

Dr Andrew McCoshan works extensively for the European Commission and its agencies in education and training. He specialises in vocational education and training (VET) and lifelong learning, and much of his work involves international comparisons of VET and skills formation systems with a strong focus on ways to improve policies and practices – he recently contributed to a set of EU studies on the changing role of VET in Europe and is about to start on a follow-up assignment on the future of VET. With regard to educational disadvantage, Andrew is interested in school-to-work transitions and the role of VET both as a factor in the reproduction of socio-economic disparities and as a (potential) solution, e.g. as a remedy for early school leaving. His work currently includes the analysis of innovations in pedagogy related to digital learning in VET (with a Working Group coordinated by the European Commission). A geographer by background, he is interested in the spatial aspects of educational inequality and community-based solutions to poverty and social inclusion in education. In the area of lifelong/adult learning, his work (e.g. on the European adult learning platform, EPALE) has included the analysis of policies and practices for tackling variations in educational attainment and overcoming obstacles to the acquisition and recognition of skills and qualifications. In the future, he'd like to explore the role of skills acquisition in the formation of personal and class identities.