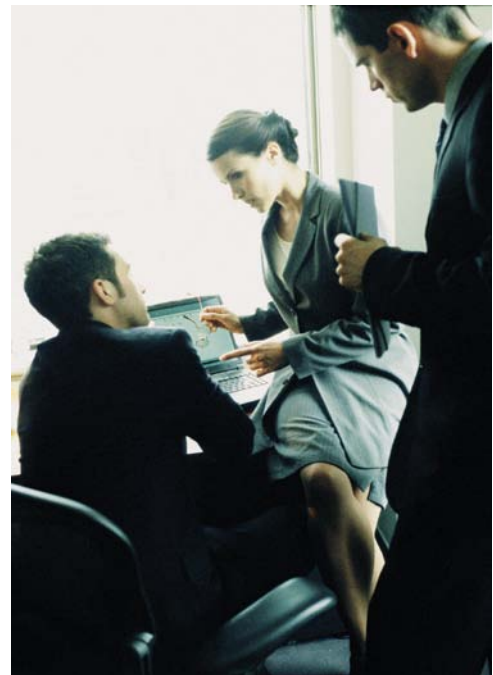


Putting Skills into Business

Research Summary

The ESRC Research Centre on Skills, Knowledge and Organisational Performance (SKOPE) explores the impact of education and training on economic performance. A key goal is to improve understanding of how, why, and in combination with what other factors or forms of investment, skill enhances performance. This means a strong interest in the impact of skill on innovation and productivity.

This programme seeks to identify the key research and policy issues confronting skills systems across the developed world. It includes initial as well as continuing learning which is often informal, uncertified and takes place in the workplace.



Impact

SKOPE researchers critically assessed the English Skills Strategy and policymakers valued the research as an 'unofficial' opinion. Their work is widely acknowledged to have provided evidence to fill important gaps in the skills evidence base.

Research on the links between workforce skills and business improvement has also had an impact on policies beyond the United Kingdom. Workplace re-design policies set up by the Finnish Ministry of Labour have been influenced by SKOPE research, and study groups to examine

reforms of the national curriculum in Norway have taken place as a result.

Findings from the Centre were also influential in the development of Skill Ecosystem projects in Australia supporting partnerships between trainers and industry, and focusing on improving workforce capacity and the use of skills.

In New Zealand, SKOPE's research had a major impact on the development of thinking in the national Tertiary Education Commission which funds further and higher education and training. This approach reflects SKOPE's analysis of the need for skills policies to be embedded in wider attempts to alter employee relations, work organisation, job design and

competitive strategies if enhanced skill supply is to generate maximum effect.

A recent Frontier Economics report which analysed the impact of the research centre on policies in the UK and beyond has high praise both for the targeted nature of the work undertaken and for the ability of SKOPE to transmit the information it gathers to a wider audience. It noted that SKOPE's research "continues to accumulate a critical mass of impact on policy thinking and to reverberate across the policy landscape in several countries".



Key Findings

- SKOPE research focuses not just on the supply of skills but also the demand for and use of these skills as well as other routes to competitive success.
- Policy interventions in Norway, workplace re-design in Finland and skills projects in Australia and New Zealand have all been influenced by SKOPE.
- Research from SKOPE has had wide-ranging impact on policy in the UK and abroad.

Further Information

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Putting Skills into Business

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Project Information:

<http://www.esrcsocietytoday.ac.uk/esrcinfocentre/viewawardpage.aspx?awardnumber=RES-557-28-5003>

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The Economic and Social Research Council funds research into the big social and economic questions facing us today. We also develop and train the UK's future social scientists. Our research informs public policies and helps make businesses, voluntary bodies and other organisations more effective. Most importantly, it makes a real difference to all our lives.

The ESRC is an independent organisation, established by Royal Charter in 1965, and funded mainly by Government.

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