

Introduction

Since 1996, the EURYDICE network has increasingly extended its activities to the countries of central and eastern Europe and Cyprus, to help prepare them to take part in the EU education programme, Socrates.

In order to ensure that these countries would be fully involved in educational cooperation in the Community, it was important at the outset to improve awareness of how their own education systems were organized. The purpose of the present study is to respond to this need. It constitutes a *Supplement* to the basic document “Structures of the Education and Initial Training Systems in the European Union” jointly produced and regularly updated by EURYDICE and CEDEFOP.

As in the above-mentioned basic edition covering the European Union and EFTA/EEA countries, the present study can claim neither to be exhaustive, nor to offer an in-depth analysis of ongoing developments in the educational field. It aims to provide basic descriptive information about the education systems of the countries concerned, so that the interested reader may better understand the organisation of these systems and how they are structured. The information in question relates to the three Baltic countries (Lithuania, Estonia and Latvia), Slovenia and Cyprus. A similar first *Supplement* on Bulgaria, Hungary, Poland, Romania, the Czech Republic and Slovakia was published in 1998.

For the drafting of information dealing with initial training, the EURYDICE National Units in the countries concerned have for the most part cooperated closely with the National Observatories of the European Training Foundation (ETF). We should like to thank them all for their excellent contribution to the preparation of this *Supplement*, as a result of which EURYDICE is now able to inform its readers about education in yet more European countries, and reflect better than ever before the richness and diversity of education systems in Europe.

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