, if it is complete, deficient or not saleable at all. Goods are rejected if in-house quality standards are not met. Verification and visual check take place either in the shop or at the supplier's depending on the organisation.
When deciding on the price in the purchasing process the margin of profit has to be taken into account. Good knowledge about the second hand trade regarding the product to be bought and about its value is essential. Experience is also really important for pricing. Some companies are able to fall back on the fact that they dispose of an inventory control system which is helpful for pricing: the data recorded gives an idea of what the price roughly should be. In addition to this, research is done on the internet or in other shops or stores if necessary. For completing the task it is first and foremost »technical« knowledge about the products and about allocating them to certain subject areas which is required. In case of larger amounts the buyer has to calculate a certain price margin within which negotiations with the supplier takes place.
After goods are evaluated the purchasing person negotiates with the supplier about the price. If agreement is reached, the data of the supplier is recorded, the receipt is made out and the price is paid. After the goods are bought they are sorted with regard to quality and then transferred. Depending on the state they are in and on market demand in general they are stored temporarily (if a storehouse is available) or transferred to be sold directly. The one responsible for purchasing has to know the range of products available and the storage capacity.

   People responsible: Large amounts of goods that cost a lot of money are mostly bought by a purchasing person in the business itself. Daily purchasing is mainly realised by experienced general staff members (amongst others also semi-skilled and unskilled individuals). Criteria for quality as well as the quality check is realised by management, lead worker or the purchasing person.

   Peculiarities: No storage facilities were identified in Finland and the UK. In one case study CDs/DVDs were outsourced to other companies for reconditioning (rubbing). This work step was only identified in Germany, however. In the other countries, goods were not technically reconditioned.

6. The task »selling the goods« involves fixing the price, arranging and sorting the products as well as the actual process of selling. Goods are listed in an inventory control

system if available, the price is fixed and then the corresponding products are labelled. Prices are calculated the same way as in the purchasing stage based on experience on the one hand, and research about prices in the market, on the other: this information is retrieved by means of an archive, the internet or similar sources (stores, other second hand shops). Designing the sales floor and sorting the goods are important subtasks. It is crucial to orientate oneself strongly towards the customer and service in general for completing the selling process successfully. Specific knowledge of the relevant market (books, CD/DVD: styles of music, movies, PC games) is favourable in the context of customer service, it not absolutely needed though and is often gained only in the course of time on the job. The task ended with selling and operating the point of sale system.

People responsible: The task only requires little technical knowledge (calculating the prices are related closely to the specified sources of information) and is therefore completed by general staff members. Orientation towards the customer and towards service in general as well as customer service are key qualities in sales whereas technical knowledge only plays a minor role.

3.3 Core operating processes and tasks in the business area of »electrical and electronic devices«

The business area of »electrical and electronic devices« used smaller and bigger electrical and electronic devices (e.g. white goods), computer and computer equipment as well as office equipment which is accepted, collected, disassembled, repaired and resold. Figure 3 presents an overview of the core working processes in the business area of »electrical and electronic devices.

All in all the business area is characterized by a variety of technical tasks (especially with regard to repair). The acquisition of electrical appliances is the first step in the working process. The next step is goods are obtained and transported to the business. Taking the order and preparing transport is part of the acquisition process. The products are pre-sorted in the business according to their type (e.g. a distinction is made between white, grey or brown goods) and at the same time the initial state is evaluated in order to determine the working steps to follow. Then a decision is made about whether to repair the device or to disassemble it depending on its quality. When repairing it, deficiencies are eliminated and spare parts are exchanged in order to improve its condition so that it works and is saleable. If repairing is ruled out it is a possibility that the device is disassembled into individual parts depending on the market situation.

These parts are then meant to be sold as spare parts. These are also verified, repaired and stored. If it is neither an option to repair the device nor to take out the spare parts, it is disassembled into its individual parts and is recycled and disposed according to the current environmental regulations. The parts gained for recycling are sold according to the market price. In the last step of the area of business, the repaired devices and spare parts are stored and transferred to sales. The goods are sold according to the business' concept in a shop/store or on the internet. The respective concept leads to different working tasks: customer care or preparation of shipping.

The working processes identified can be divided into eight working tasks. These tasks can be referred to as core working tasks in the business area of »electrical and electronic devices« in the second-hand sector:

1. The task »acquiring the devices« involves obtaining orders to pick up electric devices and dispose other electric devices in collections or on-site points of acceptance. New suppliers should be attracted to hand over electronic appliances by means of different media like flyers, leaflets, newspapers, internet, but also through personal contacts or special networks.
   People responsible: The task is completed by individuals working at management level.

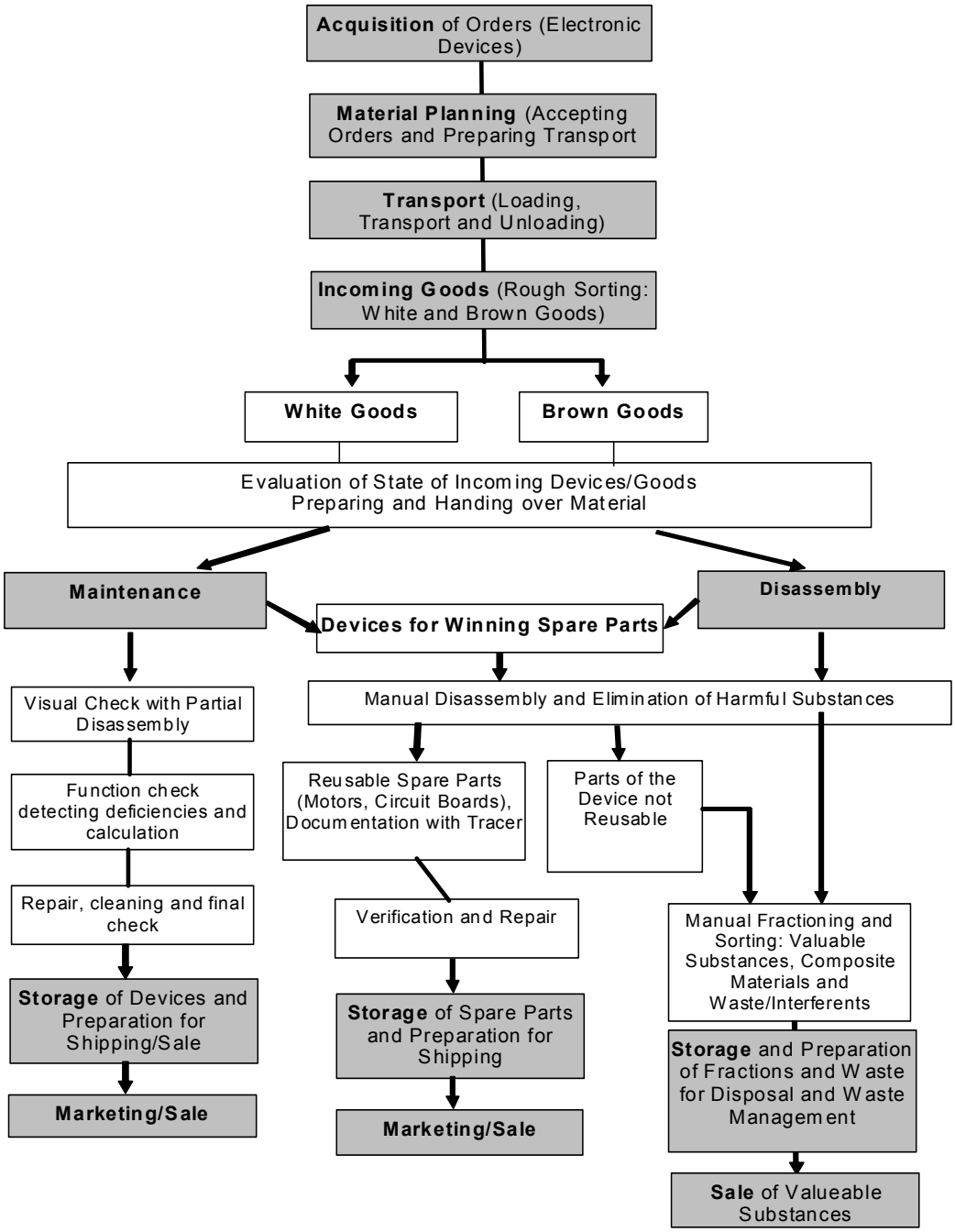

Fig. 3 Operating processes in the business area of »electrical and electronic devices« in the Second- Hand sector

2. The task »planning the pick-up of the devices« involves that the inquiries made by suppliers who want their goods to be picked up are accepted and that the viewing as well as the transport of the devices is prepared and organised. Pick-up and reception of the devices is registered (provided they are accepted) by means of order and transport documents (if available). Customer data, destination and amount of material have to be entered into these documents. The members of staff have to coordinate themselves with the area responsible for transport in order to plan and implement the transport successfully.
   People responsible: The task is completed by individuals working at the management level.

3. The »transport of second hand devices« task involves all executive work directly related to transport. Therefore, included are the loading of the goods on board, the transport itself (abiding by the regulations of loading and transport) and the unloading process at destination. After having planned these steps, the ones responsible drive to the supplier and put the appliances on board the vehicle of transport to make sure they are transported safely to the destination/business. Transport and loading regulations have to be abided by and transport and loading devices (forklift truck, lifting truck and strap equipment) have to be handled reliably. In parts, certain boxes or devices for storage (wire metal boxes or skids) have to be provided. Devices have to be loaded and transported in a very careful, space-saving manner.
   After loading, the appliances are transported with a suitable vehicle (truck, transporters etc.). The legal requirements of the respective country regarding road safety and transport/safety regulations have to be abided by. The vehicle used has to be roadworthy and registered. The aim is to ensure transporting the goods carefully abiding by the regulations of transport.
   At the destination, the appliances are unloaded taking into account the in-house processes of the organisation. To some extent, the appliances are stored temporarily. Goods should be unloaded taking good care of the material. Tools that are provided are amongst other things forklift truck and hand forklift truck. Order documents have to be filled in after unloading and passed on when completed.
   People responsible: The task is completed by general staff members (e.g. semi-skilled and unskilled individuals). A driver's licence for the respective vehicle of transport is an essential precondition.
   Peculiarities: In Austria, this task was not identified.

4. The task »reception of used electronic devices« involves the rough sorting and the verification of the state the goods are in as well as preparing the devices for the working steps to follow. The reception people evaluate the used devices coming in (only applicable for profit-oriented businesses). The devices are identified by looking at them (brown or white appliances), they are labelled and transported for further treatment, or prepared for being stored temporarily. In some businesses helpful tools like order documents, in-house supply notes or EDP-aided order management systems are provided. In some cases, the appliances are function checked for the first time already in the moment of arrival. This is due to the fact that especially those companies orientated on profit often only buy devices that are actually working. Also fixing the price is only possible taking into account the respective state the devices are in on the one hand, and the market, on the other.
   Not-for-profit businesses sort the devices according to the state they are in. The value of the device is determined taking into account its functional capability, the resale

value and the estimated amount of repair. After having fixed the price, devices are sorted regarding respective processes to follow (repair, the acquisition of spare parts or disassembly). Partly it is necessary to store the devices temporarily in wire metal boxes, containers or on shelves in consideration of the safety regulations. After that, the sorted appliances are transferred for further treatment to the different areas by means of transport devices and boxes. It is important to label the appliances precisely for this. Close coordination with the areas to follow is indispensable.
People responsible: The task is quite challenging, because specific technical knowledge (e.g. when verifying the initial state of the devices and their functioning) is required. Therefore, it is completed by individuals at the lead worker/trainer level. General staff members (e.g. semi-skilled and unskilled individuals) implement the criteria for sorting and testing and are involved in subtasks like temporary storage and the acquisition of spare parts which are disassembled in most of the businesses.

5. The »disassembly of used devices« task involves the disassembly of the appliances, the removal of contaminated parts and the grouping of the different parts into those that are recyclable (quality of valuable substance), into secondary raw materials and into waste. The parts have to be told apart, the material has to be sorted correctly and the legal requirements for pollutant extraction have to be met. Tools provided for disassembly are workbench, conveyor belt, air torque screwdriver, wire metal boxes/containers, boxes for contaminated parts and also common tools (hammer, screw driver, pliers). Besides using the tools in a reliable way it is important to remove the contaminated parts carefully without damaging them. The level to which a certain device is taken apart is determined in consideration of economic aspects: the parts that are reusable are withdrawn (reusable parts are e.g. motors, circuit boards). The information about where the part came from and part number are documented or written on a tracer. The overall target of this task is the efficient and unmixed materials recovery.
People responsible: The task is completed by general staff members (e.g. semi-skilled and unskilled individuals).
Peculiarities: In Bulgaria, this task was not identified at all and in Austria, only the not-for-profit businesses had it.

6. The »second hand devices repair« task is a very challenging one with regard to the technical skills the ones responsible have to have and also requires a lot of experience in the field in order to be able to repair and maintain the wide variety of different types of appliances in the most efficient way possible. The function check starts by finding out if it is the case that the product is broken, leaking or cabled the wrong way. For this purpose, it has to be partly disassembled. After that, a quick and reliable function check by means of checking and diagnostic devices is carried out. The ones responsible fall back on the producer's documents available (e.g. operating manuals). Different testing concepts are being implemented (amongst other things VDE (German Association for Electrical, Electronic and Information Technologies) and voltage test) and defined measurements depending on the type of device (e.g. motor power for white goods) are carried out. The deficiencies are registered and necessary repair is done. If a device has to be repaired the expense for repair has to be calculated beforehand to make sure it is worth it depending on the possible price it could be sold at. If it is repaired the worn or broken parts are exchanged and other ones (new if needed) are installed. For that purpose standard tools, service and repair documents, technical information, work sheets if available, the internet and special tools are used. The pur-

chase of new spare parts has to be weighed up against the possible resale price. The aim is to re-establish the functioning of the product in consideration of the economic framework conditions. Due to the fact that in the context of commercial sales of used electronic appliances it is required by law to give one year of warranty, a product is only repaired if it is actually possible to give a warranty. Therefore devices have to meet a minimum standard. In the end, its functioning is tested and it is finally checked as a whole.
People responsible: The ones responsible for this task are individuals at the lead worker/trainer level, because it is quite challenging and very profound technical knowledge (regarding the repairing and maintaining processes as well as determining the resale value) is absolutely necessary. General staff members (e.g. semi-skilled and unskilled individuals) work in this field when they are being asked to do so, they assist and support and do routine work.
Peculiarities: in Austria, function checks were only identified in the not-for-profit businesses.

7. The task »storing the spare parts/electronic devices« involves the repaired devices and the functioning or repaired spare parts being stored in a space-saving manner according to a storage plan, using forklift trucks, wire metal boxes, skids, containers and shelves. The inventory is documented regularly – in parts by means of an EDP system. The storage and supply of the sorted parts and waste parts, until they are recycled and disposed, is related to the working task. If old appliances or spare parts are called up (e.g. when being sold on the internet) they have to be prepared for shipping (if the respective business is offering the service) or for being sold directly (shop or store). Methods of transport have to be handled reliably while storing or removing the devices. It is possible to identify and call up the repaired devices quickly if the stock is administered well.
People responsible: The task does not require much technical knowledge and is thus completed by general staff members (e.g. semi-skilled and unskilled individuals).
Peculiarities: In Austria, the task was only identified in the not-for-profit businesses.

8. The working task »marketing of spare parts, repaired devices and valuable substances« presents the last step of the area of business. It aims at selling the repaired devices and spare parts and at recycling the usable parts. The used spare parts offered for sale (e.g. motors), the electronic devices (e.g. white or brown goods) or valuable substances (e.g. metal, copper and plastics) are registered in an inventory control system, if available. Prices have to be fixed following the market price and in consideration of the costs for repair. When offering the products on the internet pictures have to be uploaded and the device has to be described on the relevant site. Different media like digital cameras or computers have to be operated in this context. If an order is received via the internet (telephone/PC), the one responsible in the storehouse has to be told, because shipping is organised via that place. The repaired appliances are sometimes delivered and installed at the customer's. In order to increase sales ads are taken out in the newspapers or on the internet and flyers or emails are distributed. Besides, networks are being established for strengthening relations with customers or for winning new ones.
People responsible: Responsibility for the marketing activities is with the lead worker/trainer level, and also partly with the management. General staff members (e.g. semi-skilled and unskilled individuals) are asked to complete subtasks in this context.

Peculiarities: In Austria, selling valuable substances was not identified to be part of this task.

3.4 Core operating processes and tasks in the business area of »textiles«

In the business area of »textiles« all sorts of textile products are being accepted, collected, partly bought and, depending on the organisation, cleaned and given out again or sold, respectively. Figure 4 presents an overview of the core working processes in the area of business »textiles«.

Significant differences were identified between the profit and not-for-profit enterprises in this business area. Whereas the profit-oriented enterprises only accept textiles which are of good quality (textiles which are ready for sale without having to be cleaned or mended), not-for-profit enterprises also accept goods that to some extent have to be cleaned or mended.

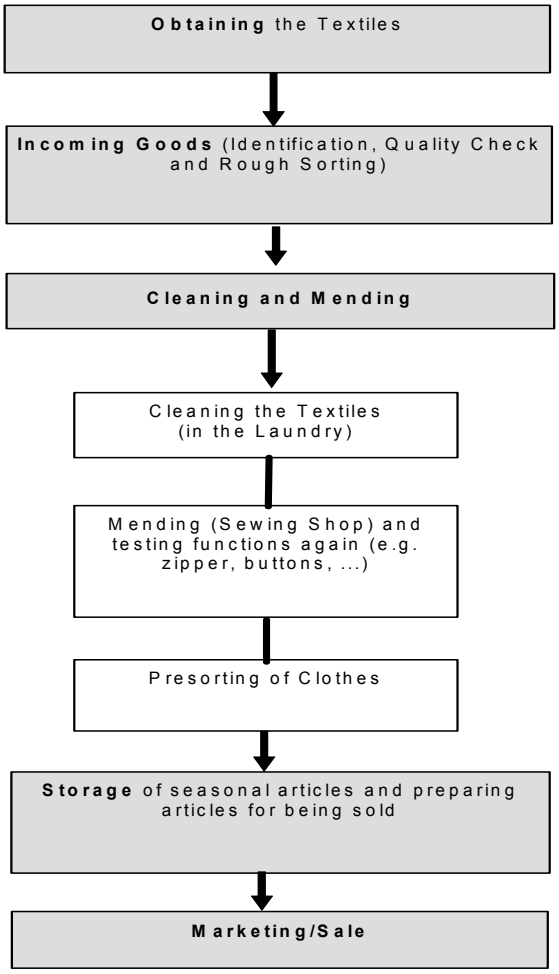

Fig. 4 Overview of the operating processes in the business area of »textiles« in the second-hand sector

There are several ways in which textiles get to a second hand business. In part, the goods are picked up directly at the customer's or are taken to the business by the supplier. There, a quality check and rough sorting takes place. The task of cleaning and mending is only

completed in some businesses. Depending on the capacities the sorted and mended textiles are stored temporarily (e.g. seasonal goods). After that, the goods are displayed, hung up and arranged in the shop (mostly according to certain predefined criteria like e.g. male or female clothing, clothes for children/type of article) in order to then sell them whereas customer service is included in the selling process.

When analysing the working processes in the business area of »textiles« in the second-hand sector, seven core working tasks were identified:

1. The focus for the working task »obtaining textiles« varies regarding the business' concept. The main target is to acquire donations or to purchase textiles in order to make sure enough products are on offer. Gaining new suppliers – no matter if they donate or sell the textiles – is in the centre of the task. It is important to weigh the amount of donations/purchases obtained against the improvement of the quality of the donations/purchases or the acquisition of specific goods (e.g. seasonal goods), respectively. By means of different media like flyers, leaflets, postcards or the internet, certain target groups are addressed (and preferably should be predefined). In doing so, the respective medium, the contents and size of the ads as well as the orders for designing them have to be organised and supervised. In this context both, being in contact with the customers personally and keeping networks alive are decisive things to bear in mind. This is a challenging task focusing on public relations which coins the image of the company altogether.
   People responsible: The management is responsible for obtaining textiles. General staff members (e.g. semi-skilled and unskilled individuals) are being supportive regarding the completion of the task.
   The two operating tasks to follow such as »transport of goods« and »picking up the goods« were only identified in some of the businesses analysed in Bulgaria.
2. The task »planning the transport of goods« involves accepting new orders and coordinating them with logistics. In case of an inquiry the destination as well as the state the goods are in and their amount have to be identified before deciding whether the order is acceptable or not. Selling inquiries are coordinated and thus turned into real orders. Then they are passed on to the transport section by means of an order document. Transport and order documents are used for documentation and order processing.
   People responsible: The transport of goods is planned by members of staff of the management level.
3. When picking up the goods has been planned, textiles are actually transported. This next step is the operating task called »picking up the goods«. The order document is the basis for the pick-up. The textiles are picked up after having been looked at. Textiles have to be loaded in a space-saving manner and carefully, protecting them from being damaged. Finally, they have to be secured for transport. For the process of transport itself it is necessary that the vehicle (truck/transport vehicle) is registered and roadworthy. All (national) legal requirements regarding road safety and the regulations of transport/safety have to be abided by. Also it has to be driven in a reliable way. The goods are unloaded on the premises of the business. Order documents have to be dealt with accordingly and the pick-up has to be coordinated with the ones responsible for the processes prior to and after this one. It is either the ones responsible for planning or the employee himself/herself to deal with planning the route. In several businesses navigation systems are provided. For the goods picked

up directly at the customer's, customer contact and the attitude of the employee are really important for the image of the company.
People responsible: Due to the fact that the task is not very challenging, it is completed by general staff members (e.g. semi-skilled and unskilled individuals). The driver's licence for the vehicle of transport is the most important precondition for completing this task.
Peculiarities: In Finland textiles are not picked up straight at customers, they are picked up at general container sites where people bring them to or they bring them straight to shops.

4. The task »accepting the goods« involves evaluating the textiles' quality, grouping and rough sorting them as well as preparing and handing them over to the areas to follow. After unloading or accepting the goods, their future usability is determined. This is being done according to in-house criteria e.g. by defining categories like »new products«, »deficient products« and »products to be passed on to people in need« (e.g. developing countries, humanitarian aid). By looking at the textiles and by testing their functions the cleanliness and functionality (e.g. of zippers and buttons) is verified. By this means, quality is evaluated for the first time. The goods are sorted according to the state they are in and get an in-house accompanying document which helps transferring them to the different points of disposal or treatment. Baskets, cardboard boxes or bundles are used for this. The sorted goods have to be kept separated and must be allocated to the right boxes. These have to be labelled correctly afterwards.
People responsible: The task is completed by general staff members (e.g. semi-skilled and unskilled individuals) and is coordinated by lead workers or trainers, respectively.
Peculiarities: The sorting into different categories described was not identified in Slovenia, the UK and Austria.

5. The task »cleaning and mending the textiles« involves several subtasks which are completed, depending on the company, in different areas. At first, textiles are cleaned in the laundry. For cleaning these textiles the following tools and helpful devices are provided: washing machine, dryer and detergent. After cleaning the textiles are looked at again in order to determine the work steps to follow (mending, ironing). If a product has to be sewn, repaired or fixed, it is done in the sewing shop. Therefore the expense for repair has to be estimated in the beginning. If a piece is not worth of being mended it has to be disposed of. Sewing machines, scissors, yarn and replacement parts are provided for sewing, mending and fixing. After mending the piece of textile, it is checked again and if quality is good, it is transferred to the next step: ironing. After that, textiles are pre-sorted according to certain criteria (textiles for children, shoes, summer/winter clothes, size etc.).
People responsible: The task does not require much technical skills and is thus completed by general staff members (e.g. semi-skilled or unskilled individuals). It is coordinated and guided by lead workers or trainers, respectively.
Peculiarities: Textiles are only cleaned in Bulgaria, some organisations in the UK and Germany. Textiles were identified to be only mended in Germany and Bulgaria and in Austria, but here only if the textiles are very exclusive. In Slovenia, textiles were not pre-sorted in final verification.

6. The operating task »storing and providing the textiles« involves that certain textiles (e.g. seasonal goods) are stored in cardboard boxes, baskets, boxes and bundles until they are sold (depending on the time of year, the up-to-datedness). Goods should be

stored in a space-saving manner and also documented in a storage plan to ensure their transparency and availability.
People responsible: The task is completed by general staff members (e.g. semi-skilled and unskilled individuals) due to the fact that it does not require much technical knowledge.

7. The whole working process of the business area is completed with »marketing the textiles«. This task involves selling and handing out the textiles to the end customer. First, textiles are registered in an inventory control system or in a handwritten way and then, they are labelled for being sold. For labelling and registering the goods in the inventory control system their value has to be estimated by means of fixing a price. Textiles are sorted into the products already on offer after that and are displayed for sale. All in all, the sales floor has to be prepared adequately and different merchandising activities have to be carried out where appropriate (seasonal offerings). In this context, it is really important to have commercial skills for fixing the prices and a strong orientation towards both, customers and service. Moreover, the inventory control and point of sale systems (incl. billing) have to be dealt with in a reliable and correct way.
People responsible: The task is completed by general staff members (e.g. semi-skilled and unskilled individuals) due to the fact that it does not require much technical knowledge. Responsibility and coordination is with the lead workers or the trainers.
Peculiarities: In Finland and the UK no inventory control system was identified.

3.5 Operating processes and tasks relevant for all areas of business

The analysis of the characteristic operating processes in the second-hand sector points out that there are working processes and tasks that are relevant for all areas of business. All businesses of the second-hand sector deal with

- obtaining donations/goods and customers,
- incoming goods
- outgoing goods

This is illustrated in figure 5 (blue areas). The three central operating processes mentioned here which were identified in all areas have similarities in addition to this.

A central operating process of the second-hand sector is accepting the goods, evaluating their quality, sorting and transferring them. These tasks have to be completed at the point where the goods come in all the businesses, no matter what area of business they belong to. The employees have to evaluate the goods' quality (this is done either before or after accepting them, depending on how it is organised), estimate the resale value (cost-benefit estimation) and determine their future purpose on the basis of this evaluation. In doing so, goods are put in different categories. These are: disposal/recycling, repair, storage, direct sale or reusage of parts. The categories differ depending on the area of business and the way the businesses are organised. Depending on the business concept different strategies and ways of organisation are pursued. This may also affect the processing steps to follow. The field of repair is, for reasons of economy, often only rudimentarily there or not even existing at all in profit-oriented businesses. Here, normally only high-quality goods are accepted for this reason. These businesses simply focus more on economic

aspects. Another difference to be mentioned in the context of the income of goods is to be found when looking more closely at what is involved in the tasks and what the technical skills are that are required for their completion. Different technical skills are relevant for the respective quality checks in the different areas. The skills required for evaluating CDs differ from those required for evaluating used electronic devices, textiles or furniture. The relevant differences will be explained in more detail in chapter 3.6. At this point we would like to mention that the operating process described is crucial for all businesses. Evaluating and sorting the goods affects the range of products available for sale enormously on the one hand, and the efficiency of the business, on the other.

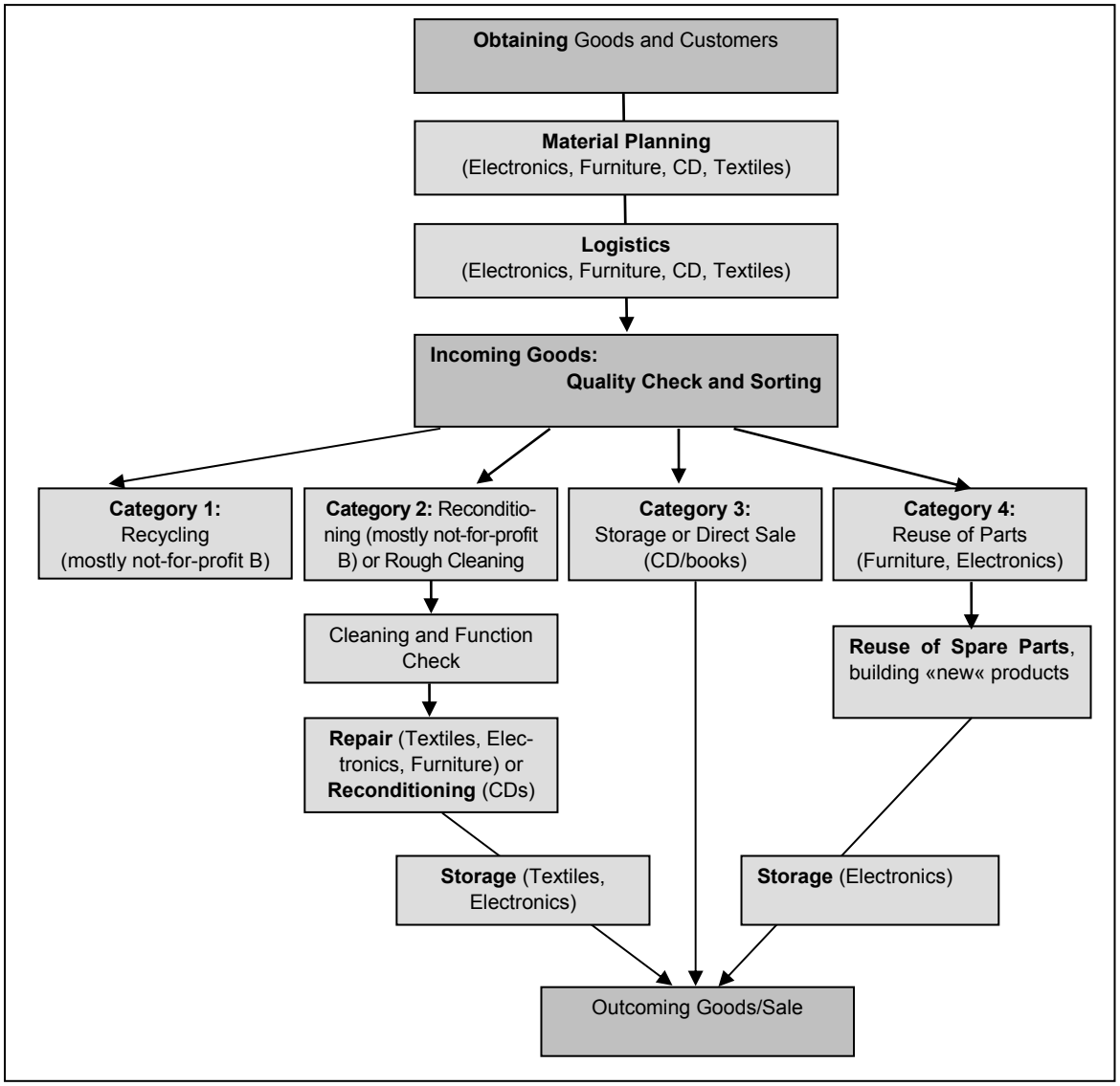

Fig. 5 Overview of the operating processes and tasks in the second-hand sector identified on the basis of case studies

A second, fundamental process in the second-hand sector which is identified in all areas of business relates to the outgoing goods. It includes fixing the prices, registering the goods, their presentation and selling as such. For selling, different tasks have to be completed. The resale price of the goods has to be determined and entered into a system (partly this is done by means of an EDP-aided inventory control system). For selling the goods successfully they have to be presented to the potential customer in an attractive

way. In addition to this, customer service and the actual sales conversation play an important role. Part of the selling task is also dealing with the point of sale system. Technical knowledge or knowing about the market is undoubtedly helpful for determining the price and for customer service, but it is not essential to know about these things for successful sales. All in all, the tasks that have to be completed by the members of staff in the selling context are very similar in the different areas of business. In addition to this, it appears that less technical knowledge is required for sale in general than for other tasks like repair/restoration.

3.6 Area-specific operating processes and tasks

The third shared operating process includes obtaining donations (not-for-profit businesses) or goods (profit-oriented businesses) and also customers to buy the goods. Depending on the concept of the business, the process also involves advertising activity in order to obtain donations or to acquire goods. Potential donors or sellers need to be informed about the possibility of handing in their possessions and have to be attracted to do so. It is a key challenge for second hand businesses to obtain goods which are of the highest quality possible. The goods that are obtained determine the range of products that will be sold. For this reason the target is to obtain goods that will be resold as quickly and efficiently as possible. Advertising activities for reselling the products were identified, too, for all the businesses and in different ways. This task only plays a minor role, however, in consideration of the main focus of the operating process. Area-specific operating processes and tasks

Besides the processes that are relevant for all areas of business, area-specific characteristics were identified, too. These come to the fore especially regarding the technical contents of the tasks. However, there are also structural differences in the operating processes. For the majority of businesses analysed[2] in the area of »textiles«, material planning and logistics do not play an essential role in the processes. In the other areas of business they are quite important. Another area-specific peculiarity is identified in the working processes and takes place after the incoming goods check. The similarities and peculiarities regarding the categories into which the goods are sorted and the tasks to result from them are presented in table 2. It becomes clear that »books/CD« is the only area of business in which products are not treated further at all or where treatment is outsourced (to another business). The same occurs in consideration of the area of electronic devices, only the acquisition of spare parts is identified here.

When analysing the tasks and comparing what is involved in them from area to area it becomes clear that they differ quite a lot. This is reflected in the technical requirements which differ a lot, too. The task »incoming goods« for example involves quality verification. For this verification the functioning, the resale value and the repair expenses of furniture, textiles, electronic devices or books/CDs have to be estimated. Various technical skills are helpful or sometimes even necessary in this context. According to this, require-

[2] The analysed businesses in Bulgaria are an exception in this context, however. Logistics and material planning are part of the working process there.

ments for completing the tasks differ and depend on the subject or area of business, respectively. Also with regard to disassembly/recycling remarkable peculiarities are identified when comparing the areas of business. In the areas »books/CD« and »textiles« no goods are accepted for example – if possible – that actually should be disposed of.

Area of business	**CATEGORIES of Sorting**				
Furniture	No Treatment	Repair, Restoration			Recycling
Books/CD	No Treatment	(Treatment outsourced)		Storage	
Electronic devices		Maintenance, Repair	Acquisition of Spare Parts		Recycling
Textiles	No Treatment	Reconditioning, Mending, Cleaning		Storage	

Table 2 Comparison of the categories into which the goods are sorted (after areas of business)

In the businesses which provide maintenance/cleaning/repair, tasks also vary depending on the area they have to be completed for. For maintaining and repairing different electronic appliances very good technical skills are required. These differ fundamentally from the skills that are required for restoring or for building new furniture from old furniture parts. These two tasks also vary entirely from what is required of somebody who sees to mending and cleaning textiles. In turn »Books/CD« are not repaired or treated at all. Rubbing CDs/DVDs clean is the only exception. This task is outsourced, however, according to the businesses analysed and is therefore not really a task in the area »CD/DCD«.

The storage of goods is important in the three areas of business »textiles«, electronic devices« and »CD/books«. The area »furniture« is an exception in this context. With regard to storing the goods, no tasks are identified which show area-specific (technical) peculiarities i.e. the storage of textiles, electronic devices or CDs follows similar criteria and requires the same skills. The transport of goods (pick-up or delivery) was identified in the areas of business »textiles«, »electronic devices« and »furniture« whereas in the area »CD/books«, transport was not essential. Tasks do not differ, transport is organised differently, however, depending on the goods.

The requirements behind the tasks do not only differ with respect to the area of business, but also with respect to the kind of business (profit or not-for-profit business). Profit-oriented businesses of all areas calculate a price when purchasing the goods. This increases the importance of the quality check for the goods that are offered quite essentially and points out also the possible need for technical knowledge. However, in the profit-oriented companies it is often only the goods of high quality that are accepted which

means that they do not have to be categorized that carefully. The same applies to the estimation of the expenses for repair. As a rule, repairing the goods is not an option.

The kind of business (orientated or not orientated to profit) is also important as the specific area in the context of the task »disassembly/disposal«. In the areas of »electronic devices« and »furniture« it is generally only the not-for-profit businesses which organise disposal. The situation is similar with regard maintenance/cleaning/repair. Most of the profit-oriented businesses evaluate the further processing of second hand goods unprofitable. In general, the whole operating process does not take place in these businesses.

4. Consequences for qualification in the second-hand sector

4.1 Need for sector-specific development of competences

The results of the analysis and the case studies carried out in the course of the project pointed out that the second-hand sector clearly has deficits in the field of qualification. Thus, only a few examples of qualifications were identified. These are mostly fitted individually to the demand of the individual business co-operations or networks (like e.g. in Belgium) and are generally not accessible for the businesses operating in the sector. Only in Germany, a few sector-specific offerings were identified, whereas these are very limited. Furthermore, it turned out that qualifications which are organised are only very seldom sector-specific and additionally – in case of the not-for-profit companies – do not aim at preparing staff for working in the second-hand sector exclusively, but generally for working in the job market. It turned out that the contents of the qualifications are generally not adapted to the peculiarities of the processes and tasks in the second-hand sector. The results of the case studies pointed out furthermore, that Europe is not only lacking adequate and sector-specific qualifications. It also turned out very clearly that both, the employed and the businesses really need qualification. Many businesses operating in the second-hand sector strive for further professionalisation and want to increase their quality. This comes along with the need for developing competences sector-specifically.

In the results of the case studies first starting points for the development of sector-specific qualification offers are recognised. Tasks were identified which, when taking a closer look, involved special requirements of the ones employed in the sector. The overlap between the competences required for completing the tasks and the competences required for working in other sectors cannot obscure the fact that the sector is characterized by some specific criteria. The special requirements should be met by means of a qualification concept which aims at supporting the employed in developing sector-specific competences.

One of the peculiarities of profit-orientated businesses is to be found in the area of purchasing or accepting the goods, respectively. By definition, all of the second hand businesses have in common that only used goods are traded there. It is therefore not possible for the respective businesses to purchase wholesale and order the needed amount of goods there for a fixed price and predefined quality standard which is the common procedure for businesses of the first-hand market. Therefore, planning what products will be on offer is hardly realizable and it is also hard to calculate things in the long run. The second hand businesses depend on the acquisition offerings which are made by private persons or commercial offers, e.g. liquidations, and also on the quality and quantity they get. The case studies pointed out that it is generally not a problem for the businesses to obtain enough products. They normally have no difficulties in getting offerings. By purchasing or accepting these, it is always possible to make sure the amount of goods on offer is big enough. Due to the fact that competition is getting tougher and customers nowadays also demand good quality for second hand products, mere quantity is not enough, however. The key factor for the success of a business operating in the sector is to offer products of a quality which is as high as possible. The fact that the quality of the products has to be

evaluated when they are acquired, always bearing in mind the fact that they have to be resold again, is specific and not found in any other sector.

Both, the acquisition and the evaluation of second hand goods are to be looked at from two different angles:

- On the one hand, second hand products are always offered in a different condition which means that every single piece possibly has to be looked at and evaluated before it is acquired.
- On the other hand, acquisition is connected with fixing a certain price which has to be determined relatively quickly bearing in mind the respective condition of the product, possible expenses for repair as well as the market.

The member of staff who acquires the product is assuming a lot of responsibility: his/her decisions take effect right away and cannot be called off because the acquisition is mostly connected to cash payment. The field of purchasing significantly adds to the success of especially the profit-oriented businesses. It is not only the products later being available for sale that are related to purchasing in this context (a fact that is valid for the not-for-profit businesses too), the respective businesses additionally often deal with considerable amounts of money in the purchasing process. Therefore, excellent skills of those working in the purchasing field are crucial especially for the profit-oriented businesses. So far, these skills are based on the experience of the individual and implicit (e.g. in order to understand the market for CDs/DVDs one has to have years of experience and a certain interest in the subject). Price negotiations are important in all areas, having to bear in mind the quality of the goods on offer (profit-oriented businesses only) and their current value on the market. It is also important, however, to generally make the right decision for or against the acquisition/accepting a product.

Due to the fact that the not-for-profit businesses mainly obtain their goods through donations, the responsibility people who estimate the price or negotiate it are bearing is relatively small. In many cases, all of the products that are handed in are also accepted. Evaluation and selection of high-quality and interesting second hand products does not take place before the goods come in, but when they are handed in or even after that. Then, they are sorted and the quality is evaluated and assessed. The expenses for repair have to be weighed against the estimated resale value (this is valid for the areas of electronic devices, furniture and textiles). The evaluation of the products is the basis for categorizing them as presented above (see table 2) and for transferring them to the processes to follow (e.g. disposal, maintenance, spare parts). The members of staff have to evaluate the goods quickly. This is why they have to know a lot about the incoming goods (quality and expense for repair), the in-house processes (costs for repair) and the market value (demand and resale price to be achieved). The member of staff has to be capable of assessing whether a product is stored or simply disposed especially when used textiles are of good quality, but in real need of being mended, and there are large amounts of goods in store. It is therefore important to have profound knowledge of the in-house structures, standards and working processes. It is also indispensable to coordinate oneself and communicate well with the operating fields to follow.

Repairing/restoring used goods is another sector-specific peculiarity which needs to be dealt with by somebody especially trained. Due to the fact that profit-oriented second hand businesses do not consider the repair of used goods being a profitable means (this is why mostly only goods coming in an excellent condition are accepted) this particularity was only identified for the not-for-profit businesses. In parts, very technical skills are required in order to be able to repair old electronic appliances, mend textiles and restore furniture. The sector-specific requirements in this regard are

- the evaluation of used goods bearing in mind the expenses for repair and the resale value and
- the dealing with a wide variety of used products.

The goods that are supposed to be repaired or restored and that have been transferred to the respective area are assessed again by the members of staff responsible there. The assessment takes place every now and then at certain points in the operating process because new information about the state the device is in is obtained in the process of repair, e.g. about the repair expense and the possible profit when reselling it. Members of staff do not only have to be technically skilled, i.e. dealing with the products and repairing them. They also have to evaluate them bearing in mind the possible in-house costs and the market value. In most European countries a warranty of one year has to be given when second hand electrical and electronic devices are resold. This also has to be included in the evaluation.

The second peculiarity with regard to repairing electronic devices, mending textiles or restoring furniture is about the type of product which is to be repaired. Due to the fact that members of staff deal with second hand products they have to be able to handle a wide variety of different products and brands and therefore have to have profound technical knowledge. This is especially true for the electronic and electrical devices area of business. New, digital devices have to be repaired here as well as devices from the 1920s. The special and profound technical knowledge needed for the completion of this task is particularly required in the second hand business. This means people working here have to develop sector-specific skills.

With regard to textiles, members of staff also have to be able to assess a wide variety of different qualities and conditions correctly. Due to the fact that in many cases clothes do not have their label attached anymore, the person working here has to be technically very skilled regarding the materials or the products as such for evaluating them.

The situation is similar in the area of »furniture«. Good knowledge about different eras and styles is needed in order to be able to evaluate the products well. However, people working in the areas of business mentioned last do not seem to have to deal with such big varieties of goods like the ones working in the area of second hand electronic devices. The quick development in the field of electronics led to the fact that new and old technologies are coexisting and thus, very different technical skills are required from the members of staff.

Besides the variety of sector-specific competences which come to life because of the peculiarities of second hand products, numerous other competences were identified which are required, too, e.g. in the field of administration and organisation or in selling as such.

These do not differ a lot from those needed for the first-hand sector. It was detected, however, that there is need for qualification also in this context. The main difference to the first-hand business is not found in the individual activities themselves, but in the peculiarity of the products as such and how to deal with them (e.g. how to present them in the shop) as well as in the particular clientele. Finally, it can be concluded that the second-hand sector requires many special skills and specific competences of its employees. The need for developing sector-specific qualifications arises clearly from the fact that the second hand market is expected to grow and that the individual businesses want to professionalise themselves and increase their quality in order to remain competitive within the sector as well as towards the market of first hand goods.

4.2 The importance of homogeneous quality standards in the context of qualification

The analysis showed that there are no homogeneous qualification opportunities or standards in the European second-hand sector, neither on a European nor on a national level nor sector-internally. If qualification approaches could be identified in the several partner countries, then the content and complexity of these approaches differed enormously within the individual countries. Respective qualification strategies as well as the individual qualifications as such are primarily orientated on the needs of the respective businesses and fitted to the deficits of the respective member of staff. Only very seldom are they sector-specific. The area, the size and the targets (oriented to profit/not-for-profit) of the businesses as well as their attitude towards supporting the development of their staff play an important role in the context of qualification opportunities. The qualification, its content, complexity and quality are left to the subjective evaluations of the businesses. If the respective qualification strategies (or qualifications, respectively) are provided, the businesses or networks which implemented them partly provide a framework (as regards content and method) for qualifications by defining quality standards. These standards help the members of staff as well as the businesses being a means of orientation.

The increased pressure for professionalisation and the high requirements for quality lead to a need for qualification which also arises out of the businesses themselves, out of the operating processes. The businesses operating in the sector realise more and more that highly qualified staff is the key for coming to terms with future challenges. Qualifications have to aim at preparing the members of staff for the challenges related to the pressure of qualification effectively and thus have to meet a predefined standard of quality. In doing so, entrepreneurial targets have to be connected with individual and social targets. Systematic qualification which would meet these standards is not assured by means of the current, sector-non-specific qualifying measures. Moreover, for the ones working in the sector, introducing quality standards would be favourable, too: their competences would be acknowledged (people working there often belong to the group of disadvantaged persons). By obtaining an acknowledged qualification future employment perspectives for the ones working in the sector as well as their mobility on the job market is increased. Last but not least, by obtaining a certified qualification the employed will identify more with the sector (especially the ones employed temporarily in the context of work programs of

not-for-profit businesses) which is favourable for the development of the whole sector. Homogeneous quality standards thus ensure comparability of qualifications all over Europe, strengthen the businesses in the sector as well as the ones employed and further their mobility. In addition to this, they create more transparency and reliability for both, the businesses and their employees.

The results obtained so far form the basis for the future development of homogeneous quality standards in the field of qualification in the second-hand sector in Europe. The results of the analyses show that in addition to the heterogeneous structures which are found in the sector and which have been hindering the development of certain standards so far, common ground is found, too. Thus, independently of the area of business or the company's focus on profit or not on profit, numerous operating processes and tasks were identified that all businesses of the sector have in common. These similarities offer possibilities for homogeneous qualification and the respective quality standards. This is not to be understood as »standardizing« means, however, which is neglecting or ignoring the differences in the sector. The technical skills which were identified in the different areas of business – especially those in the field of repair/maintenance – are part and parcel of high-quality qualification. In order to meet the needs of the whole sector, qualification has to start with the sector's common ground, but then has to address the respective peculiarities of the areas of business as well. Thus, the demands of the different businesses are met and an important basis concerning the various opportunities to work in the sector is created for the ones employed. This furthers the employability and the opportunities to work for the employees.

4.3 The creation of sector-specific qualification

Based on the study results and the core operating processes and tasks identified in the context of the analyses of the case studies, it is possible to develop a qualifying concept which is coordinated closely with the actual challenges and valid for all areas of business at the same time. In doing this, a quality standard is implemented which has not tried to be met in the second-hand sector so far – especially on the European level.

It is important that besides the empiric results, also the experiences made so far regarding the development and implementation of quality approaches are taken into consideration in the context of the second-hand sector. For example, the qualification module »shop assistant training« is a sector-specific training module directed towards the target group of disadvantaged people (it was implemented in Germany following this concept). The qualification is nevertheless orientated to the area of sales in second hand businesses. Thus, the qualification is relatively straight to the point and people are taught skills pointing in a certain direction. When regarding the contents of the training modules it also becomes obvious that the needs of the group of those who are disadvantaged on the job market are especially taken into account by also training them for job applications. Moreover, the approach does not take into consideration European targets. Another possible qualification approach for the sector is to be found in an effort made in Germany: the job specification »trained retail salesperson« was tried to be adapted to the second-hand sector by offering extra and alternative modules. It was not possible to integrate the idea into the

country's job training system, however. This points out that we should concentrate on the development of a Europe-wide further training profile when creating the first, Europe-wide, sector-specific qualification in the second-hand sector. Due to the fact that the qualifications required for working in the sector have various similarities with other occupational fields (trade, handicraft) it is possible that the next step could be the integration into existing job specifications of the occupational training system. Additionally, it is possible to verify whether the development of an independent job specification for the second-hand sector makes sense or not based on the experiences made in the context of developing and implementing a training profile.

All in all, the qualification to be developed in the framework of the »QualiProSecond-Hand« project should aim at extending the existing approaches with regard to quality, at including the needs of second hand businesses in Europe and at creating homogeneous standards. The respective qualification should be directed towards the ones already working in the sector and also towards persons who are not yet working in second hand businesses, but want to prepare themselves for a future field of activity. Establishing a sector-specific qualification contributes to the fact that the ones employed in the sector (the ones disadvantaged on the job market who take part in job programs of the not-for-profit businesses have to be mentioned in this context) are prepared better for the specific requirements and activities of the second hand industry. The concept of possible qualifications could either be to direct them towards the deficits or towards the potential.

The results of the analysis have shown that the contents of sector-specific qualifications can be mediated taking the similarities of operating processes and tasks of the different areas of business as a starting point, but that also the different areas of business have to be dealt with separately. Dealing with these areas separately could be integrated into a common training profile for the whole sector. A first overview of the required contents and the set-up of a training profile is presented in figure 6. The training profile shows that some of the content could be summarized for all areas of business whereas for tasks that require very technical skills contents of the qualification differ from area to area (marked in grey).

The administration of all the business processes does not require any product-specific knowledge and is, as regards content, likewise relevant for all areas of business: commercial and communicative skills as well as the ability to organise are put to the fore. The situation is similar with regard to acquiring goods and customers, organising the goods income and purchasing or accepting the goods. It is possible to mediate the skills required for completing these tasks in a summarized training profile for all the areas of business. The different requirements which exist depending on the area of business and the field of application are met by the training profile's concept: the ones taking part in it should be prepared for a scope of tasks as wide as possible and their employability should be ensured like this. This means that e.g. the ones to be qualified in the context »purchasing/accepting goods« are prepared also for the more challenging tasks in the field of purchasing for profit-oriented businesses.

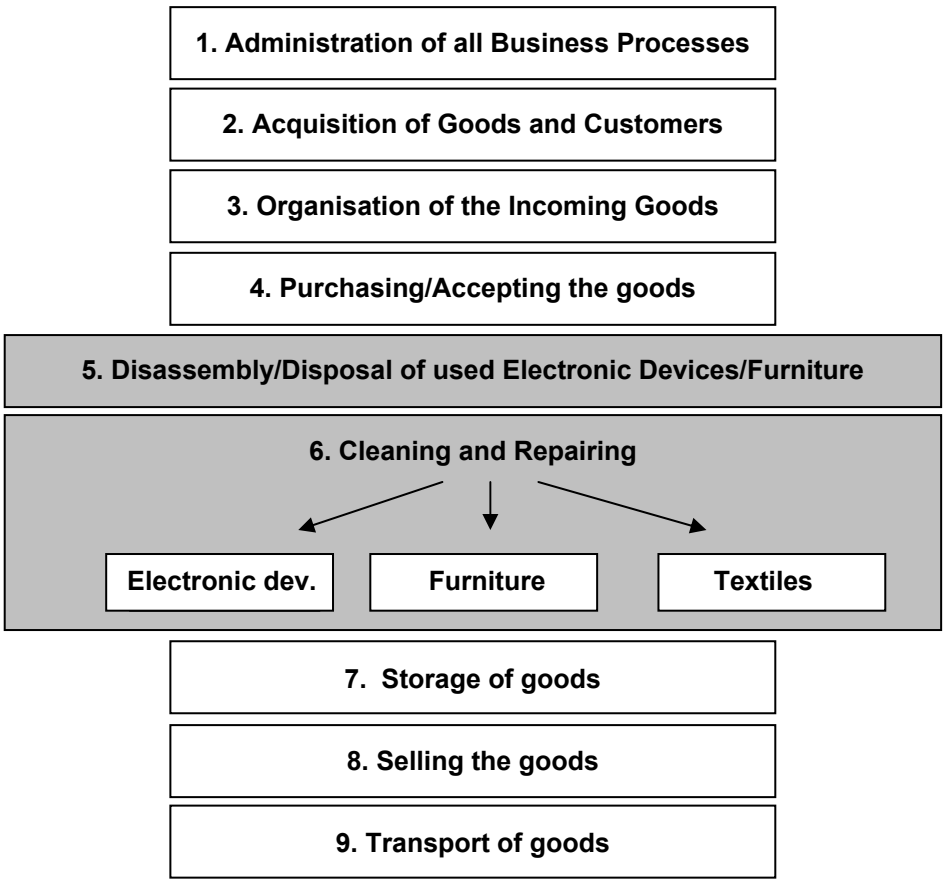

Fig. 6 Overview of the contents and the set-up of a sector-specific qualification

The field »disassembly and disposal« is the first qualification unit of the training profile that is area-specific. The results of the study showed that the disassembly and disposal process in the field of electronic devices and furniture requires different skills from the members of staff than in textiles and books/CDs: often the process does not even exist in this area (profit-oriented businesses generally do not dispose used goods at all). For this reason, it is important to deal with disposal as an individual and area-specific training unit. Nevertheless, it is possible to train the skills and the competences for electronic appliances and furniture required for disposal and disassembly in a common qualifying unit, because it is not about mediating profound technical knowledge. Regarding the »cleaning and repair« topic of a possible profile, it would be necessary to offer separate training units for each business area due to the fact that here, technical skills are mediated which are closely related to the specific aspects of the individual areas of business. In general, different skills are required for restoring or building new furniture than for maintaining electronic appliances. The skills for cleaning and mending textiles in turn differ a lot from what is required in other areas. Due to the fact that in the area »books/CD« no repairing or maintaining work is done, accordingly, no qualification is required for this area.

The qualification units »storage of goods«, »transport of goods« and »selling the goods« are organisable in an overall unit for all areas of business in turn. It is important to point to the fact that the qualifications which are relevant for all the areas cannot be completely disconnected from their context. We generally aim at accompanying the contents dealt with in the respective units of a possible training profile with examples from the different

areas of business and also at mentioning the peculiarities. This is first and foremost done in the units which deal with aspects that are valid for all areas, because similarities are prevailing. A possible concept for qualification or training profile, respectively, should be established as follows: the ones to be qualified should be experts of the second-hand sector and ready to work in all areas of business after qualification. Whether this qualification could or should also offer specialisations regarding the different areas, e.g. electronic devices or furniture, depends on the precise contents, the profundity and the standard of the area-specific qualification units and is to be developed in the future elaboration of the qualification.

4.4 Possible consequences for the sector if sector-specific qualifications are developed and introduced.

The second-hand sector is attested to be of high economic potential in the long run for various reasons (environmental protection, significance of recycling, changing attitude towards second hand goods etc.). Nevertheless, it is unavoidable to professionalise the sector in order to make use of the potential available. The qualification of the ones employed in the sector is really important in this context especially against the background that up until now only few or even no activities took place in this regard. A qualifying concept oriented towards high quality standards leads to the development of the sector-specific skills the members of staff are required to have. Better qualification for the daily tasks does not only foster the quality of their work or of products. Training orientated on future challenges and on the development of the member of staff improves the way in which processes are understood. Like this, not only an important contribution to the businesses and their current status quo protection is made, but the consequent advancement as well on product level as on business level is furthered. The key of coming to terms with future challenges for the businesses and the sector is employing staff that possess high-quality, acknowledged qualifications. Businesses have already realised that there is a need. Sector-specific qualifications would improve, moreover, the attitude of the public towards the second-hand sector which partly still has to deal with its negative image today.

For the ones employed in the sector it would make a lot of sense and be necessary to obtain a qualification accepted all over Europe for various reasons. Until now, the employed are not able to qualify themselves for improving their skills (except in a few countries, e.g. Germany) in training which prepares them especially for working in the second-hand sector. This is especially true for the different levels of hierarchy we discussed before (management, lead worker/trainer, and general staff). The employed therefore are not supported when willing to develop their skills apart from the training they get in the businesses themselves. They are also not able to prove the skills they have established already nor can these be registered somewhere. This is especially hard for the group of disadvantaged people who are often employed in not-for-profit businesses regarding their establishing on the job market. By developing and implementing a sector-specific qualification employability, mobility (all over Europe) and the acknowledgement of achievements would be implemented. The acknowledged qualification for groups of people who until

now were not given much attention with regard to job trainings supports the ability to study of each individual and supports personal identification with the sector.

The development of a specific qualification also contributes to developing employment opportunities within the sector and to systemising them in order to use the sector's potential available which is so far not being made use of. By professionalising the sector by means of qualification new and, most notably, attractive jobs are created. Groups of people who are not employed in the sector so far are given the opportunity to achieve and prove their employability by taking part in a sector-specific qualification. Like this, an occupational area is opened up which has not been accessible systematically in this way. The different levels of education and qualifications which are represented in the sector clarify the need for a sector-specific qualification. By introducing a qualification especially for the sector, businesses are given support in orientating themselves towards possible employees and it is also safer for them to employ new members of staff. By means of a qualification it is ensured that new employees dispose of the skills they are required to have for working in the sector which results in shorter training periods in the business and better quality of the job they do. And this, in turn is influencing the quality of the business and its competitiveness on the market in a positive way.

Generally, the development of a sector-specific qualification contributes to strengthening the businesses operating in the second-hand sector and to furthering their professionalisation. By means of sector-specific qualifications not only the quality of the work of the ones employed in the sector is assured, it has also positive effects on the quality of the whole business, on its in-house structures and on the quality of the goods and services on offer.

5. Conclusion

The good practice report clearly points out that only few cross-business qualification approaches exist in the European second-hand sector and that in bigger networks or business corporations in-house qualification strategies exist. These offerings are mostly orientated towards the special needs of the businesses and were not openly accessible. Especially the case studies carried out showed very clearly that in the businesses of all areas employees do not only have to meet special requirements, but also that there is a need for qualifications on the different occupational levels (independent of whether the business is profit-orientated or not orientated to profit). The need for qualifications within the businesses depends on a variety of factors like the business qualification of the employees, the in-house structures, the area of business and first and foremost the specific tasks that are to be completed. This need was identified in all European countries involved even if the individual tasks differ in the areas of business analysed.

The analysis of the working processes and tasks of the four areas of business (textiles, books and audio media, furniture as well as electrical and electronic devices) of the European second-hand sector looked at shows that partly the employed are required to have profound knowledge and a lot of technical skills. As well with regard to the operating processes valid for all areas of business analysed as with regard to the area-specific processes and tasks there are numerous points of contact for the development of sector-specific qualifications. This is true for all groups occupied in the second-hand sector. The core tasks analysed and the needs identified in all six countries involved, form the basis for the qualification approaches to be developed. Therefore, a concept should be established for the development of qualification profiles at first. This concept then should be the basis for the development of a sector-specific qualification. Due to the fact that the development of homogeneous qualifications for the second-hand sector is strived for in the long run, it is necessary to develop quality standards for the respective qualification concepts further on. In doing so, comparability should be ensured on the one hand. On the other hand, quality standards should be measurable precisely. Furthermore, a guideline based on the empiric results should be developed in view of supporting professionalisation of the businesses acting in the second-hand sector. This guideline should enable businesses to develop new qualification opportunities independently in order to finally increase the overall quality of the business and thus remain competitive.

Reihe ITB-Forschungsberichte

Nr. 1 **Bernd Haasler, Olaf Herms, Michael Kleiner:** *Curriculumentwicklung mittels berufswissenschaftlicher Qualifikationsforschung*
Bremen, Juli 2002, 3,– €, ISSN 1610-0875

Nr. 2 **Fred Manske, Yong-Gap Moon:** *Differenz von Technik als Differenz von Kulturen? EDI-Systeme in der koreanischen Automobilindustrie*
Bremen, November 2002, 3,– €, ISSN 1610-0875

Nr. 3 **Felix Rauner:** *Modellversuche in der beruflichen Bildung: Zum Transfer ihrer Ergebnisse*
Bremen, Dezember 2002, 3,– €, ISSN 1610-0875 X

Nr. 4 **Bernd Haasler:** *Validierung Beruflicher Arbeitsaufgaben: Prüfverfahren und Forschungsergebnisse am Beispiel des Berufes Werkzeugmechaniker*
Bremen, Januar 2003, 3,– €, ISSN 1610-0875

Nr. 5 **Philipp Grollmann, Nikitas Patiniotis, Felix Rauner:** *A Networked University for Vocational Education and Human Resources Development*
Bremen, Februar 2003, 3,– €, ISSN 1610-0875

Nr. 6 **Martin Fischer, Philipp Grollmann, Bibhuti Roy, Nikolaus Steffen:** *E-Learning in der Berufsbildungspraxis: Stand, Probleme, Perspektiven*
Bremen, März 2003, 3,– €, ISSN 1610-0875

Nr. 7 **Simone Kirpal:** *Nurses in Europe: Work Identities of Nurses across 4 European Countries*
Bremen, Mai 2003, 3,– €, ISSN 1610-0875

Nr. 8 **Peter Röben:** *Die Integration von Arbeitsprozesswissen in das Curriculum eines betrieblichen Qualifizierungssystems*
Bremen, Juli 2003, 3,– €, ISSN 1610-0875

Nr. 9 **Philipp Grollmann, Susanne Gottlieb, Sabine Kurz:** *Berufsbildung in Dänemark: dual und kooperativ?*
Bremen, Juli 2003, 3,– €, ISSN 1610-0875

Nr. 10 **Bernd Haasler:** *»BAG-Analyse« – Analyseverfahren zur Identifikation von Arbeits- und Lerninhalten für die Gestaltung beruflicher Bildung*
Bremen, Juli 2003, 3,– €, ISSN 1610-0875

Nr. 11 **Philipp Grollmann, Morgan Lewis:** *Kooperative Berufsbildung in den USA*
Bremen, Juli 2003, 3,– €, ISSN 1610-0875

Nr. 12 **Felix Rauner:** *Ausbildungspartnerschaften als Regelmodell für die Organisation der dualen Berufsausbildung?*
Bremen, Juli 2003, 3,– €, ISSN 1610-0875

Nr. 13 **Philipp Grollmann, Susanne Gottlieb, Sabine Kurz:** *Co-operation between enterprises and vocational schools – Danish prospects*
Bremen, Juli 2003, 3,– €, ISSN 1610-0875

Nr. 14 **Felix Rauner:** *Praktisches Wissen und berufliche Handlungskompetenz*
Bremen, Januar 2004, 3,– €, ISSN 1610-0875

Nr. 15 **Gerald A. Straka:** *Informal learning: genealogy, concepts, antagonisms and questions*
Bremen, November 2004, 3,– €, ISSN 1610-0875

Nr. 16 **Waldemar Bauer:** *Curriculumanalyse der neuen Elektroberufe – 2003*
Bremen, November 2004, 3,– €, ISSN 1610-0875

Nr. 17 **Felix Rauner:** *Die Berufsbildung im Berufsfeld Elektrotechnik-Informatik vor grundlegenden Weichenstellungen?*
Bremen, Dezember 2004, 3,– €, ISSN 1610-0875

Nr. 18 **Gerald A. Straka:** *Von der Klassifikation von Lernstrategien im Rahmen selbstgesteuerten Lernens zur mehrdimensionalen und regulierten Handlungsepisode*
Bremen, Februar 2005, 3,– €, ISSN 1610-0875

Nr. 19 **Gerald A. Straka:** *›Neue Lernformen‹ in der bundesdeutschen Berufsbildung – neue Konzepte oder neue Etiketten?*
Bremen, August 2005, 3,– €, ISSN 1610-0875

Nr. 20 **Felix Rauner, Philipp Grollmann, Georg Spöttl:** *Den Kopenhagen-Prozess vom Kopf auf die Füße stellen: Das Kopenhagen-Lissabon-Dilemma*
Bremen, Juli 2006, 3,– €, ISSN 1610-0875

Nr. 21 **Felix Rauner, Philipp Grollmann, Thomas Martens:** *Messen beruflicher Kompetenz(entwicklung)*
Bremen, Januar 2007, 3,– €, ISSN 1610-0875

Nr. 22 **Georg Spöttl:** *Work-Process-Analysis in VET-Research*
Bremen, Januar 2007, 3,– €, ISSN 1610-0875

Nr. 23 **Felix Rauner:** *Kosten, Nutzen und Qualität der beruflichen Ausbildung*
Bremen, Februar 2007, 3,– €, ISSN 1610-0875

Nr. 24 **Johannes Rosendahl, Gerald A. Straka:** *Aneignung beruflicher Kompetenz – interessengeleitet oder leistungsmotiviert?*
Bremen, Januar 2007, 3,– €, ISSN 1610-0875

Nr. 25 **Simone Kirpal, Astrid Biele Mefebue:** *»Ich habe einen sicheren Arbeitsplatz, aber keinen Job.« Veränderung psychologischer Arbeitsverträge unter Bedingung von Arbeitsmarktflexibilisierung und organisationaler Transformation*
Bremen, März 2007, 3,– €, ISSN 1610-0875

Nr. 26 **Aaron Cohen:** *Dynamics between Occupational and Organizational Commitment in the Context of Flexible Labor Markets: A Review of the Literature and Suggestions for a Future Research Agenda*
Bremen, März 2007, 3,– €, ISSN 1610-0875

Nr. 27 **Waldemar Bauer, Claudia Koring, Peter Röben, Meike Schnitger:** *Weiterbildungsbedarfsanalysen – Ergebnisse aus dem Projekt »Weiterbildung im Prozess der Arbeit« (WAP)*
Bremen, Juni 2007, 3,– €, ISSN 1610-0875

Nr. 28 **Waldemar Bauer, Claudia Koring, Peter Röben, Meike Schnitger:** *Weiterbildungsprofile und Arbeits- und Lernprojekte – Ergebnisse aus dem Projekt »Weiterbildung im Prozess der Arbeit« (WAP)*
Bremen, Juli 2007, 3,– €, ISSN 1610-0875

Nr. 29 **Ludger Deitmer, Klaus Ruth:** *»Cornerstones of Mentoring Processes« – How to implement, conduct and evaluate mentoring projects*
Bremen, Dezember 2007, 3,– €, ISSN 1610-0875

Nr. 30 **Meike Schnitger, Lars Windelband:** *Fachkräftemangel auf Facharbeiterebene im produzierenden Sektor in Deutschland: Ergebnisse der Sektoranalyse aus dem Projekt »Shortage of Skilled Workers«*
Bremen, Februar 2008, 3,– €, ISSN 1610-0875

Nr. 31 **Meike Schnitger, Lars Windelband:** *Shortage of skilled workers in the manufacturing sector in Germany: Results from the sector analysis*
Bremen, Februar 2008, 3,– €, ISSN 1610-0875

Nr. 32 **Joanna Schulz, Sabine Kurz, Josef Zelger:** *Die GABEK®-Methode als Ansatz zur Organisationsentwicklung*
Bremen, Februar 2008, 3,– €, ISSN 1610-0875

Nr. 33 **Simone Kirpal, Roland Tutschner:** *Berufliches Bildungspersonal: Schlüsselakteure lebenslangen Lernens*
Bremen, September 2008, 3,– €, ISSN 1610-0875

Nr. 34 **Heike Arold, Claudia Koring, Lars Windelband:** *Qualifizierungsbedarfe, -ansätze und -strategien im Secondhand Sektor – Ein Europäischer Good-Practice-Bericht*
Bremen, Oktober 2008, 3,– €, ISSN 1610-0875

Nr. 35 **Heike Arold, Claudia Koring, Lars Windelband:** *Qualification Needs, Approaches and Strategies in the Second-Hand Sector – A European Good Practice Report*
Bremen, Oktober 2008, 3,– €, ISSN 1610-0875

Bestelladresse:

Institut Technik & Bildung – Bibliothek
Universität Bremen
Am Fallturm 1
28359 Bremen
Fax. +49-421 / 218-4637
E-Mail: quitten@uni-bremen.de

Reihe ITB-Arbeitspapiere

Nr. 1 **G. Blumenstein; M. Fischer:** *Aus- und Weiterbildung für die rechnergestützte Arbeitsplanung und -steuerung*
Bremen, Juni 1991, 5,23 €, ISBN 3-9802786-0-3

Nr. 2 **E. Drescher:** *Anwendung der pädagogischen Leitidee Technikgestaltung und des didaktischen Konzeptes Handlungslernen am Beispiel von Inhalten aus der Mikroelektronik und Mikrocomputertechnik*
Bremen, 1991, 3,14 €, ISBN 3-9802786-1-1

Nr. 3 **F. Rauner; K. Ruth:** *The Prospects of Anthropocentric Production Systems: A World Comparison of Production Models*
Bremen, 1991, 4,18 €, ISBN 3-9802786-2-X

Nr. 4 **E. Drescher:** *Computer in der Berufsschule*
Bremen, 1991, 4,67 €, ISBN 3-9802786-3-8 ***(Vergriffen)***

Nr. 5 **W. Lehrl:** *Arbeitsorganisation als Gegenstand beruflicher Bildung*
Bremen, März 1992, 5,23 €, ISBN 3-9802786-6-2

Nr. 6 **ITB:** *Bericht über Forschungsarbeiten (1988-1991) und Forschungsperspektiven des ITB*
Bremen, 1992, 5,23 €, ISBN 3-9802786-7-0

Nr. 7 **ITB:** *Bericht über die aus Mitteln des Forschungsinfrastrukturplans geförderten Forschungsvorhaben*
Bremen, 1992, 5,23 €, ISBN 3-9802786-8-9 ***(Vergriffen)***

Nr. 8 **F. Rauner; H. Zeymer:** *Entwicklungstrends in der Kfz-Werkstatt. Fort- und Weiterbildung im Kfz-Handwerk*
Bremen, 1993, 3,14 €, ISBN 3-9802786 **(Vergriffen)**

Nr. 9 **M. Fischer (Hg.):** *Lehr- und Lernfeld Arbeitsorganisation. Bezugspunkte für die Entwicklung von Aus- und Weiterbildungskonzepten in den Berufsfeldern Metall- und Elektrotechnik*
Bremen, Juni 1993, 5,23 €, ISBN 3-9802786-9-7 ***(Vergriffen)***

Nr. 11 **ITB:** *Bericht über Forschungsarbeiten 1992-1993*
Bremen, 1994, 6,78 €, ISBN 3-9802786-5-4

Nr. 12 **M. Fischer; J. Uhlig-Schoenian (Hg.):** *Organisationsentwicklung in Berufsschule und Betrieb – neue Ansätze für die berufliche Bildung. Ergebnisse der gleichnamigen Fachtagung vom 10. und 11. Oktober 1994 in Bremen*
Bremen, März 1995, 5,23 €, ISBN 3-9802962-0-2 **(*Vergriffen*)**

Nr. 13 **F. Rauner; G. Spöttl:** *Entwicklung eines europäischen Berufsbildes „Kfz-Mechatroniker" für die berufliche Erstausbildung unter dem Aspekt der arbeitsprozeßorientierten Strukturierung der Lehr-Inhalte*
Bremen, Oktober 1995, 3,14 €, ISBN 3-9802962-1-0

Nr. 14 **P. Grollmann; F. Rauner:** *Sccenarios and Strategies for Vocational Education and Training in Europe*
Bremen, Januar 2000, 10,23 €, ISBN 3-9802962-9-6 ***(Vergriffen)***

Nr. 15 **W. Petersen; F. Rauner:** *Evaluation und Weiterentwicklung der Rahmenpläne des Landes Hessen, Berufsfelder Metall- und Elektrotechnik*
Bremen, Februar 1996,4,67 €, ISBN 3-9802962-3-7 ***(Vergriffen)***

Nr. 16 **ITB:** *Bericht über Forschungsarbeiten 1994-1995*
Bremen, 1996, 6,78 €, ISBN 3-9802962-4-5 ***(Vergriffen)***

Nr. 17 **Y. Ito; F. Rauner; K. Ruth:** *Machine Tools and Industrial Cultural Traces of Production*
Bremen, Dezember 1998, 5,23 €, ISBN 3-9802962-5-3 ***(Vergriffen)***

Nr. 18 **M. Fischer (Hg.):** *Rechnergestützte Facharbeit und berufliche Bildung – Ergebnisse der gleichnamigen Fachtagung vom 20. und 21. Februar 1997 in Bremen*
Bremen, August 1997, 5,23 €, ISBN 3-9802962-6-1

Nr. 19 **F. Stuber; M. Fischer (Hg.):** *Arbeitsprozeßwissen in derProduktionsplanung und Organisation. Anregungen für die Aus- und Weiterbildung.*
Bremen, 1998, 5,23 €, ISBN 3-9802962-7-X ***(Vergriffen)***

Nr. 20 **ITB:** *Bericht über Forschungsarbeiten 1996-1997*
Bremen, 1998, 6,78 €, ISBN 3-9802962-8-8

Nr. 21 **Liu Ming-Dong:** *Rekrutierung und Qualifizierung von Fachkräften für die direkten und indirekten Prozessbereiche im Rahmen von Technologie-Transfer-Projekten im Automobilsektor in der VR China. – Untersucht am Beispiel Shanghai-Volkswagen.*
Bremen, 1998. 6,76 €, ISBN 3-9802962-2-9

Nr. 22 **ITB:** *Bericht über Forschungsarbeiten 1998-1999*
Bremen, 2000, 12,78 €, ISSN 1615-3138

Nr. 23 **L. Hermann (Hg.):** *Initiative für eine frauenorientierte Berufsbildungsforschung in Ländern der Dritten Welt mit Fokussierung auf den informellen Sektor.*
Bremen, 2000, 7,67 €, ISSN 1615-3138

Nr. 24 **Mahmoud Abd El-Moneim El-Morsi El-zekred:** *Entwicklung von Eckpunkten für die Berufsbildung im Berufsfeld Textiltechnik in Ägypten.*
Bremen, 2002, 10,50 €, ISSN 1615-3138

Nr. 25 **O. Herms (Hg.):** *Erfahrungen mit energieoptimierten Gebäuden.*
Bremen, 2001, 7,67 €, ISSN 1615-3138

Nr. 26 **Yong-Gap Moon:** *Innovation für das Informationszeitalter: Die Entwicklung interorganisationaler Systeme als sozialer Prozess – Elektronische Datenaustausch-Systeme (EDI) in der koreanischen Automobilindustrie.*
Bremen, 2001, 11,76 €, ISSN 1615-3138

Nr. 27 **G. Laske (Ed.):** *Project Papers: Vocational Identity, Flexibility and Mobility in the European Labour Market (Fame).*
Bremen, 2001, 11,76 €, ISSN 1615-3138

Nr. 28 **F. Rauner; R. Bremer:** *Berufsentwicklung im industriellen Dienstleistungssektor.*
Bremen, 2001, 7,67 €, ISSN 1615-3138

Nr. 29 **M. Fischer; P. Röben (Eds.):** *Ways of Organisational Learning in the Chemical Industry and their Impact on Vocational Education and Training.*
Bremen, 2001, 10,23 €, ISSN 1615-3138

Nr. 30 **F. Rauner; B. Haasler:** *Berufsbildungsplan für den Werkzeugmechaniker.*
Bremen, 2001, 3. Aufl., 7,67 €, ISSN 1615-3138

Nr. 31 **F. Rauner; M. Schön; H. Gerlach; M. Reinhold:** *Berufsbildungsplan für den Industrieelektroniker.*
Bremen, 2001, 3. Aufl., 7,67 €, ISSN 1615-3138

Nr. 32 **F. Rauner; M. Kleiner; K. Meyer:** *Berufsbildungsplan für den Industriemechaniker.*
Bremen, 2001, 3. Aufl., 7,67 €, ISSN 1615-3138

Nr. 33 **O. Herms; P. Ritzenhoff; L. Bräuer:** *EcoSol*: *Evaluierung eines solaroptimierten Gebäudes.*
Bremen, 2001, 10,23 €, ISSN 1615-3138

Nr. 34 **W. Schlitter-Teggemann:** *Die historische Entwicklung des Arbeitsprozeßwissens im Kfz-Servide – untersucht an der Entwicklung der Service-Dokumentationen*
Bremen, 2001, 12,78 €, ISSN 1615-3138

Nr. 35 **M. Fischer; P. Röben:** *Cases of organizational learning for European chemical companies*
Bremen, 2002, 7,67 €, ISSN 1615-3138

Nr. 36 **F. Rauner; M. Reinhold:** *GAB – Zwei Jahre Praxis.*
Bremen, 2002, 7,67 €, ISSN 1615-3138

Nr. 37 **R. Jungeblut:** *Facharbeiter in der Instandhaltung.*
Bremen, 2002, 10,50 €, ISSN 1615-3138

Nr. 38 **A. Brown (Ed.) and PARTICIPA Project Consortium:** *Participation in Continuing Vocational Education and Training (VET): a need for a sustainable employability. A state of the art report for six European countries.*
Bremen, 2004, 10,00 €, ISSN 1615-3138

Nr. 39 **L. Deitmer, L. Heinemann:** *Skills demanded in University-Industry-Liaison (UIL).*
Bremen, Neuaufl. 2003, 8,67 €, ISSN 1615-3138

Nr. 40 **F. Manske, D. Ahrens, L. Deitmer:** *Innovationspotenziale und -barrieren in und durch Netzwerke*
Bremen, 2002, 8,67 €, ISSN 1615-3138

Nr. 41 **S. Kurz:** *Die Entwicklung berufsbildender Schulen zu beruflichen Kompetenzzentren.*
Bremen, 2002, 7,67 €, ISSN 1615-3138

Nr. 42 **ITB:** *Bericht über Forschungsarbeiten 2000-2001*
Bremen, 2002, 6,78 €, ISSN 1615-3138

Nr. 43 **F. Rauner, P. Diebler, U. Elsholz:** *Entwicklung des Qualifikationsbdarfs und der Qualifizierungswege im Dienstleistungssektor in Hamburg bis zum Jahre 2020*
Bremen, 2002, 8,67 €, ISSN 1615-3138

Nr. 44 **K. Gouda Mohamed Mohamed:** *Entwicklung eines Konzeptes zur Verbesserung des Arbeitsprozessbezugs in der Kfz-Ausbildung in Ägypten*
Bremen, 2003, 10,50 €, ISSN 1615-3138

Nr. 46 **FAME Consortium:** *Project Papers: Work-Related Identities in Europe. How Personnel Management and HR Policies Shape Workers' Identities.*
Bremen, 2003, 8,00 €, ISSN 1615-3138

Nr. 47 **M. Fischer & P. Röben:** *Organisational Learning and Vocational Education and Training. An Empirical Investigation in the European Chemical Industry.*
Bremen, 2004, 9,00 €, ISSN 1615-3138

Nr. 48 **ITB:** *Bericht über Forschungsarbeiten 2002-2003*
Bremen, 2004, 6,80 €, ISSN 1615-3138

Nr. 49 **S. Kirpal:** *Work Identities in Europe: Continuity and Change*
Bremen, 2004, 9,00 €, ISSN 1615-3138

Nr. 50 **T. Mächtle unter Mitarbeit von M. Eden:** *Bremer Landesprogramm. Lernortverbünde und Ausbildungspartnerschaften. Zwischenbilanz.*
Bremen, 2004, 10,00 €, ISSN 1615-3138

Nr. 51 **A. Brown, P. Grollmann, R. Tutschner, PARTICIPA Project Consortium:** *Participation in Continuing Vocational Education and Training.*
Bremen, 2004, 5,00 €, ISSN 1615-3138

Nr. 52 **Bénédicte Gendron:** *Social Representations of Vocational Education and Training in France through the French Vocational Baccalauréat Case-Study.*
Bremen, 2005, 5,00 €, ISSN 1615-3138

Nr. 53 **Kurt Henseler, Wiebke Schönbohm-Wilke (Hg.):** *Und nach der Schule? Beiträge zum »Übergang Schule-Beruf« aus Theorie und Praxis*
Bremen, 2005, 5,00 €, ISSN 1615-3138

Nr. 54 **A. Brown, P. Grollmann, R. Tutschner, PARTICIPA Project Consortium:** *Participation in Continuing Vocational Education and Training. Results from the case studies and qualitative investigations.*
Bremen, 2005, 5,00 €, ISSN 1615-3138

Nr. 55 **Philipp Grollmann, Marja-Leena Stenström (Eds.):** *Quality Assurance and Practice-oriented Assessment in Vocational Education and Training: Country Studies*
Bremen, 2005, 5,00 €, ISSN 1615-3138

Nr. 57 **Bernd Haasler, Meike Schnitger:** *Kompetenzerfassung bei Arbeitssuchenden – eine explorative Studie unter besonderer Berücksichtigung des Sektors privater Arbeitsvermittlung in Deutschland.*
Bremen, 2005, 5,00 €, ISSN 1615-3138

Nr. 58 **Felix Rauner:** *Berufswissenschaftliche Arbeitsstudien. Zum Gegenstand und zu den Methoden der empirischen Untersuchung berufsförmig organisierter Facharbeit.*
Bremen, 2005, 5,00 €, ISSN 1615-3138

Nr. 59 **Institut Technik und Bildung:** *Bericht über Forschungsarbeiten 2004-2005*
Bremen, 2006, 5,00 €, ISSN 1615-3138

Nr. 60 **Eileen Lübcke, Klaus Ruth, Il-Sop Yim:** *Corporate Social Responsibility »Made In China« – Eine explorative Studie zur Bedeutung arbeitspolitischer Dimensionen für die gesellschaftliche Verantwortung deutscher und koreanischer multinationaler Konzerne in China*
Bremen, 2007, 5,00 €, ISSN 1615-3138

Nr. 61 **Heike Arold, Claudia Koring:** *Neue berufliche Wege und Qualifikationen zur Professionalisierung des Secondhand-Sektors*
Bremen, 2008, 5,00 €, ISSN 1615-3138

Nr. 62 **Heike Arold, Claudia Koring:** *New Vocational Ways and Qualifications for Professionalisation in the Second-Hand Sector*
Bremen, 2008, 5,00 €, ISSN 1615-3138

Nr. 63 **Institut Technik und Bildung:** *Bericht über Forschungsarbeiten 2006-2007*
Bremen, 2008, 5,00 €, ISSN 1615-3138

Bestelladresse:

Institut Technik & Bildung – Bibliothek
Universität Bremen
Am Fallturm 1
28359 Bremen
Fax. +49-421 / 218-4637
E-Mail: quitten@uni-bremen.de