

International response

63. The intention is to develop this section of the website substantially in order to learn from strategies and practices in other countries. Currently it provides headline details of spending plans to address skills and employment in different parts of the world.
64. The UK is not the only nation to include education and training in its stimulus plans. The U.S. economic stimulus plan includes \$150 billion for education, including funding for HE grants, school renovations, education for the poor and disabled and direct support for local school authorities, ranging from \$400 to \$1,250 per child (depending on the wealth of the state in question). The funding is two-and-a-half times the current annual budget of the federal Department of Education. The stimulus package, worth \$787 billion overall, was signed into law on February 17th. Although it is the world's largest stimulus plan, Paul Krugman, this year's Nobel laureate, argues that it's too small to deal with worsening unemployment rates.
65. The United States' stimulus plan is the largest of its kind, but far from the only one; more than 30 nations have enacted stimulus plans in recent months, and many of these have measures related to education. Notable examples:
- The latest German stimulus plan, worth €50 billion (£46.5 billion), includes €14 billion for education and infrastructure spending, according to *Die Welt*. The plan was approved by the German cabinet in January, and completed its passage through the German parliament on February 20th;
 - Australia's government announced \$A1.6 billion in education spending in December, as part of more than \$A30 billion in stimulus spending;
 - Canada's 2009 budget includes \$C8.3 billion for '*skills development and transition support*', with \$C1 billion for training programmes;
 - Thailand's stimulus plan, approved by its Parliament in late January 2009, includes 6.9 trillion Thai baht (£138 million) to re-train unemployed workers;
 - New Zealand's stimulus includes about \$NZ220 million for school renovation and construction;
 - Portugal's €2 billion stimulus will, among other programmes, fund 12,000 paid internships.
 - The Philippines is allocated more than £40 million to its Department of Education as part of its economic recovery plan;
 - Japan published a ¥15.4 trillion (£105 billion) stimulus plan on April 9th, which provides ¥1.9 trillion (£12.95 billion) '*to protect jobs and retrain unemployed workers*'. The April plan is the latest in a series of stimuli, totalling ¥27 trillion since the recession began;
 - On April 10th, France announced a €1.5 billion (£1.3 billion) fund to support the unemployed during the economic crisis, which will support training programmes among other measures. The fund will be jointly managed by the government and by its '*social partners*', meaning employers' organisations and trade unions;
 - On April 15th, the Swedish government the Swedish finance minister announced on April 15th that his government would provide 60 billion kronor (£4.835 billion) in new stimulus spending,

despite previous statements that Stockholm's fiscal resources were '*extremely limited*'. The funding includes 10 billion kronor (£805 million) for internships, training schemes and unemployment insurance. The money is budgeted for 2010. The Swedish government will also give 17 billion kronor in aid to local governments.

66. A draft communiqué for the G20 summit, held in London on April 1st and 2nd, includes a brief commitment to increased investment in education and training. The document, published in the Financial Times, contains the following paragraph: '*Strengthening labour market and social protection policies will give real help now to those most in need, make the downturn shorter, and the recovery stronger and more sustainable. We welcome the report of the London Jobs Conference and the key principles it proposed. We will support employment by stimulating demand, investing in education and training, and through active labour market policies. We will support disadvantaged and vulnerable groups, including those most affected by the crisis, through social safety nets. We call on the ILO [International Labour Organisation, a UN agency] and OECD [Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development], working with other organisations, to assess the actions taken and those required for the future*'.