



Education & Training 2010

ETUCE Circular 2/2008

Boulevard du Roi Albert II, 5^{9th} floor - B-1210 Brussels Tel +32 2 224 06 91 / 92 Fax +32 2 224 06 94 secretariat@csee-etuice.org www.csee-etuice.org

Important information concerning the EU 'Education & Training 2010' process:

- **Meeting of the Education Council on 21-22 May 2008**
- **Cluster reports on outcomes and policy conclusions**
- **Priorities for the French Presidency with regard to the "Education and training 2010 process"**
- **Update on the preparation of a new strategic framework for EU cooperation in education and training beyond 2010**
- **New calls for proposals for EU funding in the field of education and training**

Meeting of the Education Council 21-22 May 2008

On 21-22 May 2008, the EU Education ministers met in Brussels at the Council meeting for Education. The ministers adopted conclusions on:

- adult learning
- promoting creativity and innovation through education and training
- multilingualism

The important role of adult learning in raising skills levels for low-skilled workers and promoting social inclusion for older workers was reaffirmed at the Council with the adoption of conclusions on Adult Learning. It was emphasised that there is a need for efficiency, effectiveness and quality of adult learning to ensure increased participation, especially among disadvantage groups. The ministers stressed that focus should not only be on increased opportunities, access and participation but also on results-oriented learning outcomes. The Council requested several concrete measures for the Commission to take¹:

- Analyse reforms in education and training at national level, especially the development of national qualifications systems in relation to the European Qualifica-

¹ The tasks outlined are identified on the basis of the Commission's Action Plan "It is always a good time to learn", September 2007

- tions Framework and credit transfer systems relating to both formal, non-formal and informal learning, with a view to improving adult access to qualifications systems
- Analyse the impact of national education and training reforms in terms of the distribution of funding resources across the various age groups, in line with a life-long learning approach.
 - Support the development of career opportunities, conditions and resources - based on existing good practice in the Member States - for those working in the field of adult learning, in order to enhance the visibility and status of the profession.
 - Carry out further research on the development of quality criteria for adult learning providers.
 - Draw up a common inventory of good practice and projects aimed at motivating those groups which are particularly hard to reach, identifying key factors for their reintegration into the labour market and society, and enhancing their self-esteem.
 - Identify good practice in the assessment of learning outcomes, particularly those of low-skilled and older workers and of migrants acquired mainly outside the formal learning system.
 - Produce a glossary of agreed definitions used in adult learning and, drawing on existing data collections, including those of the OECD, and remaining consistent with the 2008 Regulation on statistics on education and lifelong learning², establish a set of European level comparable core data required to facilitate monitoring. (The right of participation of all Member States in this work should be ensured)
 - Support measures to strengthen the place of adult learning within the context of national lifelong learning strategies.
 - Support campaigns aimed at raising awareness and motivation among potential learners and thereby increasing overall participation in adult learning.
 - Ensure complementarity and coherence between the follow-up given to any such measures and implementation of the Bologna and Copenhagen processes, insofar as these relate to adult learners;
 - Strengthen and use existing research structures for the needs of adult education;

Secondly, the Council adopted Conclusions on the issue of Creativity and Innovation, an issue which has been a high priority under the Slovenian Presidency. The Conclusions highlight the importance of promoting curiosity, critical thinking, risk taking and problem

² Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 April 2008 concerning the production and development of statistics on education and lifelong learning - PE-CONS 3659/3/07 REV 3 / OJ reference to be supplied.

solving alongside knowledge and skills. It was emphasised that teachers have a crucial role to play in developing innovative approaches and exemplifying creativity in their teaching. The needs of schools working in partnerships with parents, businesses and community were stated as well as the value of peer learning activities at EU level and exchange of good practices between member states.

Thirdly, the Council adopted a set of concluding remarks with regard to multilingualism which requests the Commission to draw up a proposal by the end of 2008 for a comprehensive policy framework on multilingualism. The Ministers emphasised that effective language teaching has to be improved with a view to promoting mobility and facilitating social integration and cohesion in Europe.

Finally, the Council received information from the Commission on two new proposals issued by the Commission in April: a recommendation on the establishment of the European credit system for vocational education and training (ECVET) and the proposal for a recommendation on European quality assurance reference framework for vocational education and training. The Council's discussions of these two proposals will however take place at later meetings. The ETUCE will shortly launch a consultation of all member organisations on the ECVET proposal, and further information on the proposal on quality in VET can be found in the next issue of the ETUCE newsletter in the end of June.

Cluster reports on outcomes and policy conclusions

The Commission has published two reports on the outcomes and policy conclusions from the clusters 'Teachers and Trainers' and 'Key Competences'. The ETUCE is a member of both clusters. The reports sum up the overall policy recommendations resulting from the PLAs held in each of the clusters.

The report from the cluster on teachers and trainers identifies a range of issues concerning teacher education that should be addressed at national or European level. An issue that is emphasised several times in the report is lifelong learning. The report recommends that lifelong learning is promoted through a more long term perspective in the teacher education curricula, and support structures for teachers' continuous professional development should be set up in the teacher education institutes. Partnerships between schools and teacher education institutions is mentioned as another option for promoting teachers' professional development. The report furthermore recommends that the teacher education curriculum also stimulates aspects of extended professionalism such as leadership and entrepreneurship and prepare teachers to teach in diverse and multicultural contexts.

The report from the Key Competences Cluster reflects on the outcomes of the total of three PLAs undertaken by the cluster. The main focus of the PLAs has been the implementation of the EU Recommendation on Key Competences from 2006, and the report thus aims to assist Member States with the implementation of these. The report also gives examples of how the different measures are implemented in the host countries of the PLAs.

On the basis of the PLAs the report concludes that the key competences defined in the EU recommendation have a high status in Member States' lifelong learning strategies but their implementation still requires a major change in teaching practice. In order to support schools in moving towards a competence-based approach the following points are pointed out as central. First of all good communication and involvement of all stakeholders at all levels is necessary for successful implementation, as both the overall needs of society as well as the needs and the experience of the users of the system must be taken into consideration. At school level implementation of the key competences can be supported by giving the key competences an appropriate status in the curricula, by training teachers as 'agents of change' through targeted CPD and by 'distributed leadership' which empowers teachers to work in teams and to focus on learning and the learning needs of the individual. An example is given from Belgium (Flanders) which hosted a PLA and where the key competences are included in both the subject-related final objectives as well as the cross-curricular objectives. While the subject specific objectives are required to be achieved by the students, the cross-curricular objectives complement the subject specific and are objectives that must be strived for. They are the responsibility of the whole school, not just one or two teachers and the school therefore has a legal obligation to organise the learning of the cross-curricular objectives.

The two reports are available at the Commission's website for Education & Training 2010 or can be found here:

[Main policy conclusions 2005-2007](#) from the cluster on Teachers and Trainers

[Synthesis Report on Peer Learning Activities in 2007](#) from the cluster on Key Competences.

Priorities for the French Presidency of the EU with regard to the "Education and training 2010 process" and forthcoming initiatives by the European Commission

France will take over the EU Presidency in the period from 1st of July to 31st December 2008. The main priorities of the French Presidency will be energy, the fight against climate change, immigration, Europe's defence policy, financial regulation and the future of the Common Agricultural Policy. In the field of education the French Minister of State responsible for European affairs has stated that it will be a core track of the French actions to promote the social dimension of EU action as well as to promote mobility.³ The priorities within higher education will be to reinforce quality assurance and to identify indicators to improve international comparability of higher education in Europe.

³ Stated by Mr. Jean-Pierre Jouyet, French Minister of State responsible for European affairs, at the Conference of the Committee chairmen of the European Parliament (Strasbourg, May 20, 2008), on the French presidency of the European Union.

The final program with the planned activities by the French Presidency is not made public yet, but the draft program regarding education is the following:

- Conference on Quality Assurance in Higher Education. Strasbourg. EU Presidency/Bologna conference, 9-10th September.
- Conference on Lifelong Guidance, 18-19 September, Lyon. Council Conclusions on Guidance are expected to be adopted in November.
- Conference on Learning Natural Sciences, 8-9 October, Grenoble.
- Conference on Special Needs, 29-30 October, Clermont-Ferrand.
- Conference on Mobility, 4-5 November, Nancy.
- Conference on Governance in schools, 6-7 November, Politiers. Council Conclusions on Governance are expected to be adopted in November.
- Conference on Indicators and Benchmarks. 13-14 November, Nice.
- Education Council, 20-21 November. Brussels.
- An informal meeting of the education ministers will be held on 25-26 November, Bordeaux,, where a Communiqué on VET will be adopted as a follow up to the Copenhagen process.

The French Presidency will moreover lead the Council's first negotiations on the two new proposals made by the Commission:

- The formal proposal for the ECVET, the European Credit Transfer System for VET, presented on 9 April (expected adopted in the autumn 2009).
- Establishment of a European Quality Assurance Reference Framework for Vocational Education and Training, presented also on 9th April (expected adopted in the autumn 2009).

In the second half of 2008, the following initiatives are moreover expected to be issued by the Commission:

- The Communication on schools, following up on last year's consultation, will be presented in July.
- A green paper on migration and education is expected in July.
- The renewed Social Agenda will be presented mid-2008. It is expected that it will give significant attention to education.
- A Symposium for the NESSE network and the EECE network in October 2008 will focus on Early Childhood Education.
- The Commission will present a proposal for a new strategic framework for EU cooperation on education beyond 2010 in December 2008. See below for further details.
- The Commission (DG EAC and DG EMPL) and CEDEFOP is working together to prepare the methodology for an assessment of the new skills requirement – or a skills forecast – for 2020 in continuation of the Portuguese Presidency's Conclusions on *New Skills for New Jobs* from the autumn 2007. A Communication will be presented in December 2008.

Update on the preparation of a new strategic framework for EU cooperation in Education & Training beyond 2010

As the EU Member States have entered the last phase of the Education & Training 2010 Work Programme, the drafting of a proposal for a new strategic framework in the area of education and training has started. Currently discussions and consultations are therefore taking place at several levels.

A High-level Group, organised by the EU Presidency and with members from the Member States has been set up to discuss strategic priorities beyond 2010 as well as debate the use of indicators and benchmarks. The group met in April 2008, and will meet again in June 2008.

The Commission is also consulting Member States, European Social Partners and stakeholders on their opinions on the current programme as well as on the main priorities after 2010. On 20 May 2008, the ETUCE participated in a Stakeholders' Forum on the future EU cooperation in education and training. The main part of the programme consisted of workshops in which the participants gave their opinion of the current work programme and subsequently discussed more specific issues related to the future challenges for the education systems in the EU. The ETUCE representative in the Conference was also invited to be a speaker in a panel debate at the closing of the event.

In preparation of this meeting the ETUCE had prepared a statement, adopted by the Bureau on 13 May, on the view of the ETUCE as regards the priorities for the new strategic framework. In this statement, which is based on discussions held in the ETUCE Council 2007, the ETUCE among other things emphasises the necessity of ensuring a broad outlook on education and underlines that education and training must not be seen solely with the aims of the Lisbon Strategy in mind. The ETUCE also calls for increased commitment in achieving the EU Benchmarks, improving teacher quality and teachers' status, increasing the focus on early childhood education, recognising the public responsibility for quality school education for all as well as calls for a redirection of the Commission's policy in higher education. The entire statement can be found [here](#).

In parallel with the meetings organised, the Commission is conducting a written consultation of Member States, Social Partners and stakeholders. The issues addressed are among other things the usefulness of the different working methods used so far (Benchmarks and indicators, national reporting and biennial joint reports) as well as future challenges and strategic objectives.

The Commission is expected to present the proposal for a new strategic framework in December 2008.

New calls for proposals for EU funding in the field of education and training

Within the framework of the lifelong learning programme, the Commission has recently published a range of calls for proposals, giving national trade unions the possibility to

either apply for projects themselves or be involved in projects carried out by other eligible authorities or bodies. The ETUCE Secretariat encourages member organisations to apply, where eligible, or to make contact to their national ministries or other national bodies where these institutions can apply for funding.

1.Call where member organisations are eligible

1.1. Development and implementation of the EQF and the NQF

On 30 May a call was published where, among others, the national social partners can submit proposals for projects supporting the implementation of the EQF and the NQF at national level. The projects must be carried out by partnerships consisting of representatives of at least 5 organisations from 5 different EU/EFTA countries. To be eligible to receive funding, it will therefore be necessary to seek partners for the projects from at least 4 other European countries.

Among the specific objectives of the call are:

- Support of the technical and operational aspects of the EQF's implementation, including its links to national and sectoral frameworks
- Development of principles, methods and procedures for placing levels of national or sectoral qualifications against the EQF levels
- Development and implementation of the learning outcomes approach promoted by the EQF
- Exploration of how the EQF and NQFs can open up formal education and training systems to the validation of non-formal and informal learning

Activities to be financed include workshops and seminars, establishment of specialised working groups, surveys and research that can identify issues, challenges and barriers, and more.

The potential beneficiaries are the European, national, regional and sectoral organisations, including, for example, ministries, qualifications authorities, sectoral associations, social partners and other key stakeholders with an interest and role in qualifications systems (Secretariat underlining). The selection criteria specify, amongst other, that the applicants (co-ordinators and partners) must be able to demonstrate that they have the technical competence, experience and representative legitimacy in the field of qualifications systems and frameworks relating to lifelong learning (covering general education/higher education and/or vocational education and training). Partnership co-ordinators must additionally show that they can establish and run a cohesive international partnership or consortium.

Applications must be dispatched to the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency no later than 13 August 2008.

For more information, see:

http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/llp/eqf/2008/funding_en.html

2. Other calls for proposals

2.1. Education and Training 2010 National Support

The Commission will soon offer a call for proposals aimed at supporting the national implementation of the Education & Training 2010 Work programme. Only National Ministries in charge of education and training and/or other public bodies formally designated by national governments as responsible for developing and/or implementing a coherent and comprehensive national lifelong learning strategy in line with the Education and Training 2010 work programme are eligible for the call.

However, the ETUCE Secretariat encourages member organisations to make contact with their national ministries in order to get informed on whether the ministry is applying for funding and thereby to seek influence on how teacher unions could be associated with the activities. In fact, one of the award criteria for the distribution of funding is *'the extent to which the activities involve a wide range of key stakeholders at all levels concerned by or participating in the establishment and implementation of lifelong learning strategies, including policy and decision makers, practitioners, providers, social partners, representatives of civil society and the learners'* (Secretariat underlining).

The call gives, amongst other, possibility for the financing of awareness-raising activities linked to the establishment and implementation of national lifelong learning strategies such as conferences, seminars and workshops or dissemination of existing tools or reference material (e.g. information activities, including media campaigns, publicity events, etc.). Such activities are of particular interest for teacher unions and the ETUCE Secretariat therefore prompts member organisations to seek influence on or participation in potential ministerial activities on education and training funded by this call.

The call has not been published yet, but will be published at:

<http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/index.htm>

2.2. Lifelong learning strategies

A call for proposals is available aiming at successful development and implementation of lifelong learning strategies at national and regional level. The eligible applicants are public authorities or bodies at the national or regional level who are responsible for developing and implementing coherent and comprehensive lifelong learning strategies. This for example concerns all higher education institutions which are controlled by public bodies. Only proposals submitted by partnerships of at least 5 organisations from 5 different eligible countries will be considered. The deadline for applications is 13 August 2008.

As in the abovementioned call the ETUCE Secretariat encourages member organisations to contact the authorities in charge and seek to be involved in the activities that will be undertaken. The call can provide funding for activities such as studies, conferences, co-operation projects and development of innovative practices with the purpose to exchange

experiences and good practices, support the identification of the main critical factors influencing the successful putting into place of national lifelong learning strategies and to ensure strong institutional commitment, coordination and partnership with all stakeholders.

For more information, see:

http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/llp/nlls/2008/funding_en.html

2.3. Projects to test and develop the ECVET

A call for proposals on projects to test and develop the ECVET is published. The call caters for international partnerships associating public bodies and authorities responsible for qualification systems; private/semi-private bodies with recognised responsibilities for qualification (at sectoral level, for instance); VET providers (public, private, sectoral, etc.) and/or VET providers' networks regulating body.

Teacher unions are therefore not among the eligible applicants, but the ETUCE Secretariat encourages members to notify possible partners of the project or to make contact with bodies or authorities who will carry out a project in the framework of this call. Member organisations could benefit from the information gathered in projects or participate in possible workshops or seminars.

The objective of the call for proposals is to provide grants for the organisation of two types of actions which must be combined in one project: on the one hand the creation and strengthening of partnerships between competent institutions that will work to create an operational framework for the development of tests of the ECVET. At the same time, the projects should entail experimental measures with a view to putting the ECVET system into practice. Activities to be financed include surveys and research to design methods, instruments, processes and procedures, workshops and seminars, establishment of specialised working groups, exploitation and dissemination of projects' results and more. The deadline for applications is 13 August 2008.

For more information, see:

http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/llp/ecvet/2008/funding_en.html

For more information on all of the above calls, see:

<http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/index.htm>