

EfVET Newsletter

June 2008

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Message from the President (June 2008)

Welcome

It is a pleasure to introduce our June 2008 newsletter and continue to follow our activities and developments closely. Special welcome to our new members and I trust I will be able to meet you all formally at our October Conference in Lithuania (details of which form part of this newsletter).

Strategic initiatives:

On a strategic front, EfvET has played a key role in a number of policy discussions with the European Commission and your President, Vice President and Steering Committee Representatives have all been actively involved. These events include :-

An invitation to participate in the recent Stakeholders Forum in association with EUCIS LLL, where your President and Vice President chaired and moderated two of the four workshops. The Forum discussed the key priorities the Commission and DG EAC should concentrate their energies relating to LLL over the next five to six years. A more comprehensive report is the subject of another article in this newsletter.

In addition, EfvET was well received at a major European Commission Conference on EQF, held on 4 June, my thanks to Stelios Mavromoustakos and Raza Zygmantaite for their valued contribution to this event.

Both these events are likely to become annual events and DG EAC see these as key to their continued dialogue with NGOs and civil society.

EfvET as a founding member of EUCIS has also participated in discussions with the Director-General of EAC regarding potential EC support. Discussions are on going and EUCIS is seeking additional Network representation. Currently over 18 European E&T Networks are members of EUCIS LLL.

Project activity:

Those of you who have submitted Transfer and Development of Innovation Projects in the 08 round of the Lifelong Learning Programme will no doubt be hearing from your National Agencies with approval/outcome of your project submissions. I am delighted that many of you have included EfvET as a dissemination partner in your proposals and we look forward to continued collaboration in this regard.

Website and promotion:

Your EfVET Steering Group Members and National Representatives have been exceptionally busy over recent months and I am pleased to inform you that after a few technical clichés and a lot of effort in transferring information and data, that our new www.efvet.org website will be launched in the next few weeks. This will have both a public and private space, the latter enabling discussion forums to be initiated and those areas of VET and Lifelong Learning development facing our sector.

The website will also allow each member institution/organisation to nominate at least five contact persons to aid communication.

My thanks to Aletia Trakis, colleagues at Intercollege, and other members for their energies devoted to our new website development.

Members of your steering Group have also moved forward in the creation of improved promotional literature, again to be launched shortly.

Annual International Conference –October 22-26th

On a final note, I am delighted to take this opportunity to invite you to attend our Annual International Conference to be held in Vilnius, Lithuania, this coming October, 22 – 26th. The theme and programme can be seen on our website and registration, hotel booking and requests for roundtables can be done via the web. Early bird discounts are available as usual and I hope to see you all at the event.

We have introduced a new dimension to the programme this year to incorporate a mobility and innovation marketplace to stimulate greater collaboration and partnership across our members. We hope you take advantage of this.

In conclusion for those heading for a break this summer, I wish you a restful vacation.

Warm regards



Peter Hodgson
President
president@efvet.org



Message du president (juin 2008)

Bienvenue

C'est avec plaisir que je vous communique notre bulletin de juin 2008 et continu de suivre de près la poursuite de nos activités et développements. Spéciale bienvenue à nos nouveaux membres. J'espère pouvoir tous vous rencontrer officiellement lors de notre conférence d'octobre en Lituanie (les renseignements sont contenus dans le présent bulletin).

Initiatives stratégiques :

D'un point de vue stratégique, EfVET a joué un rôle de premier ordre au cours de nombreuses discussions politiques avec la Commission Européenne et son Président, Vice Président et Comité de direction représentant y ont participé activement. Ces événements incluent :

Une invitation pour participer au récent « Stakeholders Forum » en association avec EUCIS LLL, pendant lequel le Président et Vice Président d'EfVET ont présidé deux des quatre ateliers organisés. Le Forum a abordé les priorités majeures auxquelles la Commission et la DG EAC devraient concentrer leur énergie concernant LLL, les cinq à six prochaines années. Un rapport plus détaillé sera l'objet d'un autre article dans ce bulletin.

De plus, EfVET a reçu bon accueil lors d'une conférence majeure de la Commission Européenne en EQF, tenue le 4 juin. Mes remerciements à Stelios Mavromoustakos et Rasa Zygmantaite pour leur contribution de valeur à cet événement.

Ces deux événements sont susceptibles de devenir événements de l'année et la DG EAC les considère comme étant clés pour la poursuite du dialogue avec NGO et la société civile.

EfVET, en tant que membre fondateur de EUCIS, a également participé aux discussions avec le Directeur Général de EAC concernant un potentiel soutien de la CE. Les discussions se poursuivent et EUCIS cherche à étendre son réseau de représentation. A l'heure actuelle, plus de 18 réseaux Européen E & T sont membres de EUCIS LLL.

Activités en projet :

Ceux qui ont souscrit au projet de Transfert et Développement de l'Innovation en 2008 autour du programme de la Formation et de l'Education tout au Long de la vie, vont sans aucun doute recevoir des nouvelles de vos Agences Nationales concernant l'accord/le résultat de votre proposition de projet. Je me réjouis que beaucoup d'entre vous aient inclus EfVET comme partenaire de diffusion dans vos propositions et souhaite vivement poursuivre la collaboration à cet égard.

Site Web et promotion :

Le Comité de Direction d'EfVET et ses représentants nationaux ont été particulièrement occupés ces derniers mois et je suis heureux de vous informer qu'après beaucoup d'efforts de transfert d'informations et de données, notre nouveau site web www.efvet.org va être opérationnel dans les semaines à venir. Il comprendra à la fois un espace public et privé, ce dernier permettant de mettre en place des forums de discussion. Les domaines du VET et du développement de la Formation et de l'Education tout au Long de la vie qui sont en interaction avec notre secteur d'activité auront également accès à ce forum de discussion.

Le site web va également permettre à chaque membre, qu'il s'agisse d'institution ou d'organisation, de nommer au moins 5 contacts, permettant ainsi, une meilleure communication.

Mes remerciements à Aletia Trakis, collègue d'Intercollege, et aux autres membres pour l'énergie qu'ils ont dépensé au développement de notre nouveau site web.

Les membres de votre Comité de Direction ont aussi avancé dans la création d'une documentation promotionnelle améliorée, qui sera elle aussi publiée prochainement.

Conférence Internationale annuelle – du 22 au 26 octobre

Enfin, je suis heureux de saisir cette occasion pour vous inviter à assister à notre Conférence Internationale annuelle qui sera tenue à Vilnius, Lituanie, du 22 au 26 octobre prochain. Le thème et programme sont disponibles sur notre site web et l'inscription, les réservations pour l'hôtel et les demandes concernant les tables rondes peuvent être effectuées via le web. Comme d'habitude, les demandes faites rapidement bénéficient de réductions. J'espère tous vous voir à l'occasion de cet événement.

Nous avons intégré une nouvelle dimension au programme cette année introduisant mobilité et innovation sur le marché pour stimuler une meilleure collaboration et partenariat entre nos membres. Nous espérons que vous en tirerez profit.

En conclusion, pour ceux se préparant à faire une pause cet été, je vous souhaite des vacances reposantes.

Cordialement,



Peter Hodgson
President
president@efvet.org

EfVET 2008 Conference in Lithuania

The 17th EfVET Annual International Conference will be held in Vilnius (Lithuania) from:
22 till 25 October 2008.

The conference venue is the **Radisson SAS Astorija hotel** (www.vilnius.radissonsas.com) a five star hotel right in the centre of the old city of Vilnius.

Theme/Title:

Improving Quality in Vocational Education and Training as a Vehicle of Lifelong Learning

The multitude of initiatives emanating from EU policy for Education and Training as we move to implement the 2010 Lisbon Agenda include a range of tools and instruments to drive improvements in Vocational Education and Training and foster a lifelong learning culture throughout Europe.

These policy drivers, including EQF and ECVET aim to encourage member states to raise their game in terms of National VET frameworks, stimulate transparency and encourage European citizens to raise their skills promoting greater mobility and opportunity through both learning and working abroad in other member states. Europass and the European CV encourage a common framework in this regard.

How then do we as Learning institutions respond ? How do we make it happen? How do we ensure the quality of VET delivery? How do we enhance the learning experience for all European citizens to bring about both economic and social cohesion? What strategies can we adopt and share to bring about real improvements in Vocational Education and Training?

These challenges are both relevant to VET managers and practitioners alike.

Conference will address some of the quality issues facing both leaders and teachers in VET and Lifelong Learning institutions through presentations from experts and workshops. **Issues include:**

For Managers:

- Improving leadership and management and organisational structure
- Strategies for attracting high quality staff
- Resourcing and financial implications – a key to modernising VET

For Teachers:

- Initial advice, guidance and individual learner planning
- Flexible learning pathways to meet learner needs
- Competence based approaches and assessment methodologies
- Monitoring learner progress and quality assurance methodologies.

To encourage lively debate and the sharing of good practice across the membership – delegates will be invited to prepare in advance examples of practice from across Europe on these issues.

Conference will also include the opportunity for delegates to disseminate the outcomes, products and results of their European partnership projects as has been the case in recent years. These Roundtable sessions can be booked as part of the Registration process.

New for 2008. – The Mobility Marketplace --

Conference will, as a result of member feedback, include a new and stimulating session on all aspects of student and staff mobility. This will take the form of a 'Mobility marketplace' offering members the opportunity to establish new partnerships, discuss logistics and mobility initiatives in a supportive setting. It will be set up as a surgery – for individual partnerships to come together to promote and plan effective mobility initiatives.

Draft programme:

Day 1: Wednesday 22 October

- 15:30 -18:30 Registration at Hotel Radisson SAS Astorija
- 18:30 -19:15 Welcome reception for new members and first time participants: -
"Introduction to EfVET and the conference".
Peter Hodgson, President of EfVET, and the Steering Committee members.
- 19:15 -20:00 Reception for all delegates and partners: the Vilnius City Hall
- 20:00 Dinner/cultural evening in the Vilnius City Hall

Day 2: Thursday 23 October

- 9:00 - 9.15 Welcome to Vilnius: day chair – Rasa Zygmantaite
- 9.15 - 9.30 Formal welcome by the Ministry of Education, Lithuania
- 9:30 - 9.50 Welcome to the conference; setting the theme:
Pete Hodgson, President of EfVET
- 9.50 -10:30 Keynote speaker: David Sherlock, Director 'Beyond standards'
"EQF – its role in improving quality assurance in European VET of the future"
- 10.30 -11.00 Breakout session for reflection (including refreshment break)
- 11.00 -11.30 questions and discussion
- 11.30 -12:15 Keynote speaker: Tina Bertzeletou, Principal VET expert CEDEFOP
"The European Approach to Quality in VET: a (draft) Recommendation and a Model".

12:15 Questions

12:30 -14:00 Lunch

14:00 -15:00 Workshops

Teachers

- 1) Progression Pathways implementing Individual Learning Strategies
- 2) Competence based Assessment Methodologies
- 3) How can we really improve VET

Directors

- 4) Quality Inspection of Colleges
- 5) To merge or not to merge? That is the Question!

15:00 -15:30 Refreshment break

15:30 -16:30 Workshops

17.30 Buses leave for Parliament

18.00 - 20.00 Reception at the Parliament

Following the reception delegates are free to make their own arrangements.
Discover the historic centre of Vilnius

Day 3: Friday 24th October

08.45 -10.00 Annual General Meeting

10.00 -10.45 Keynote speaker: Dr. Laima Andrikiene - Lithuanian Member of European Parliament.
"A reflection on the importance of VET and skills to the success of Europe."

10.45 -11.15 Refreshment break

11.15 -12.15 Roundtables:
an opportunity to learn about the many education development projects (both Transfer and development of innovation projects) and their products arising from Transnational partnerships under the European Lifelong Learning programme 2007 - 2013

12:30 -14.00 Lunch

14.00 -15.45 Mobility and Innovation Market place:
This new dimension to the Conference programme will enable delegates to explore new opportunities for both mobility (Leonardo and Erasmus)and Innovation/Development project partnerships. Time and opportunity for potential

new partnerships / consortia to discuss detailed interest/logistics – dates-times;
use of Europass and quality issues.

Marketplace co-ordinator:
Stefano Tirati, EfvET National representative, Italy

Refreshment break incorporated in to Marketplace session as and when required by participants

15.45 -16.45 Roundtables

19:00 Coaches leave for Gala Dinner and dance at Belmontas Restaurant

Day 4: Saturday 25 October

09:30 -10:30 Keynote speaker: (TBA)
Quality and VET in the workplace – a business perspective

10:30 -11:00 Refreshment break

11:00 -11.45 Conference conclusions and discussion.
Hans F. van Aalst, past President of EfvET

11.45 -12.00 Announcement of 18th EfvET Annual International Conference in 2009.

12:00 Closing of the conference Peter Hodgson, President, EfvET

13:00 Coaches leave for trip to Trakai, medieval capital of Lithuania
Lunch on the way in restaurant Tarku Dvarkiemis
Guided tour of Trakai Castle

Delegate fee

The delegate fee includes:

All conference material, welcome reception and dinner at the Vilnius City Hall Wednesday evening 22 October, the reception at the Parliament of Lithuania on Thursday late afternoon/evening 23 October, refreshment breaks and lunches during the conference, the conference dinner and dance in Belmontas Restaurant (www.belmontas.lt) on Friday evening 24 October, the excursion to Trakai, Medieval Capital of Lithuania, including a lunch in restaurant Traku Dvarkiemis and guided tour of Trakai Castle on Saturday afternoon 25 October, all transport during the conference.

The partner fee includes:

Welcome reception and dinner at the Vilnius City Hall Wednesday evening 22 October, the reception at the Parliament of Lithuania on Thursday late afternoon/evening 23 October, lunches during the conference, the conference dinner and dance in Belmontas Restaurant on Friday evening 24 October, the excursion to Trakai, Medieval Capital of Lithuania, including a lunch in restaurant Tarku

Dvarkiemis and a guided tour of Trakai Castle on Saturday afternoon 25 October, all transport during the conference.

Delegate fee till 01 July 2008 ("Early bird fee"):

Member of EFVET, one delegate:	€ 610
From the 2 nd delegate of the same member organisation discount € 50, per delegate:	€ 560
Non-member of EFVET, one delegate:	€ 810
From the 2 nd delegate of the same non-member organisation discount € 50, per delegate:	€ 760
Partner fee	€ 290

Delegate fee after 01 July 2008:

Member of EFVET, one delegate:	€ 650
From the 2 nd delegate of the same member organisation discount € 40, per delegate:	€ 610
Non-member of EFVET, one delegate:	€ 850
From the 2 nd delegate of the same non-member organisation discount € 40, per delegate:	€ 810
Partner fee:	€ 290
Accommodation:	

Hotel Radisson SAS Astorija 5 star (www.vilnius.radissonsas.com)

Conference venue

Room: single/double occupancy € 120 per night incl. breakfast

Hotel Ramada 4 star (www.ramadavilnius.lt/lt)

1 minute walk from the conference venue

Room: single: single occupancy	€ 88 per night	incl. breakfast
double: single occupancy	€ 92 per night	incl. breakfast
double: double occupancy	€ 102 per night	incl. breakfast

Hotel Europa Royal 4 star (www.groupeuropa.com/index.php//181)

2 minute walk from the conference venue

Room: single/double occupancy € 85 per night incl. breakfast

Registration:

You may have noticed our Website is under reconstruction. When you click on www.efvet.org you will still come to the old website. However you can still register for the conference there under “conferences”

For the hotel booking you should use the “hotel booking form”, which you can find under the same heading on our Website.

If you would like to present a roundtable session, please fill in the “roundtable proposals form”, also under “conferences” on our Website.

Frans Schneider

EfVET formulating Policies

Late May and early June the DG Education and Culture organized two stakeholders meeting in which EfVET was represented.

- A. European Stakeholder’ Forum on Future EU Cooperation in Education and Training – Brussels 20 May 2008. The president, Peter Hodgson and the vice president, Stelios Mavromoustakos took active part in the discussions. The forum tackled four main issues:
 - i. Citizenship and intercultural dialogue
 - ii. Sustainability and resources
 - iii. Access and participation
 - iv. Reference tools and instruments

The conclusions and recommendations on each issue can be found in the General report (see attachment)

- B. EQF Implementation Conference – Brussels 3/4 June 2008. The vice president and Rasa Zygmantaite, national representative of Lithuania, represented EfVET. The conference dealt with five key issues:
 - i. Linking national qualifications levels to EQF-how can quality assurance and criteria for self-certification promote mutual trust?
 - ii. How can the EQF-and National Qualifications Frameworks – facilitate the validation of non-formal and informal learning?
 - iii. How can the EQF be used as a reference point for all qualification-including those developed by industry sectors, enterprises and professionals?
 - iv. What is the role of National Qualifications Frameworks in implementing the EQF?
 - v. How can the EQF be used to build links between sub-systems of education, including adult education, vocational education and training and higher education?

The conclusions, recommendations and all presentations can be found at:
http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/educ/eqf/conf_en.html

Good reading to all,
Stelios Mavromoustakos
Vice President



Adobe Acrobat
Document

An International Strategy for the English VET Sector

The English Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS) invited the Further Education (VET) Sector to consider how best to align goals and priorities for the development of an International Strategy. Devolution means that the DIUS has jurisdiction only within England, but it is likely that Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland will devise or re-formulate similar strategies. The draft strategy sets out a vision of a VET sector that is committed to developing its learners to be global citizens; recognises the international dimension as essential to the development of its domestic clients; sees the international dimension as a basis for learning from experience overseas and uses it to support a process of continual improvement domestically; supports the mobility of labour, both into and from England and the UK; is world-class and ready to collaborate, both at home and overseas, in order to maximise the mutual benefits of its work.

Goal 1 aims to equip learners for life in a global society and work in a global economy, by supporting global understanding and social and community cohesion, by ensuring the VET curriculum supports the development of the global citizen by instilling a strong global dimension into the learning experience; by equipping employers and employees with the skills needed for the global economy, including vocational, foreign language and ICT skills; and by building the capacity of teaching staff to support the delivery of a curriculum for global citizens.

Goal 2 aims to engage with international partners to achieve their goals and ours, by working to make the EU “the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world”; by benchmarking UK performance against world class standards and drawing on best practice; and by supporting the overseas development agenda.

Goal 3 aims to maximise the contribution of the Further Education system to overseas trade and investment, by promoting the further expansion of the number of international learners at UK institutions; by ensuring an excellent student experience; by making England an international leader in the delivery of vocational and 21st century skills; and by encouraging education and training providers to work internationally in partnership with business and other local partners.

Goal 4 aims to develop an infrastructure that supports operation in international markets, by clarifying Government policy and priorities; by improving the transparency of qualifications and the extent to which they are mutually recognised; by improving knowledge of international activity and monitoring trends and identifying key target countries on which to focus particular energy.

Once the strategy is accepted, it will be essential to make sure that it forms part of all VET institutions' missions so that learners emerge trained to work not only in the local or regional arena but also directly or virtually in the European Union and the wider global economy.

Those of us who have been advocating such developments for some years will be working hard to ensure the widest implementation of this international strategy.

Geoff Scaplehorn
EfvET UK Representative

How to implement ECVET

European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET) is something new in vocational education.

By way of ECVET it is easier recognize learning outcomes (knowledge, skills and competences) which are achieved by the students during studying periods abroad. It will encourage students have studies and training in other countries, too.

Finnish National Board of Education had project called Finecvet in 2006 – 2007. One of the aims was to pilot ECVET system in nine national vocational qualifications.

Kainuu Vocational College was one the vocational schools to pilot the system. Our role was to pilot ECVET in the vocational qualification of agriculture. Kainuu Vocational College is active in international co-operation. Annually 40 -50 students from different sectors have on the job training periods abroad. Correspondingly it receives about the same amount of students from other countries. Until now the assessment of the students has been done mostly according to Finnish criteria.

After getting acquainted with ECVET we began to think about the possibility to give up using Finnish assessment criteria in the pilot project. Instead of it the students would be assessed according to criteria of the receiving country. If it succeeded we could transfer the learning outcomes and recognise them as a part of their qualification.

We got two partners from Germany, Agricultural School in Nordhorn and Chamber of Agriculture in Niedersachsen. We got Leonardo funding for sending four students for weeks to Germany in September 2007. The students worked on dairy farms mostly in animal husbandry. The learning outcomes (knowledge, skills, competence) to be achieved were described. In the document called Learning Agreement we described and agreed all the practical things during the period.



In the end of the period German partners organized a practical examination where learning outcomes were assessed according to local requirements. It was completely different from Finnish one and it was done using English language. The examination succeeded well. The period was recognised and accumulated as a part of the qualification. There is a note in the certificates of students that a part of the studies has been done in Germany.

In this pilot case trial of ECVET system succeeded well. It was so because we had good partners, we prepared well and learning outcomes were described clearly. Agriculture is good for ECVET because there are not so many differences between the countries and perfect skills of languages are not needed.

Risto Virkkunen
International manager
Kainuu Vocational College
Kajaani
Finland



- You've got a large experience as president of EFVET in analyzing different strategies in Vocational Training Institutions. Can you explain us if there has been an evolution in the VET institutions during the last 15 years in Europe?

- Larger scale of institutions
- Professional management
- Connection of VET and work
- Minimum qualification and/or work for all; including older workers, unemployed and unemployed youngsters
- ICT as part of working and learning environment.
- Ensure that people take responsibility for their own learning.
- "Competency based" learning

- From your point of view, are the governments aware of the importance of the Vocational Education and Training in the future of the economical and social development of the different countries?

- Most Governments are beginning to understand the importance of VET for social and economic development. However, traditional educational policies as they have been so successful in the 19th and first part of the 20th centuries are still dominant. Educational policies for VET demand different conceptual and operational frameworks.

- How do you see the cooperation between VET institutions and labour market organisations in Europe in general?

- General frameworks on the national/regional level are needed as well as agreed commitment to learning in the workplace and schooling of teachers. However, the real work has to be done on the local/regional level between VET institutions and companies/institutions (including public institutions)

"Strong support from government, industry, public institutions and labour organisations is crucial"

**Hans F.
van Aalst**

Past President European Forum of Vocational
Education and Training (EFVET) The Netherlands

- We can read in a lot of documents that the European framework for VET is necessary. What do you think about it?

- Not so many youngsters will be so mobile as is intended. However, for the status of VET, it is crucial that qualifications can be related to an European framework. And Youngsters are often quite proud about this. The danger is that the European framework is going to be "translated" downwards to local, regional or national qualifications. This is not the right way of doing things. Qualifications should be developed and agreed upon on the regional level and then related to the European framework.

- In most of the developed countries we are affording a structural problem. In a few years, a generation of workers will retire and maybe the new generation will not be able to replace the vacancies. Which could be the solutions?

- Solutions include a dedicated and firm mix of:

1. Replacement strategies:

- a. Immigration.
- b. Increase participation of people which are currently inactive in the labour market – unemployed youngsters, unemployed elderly, women
- c. Increase working hours and retirement at a later age
- d. Shorten the time that youngsters spend in initial (general) education (and use the freed money for Life Long Learning arrangements)

2. Innovation of industries, services and government (probably the most sustainable, but will take time)

3. Upgrade the role, status and operation of VET

- We know that you have been more than once in the Basque Country. Which is your impression about the Vocational Training in the Basque Country?

- There are notable differences between institutions. Some are excellent. I would welcome further cooperation between public and private institutions and further develop the common framework for VET in the the Basque-country. All institutions, including the ones that are really good now will face the need for transformations to meet the changing context. Strong support from government, industry, public institutions and labour organisations is crucial.

European Forum of Technical
and Vocational Education
and Training



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