

### Donatella Gobbi



Donatella Gobbi was born in Rome in 1966. Since 1995 she had been working as a researcher at **ISFOL** (Istituto per lo Sviluppo della formazione professionale dei lavoratori) – Italian State Institution for Research on Vocational Training based in Rome.

At the present time she is seconded in the **European Commission, DG EuropeAid**, Unit B3 (Employment, Social inclusion, Migration), where she is in charge of VET and skills development issues in EU development cooperation (thematic support to operation in the field and EU delegations, knowledge development, management of thematic

programme).

Prior to her current position, she was mainly involved in providing technical assistance for European Initiatives (Europass portfolio, Equal, Employment) and national programmes (Work-Life Balance Programme) and producing studies in the field of Recognition and Certification of competences. Then, she was seconded at Cedefop where - together with the ReferNet team - she was in charge of reporting on VET policies and systems, communication and developing cross-country collaboration.

### ABSTRACT

In developing countries the size of informal economy is growing and plays an important role for job insertion of young people and job creation.

However, VET and skills development policies neglect most of informal workers.

One of the main issues for EU development cooperation is: what is the role of VET in informal economy?

In addition, further challenges intersect with those questions and have an influence on the development agenda:

- the low employment elasticity of growth of countries with relies on resources extraction;
- the youth bulge in Africa (20% of African population is aged between 15 and 24);
- the changing patterns of migration in developing regions (South-South migrations).

With particular reference to the first issue, trade interventions are needed in order to find solutions. A clear profile of the private manufacturing sector and industries of each country and the alignment of VET policy with national development plans are the starting point for modernizing VET systems and make them more demand driven. ETF should not only analyse policies but also link with employment sector and should be coherent with the areas that governments want to develop. Consistent and effective methods for anticipation of skill needs should be developed and improved. Human resources development should push sectors of economy, with reference to present and future labour market and should be interrelated with economic development.

Concerning the youth bulge, recent experiences, in particular the Arab Spring, have shown that meaningful employment opportunities, especially for young people, are also indispensable for political and social stability. The EU acknowledges that it is not possible to achieve sustainable and inclusive development without ensuring that young people are able to play a full role in society. The multidimensional nature of the youth employment challenges requires comprehensive employment strategies across the diverse sectorial policy areas (economy, education, TVET, etc). The increased pace of change requires also more emphasis on creativity and innovation in VET.

Finally, the changing patterns of migration in developing regions (South-South migrations), with particular reference to Africa, has a considerable effect on VET and require a strong focus on transparency of skills and qualifications, flexibility, and mutual trust.

