

EFVET Newsletter

October 2006

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Message from the President (October 2006)



EfVET's upgrade

The Steering Committee has decided upon the upgrade of EfVET to better meet the future. Some of the reasons include the intensified role of the EU in VET-policies – such as the Life Long Learning programme. This requires a stronger and more focused approach of EfVET's voice of VET practitioners and managers in those policies. Also: the increasing role of EfVET in dissemination of project work may require restructuring of current work in order to guarantee top quality and transparency to members. The Steering Committee asked a small group to draft a "manifesto" and an agenda for further action, based on recommendations of the Policy Committee. Both will be discussed at the forthcoming Annual Conference in Cyprus. I heartily invite you all to participate in those discussions.

Farewell to Leila

Farewell to Leila Lahti who has retired from the Steering Committee. She has been the longest serving National Representative so far (since 1993) and played a key role in getting EfVET where it stands today. The human factor and sharp observations guided her wise and calm input at the Steering Committee meetings and in the Conference Preparation Group. We will miss her! Leila: thank you for all you did and for your warm friendship.

The new representative from Finland is Raimo Sivonen. Raimo : welcome. Many of us know you already and appreciate your experience and professionalism.

From Copenhagen to Helsinki

The Finnish Leonardo da Vinci National Agency in CIMO in co-operation with the Ministry of Education in Finland and the European Commission will organise a European conference on the 4th December 2006 in Marina Congress Center, Helsinki, Finland. The title of the conference is *"Best practices supporting European Cooperation in VET"*. EfVET will be present and address the conference in the plenary session. For further information, you may contact the organisers by E-mail leonardo@cimo.fi or by phone at +358-9-7747 7219.

Personal Farewell

As some of you already know, I will step down from my position as President of EfVET at the Cyprus Conference. There are two reasons: first I have served EfVET for six years now and it may be healthy for the organisation to change. Secondly: personal circumstances are binding me increasingly to home and draw a lot of my energy and emotions towards family life.

I have served you with great pleasure and a lot of respect for the work all of you do for your clients and students and for society as a whole. As you may have noticed, my main drive for servicing EfVET was the wish to improve the recognition of VET as the main educational effort for personal, social and economic development in Europe.

I wish to say goodbye by sharing with you an overview of items that have guided and inspired my work in EfVET. These will appear elsewhere in this Newsletter.

Your new President

The Steering Committee has appointed Peter Hodgson as the new President of EfVET. There is probably no need to introduce Pete to you. His wide experience in VET and in EfVET are well known. His dedication to improve EfVET is impressive. His work for EUCIS as the speaking platform of Non Governmental Organisations, the cooperation agreement with EVTA and his work for EfVET's participation in projects are only a few elements that show his productivity. I wish him and you all an inspired and productive future!

I am looking forward to meeting you in Cyprus.

Hans F. van Aalst
President
president@efvet.org

Méssage du Président (octobre 2006)

Progrès de l'EfVET

Le comité de pilotage de l'EfVET a décidé d'améliorer l'EfVET pour répondre aux demandes de l'avenir. Une raison principale tourne sur le rôle croissant de l'UE dans les politiques de la formation professionnelle – Le Programme d'apprentissage tout au long de la vie, par exemple. Ceci demande une approche plus déterminée de l'EfVET qui représente les opinions des praticiens et des directeurs du VET. Le rôle croissant, aussi, de l'EfVET tourne sur la dissémination des resultants des projets européens, qui doit être réstructurée pour garantir aux membres la haute qualité et la transparence.

Le comité de pilotage a demandé à un petit groupe de préparer un "manifeste" et un programme d'action pour l'avenir, basés sur les recommandations du comité de politique. On en discutera tous les deux à la Conférence Annuelle en Chypre.

Je vous invite tous à participer à ces discussions.

Adieu à Leila

Adieu à Leila Lahti qui a pris sa retraite du comité de pilotage. Elle exerce ses fonctions de représentant national depuis 1993 et a joué un rôle indispensable à développer l'EfVET à sa position actuelle. Son humanité et ses vives observations ont guidé ses contributions calmes et sages au travail du comité de pilotage et au groupe de préparation de la conférence. Nous regretterons son absence dans l'avenir! Nous te remercions pour tout ce que tu as fait pour l'EfVET et surtout pour ton amitié chaleureuse.

Le nouveau représentant finlandais est Raimo Sivonen. Sois la bienvenue, Raimo! Beaucoup de nous te connaissons déjà et apprécions ton expérience et ton professionnalisme.

De Copenhague à Helsinki

L'agence nationale finlandaise du programme Leonardo da Vinci à CIMO en coopération avec le ministère d'éducation en Finlande et la Commission Européenne organiseront une conférence le 4 décembre 2006 au Marina Congress Centre, Helsinki, Finlande. Le titre de cette conférence est "De meilleures pratiques pour soutenir la Coopération Européenne en VET"

L'EfVET assistera à cette conférence et fera un exposé à la session plénière.

Pour en trouver les détails et pour contacter les organisateurs: Emel: leonardo@cimo.fi ou par téléphone +358 9 7747 7219.

Mon Adieu Personnel

Comme vous le savez déjà, je me retirerai de ma position de Président de l'EfVET à la Conférence de Chypre. Il y en a deux raisons. D'abord, je suis Président de l'EfVET depuis six ans maintenant et il sera peut-être bon pour l'organisation de changer le Président. Deuxièmement, mes circonstances personnelles me forcent de passer plus de temps chez moi et d'exercer beaucoup de mon énergie et mes émotions au sein de la famille.

J'ai exercé mes fonctions avec grand plaisir et j'ai beaucoup de respect pour le travail que vous faites tous pour vos clients et pour vos étudiants et pour la société entière. Comme vous avez remarqué, mon dynamisme principal au sein de l'EfVET, a été le désir d'améliorer l'acceptance de VET comme la structure principale pour le développement, personnel, social et économique

Je vous dis adieu en partageant avec vous une vue d'ensemble des questions qui ont guidé et inspiré mon travail à l'EfVET. Ceux-ci vous trouverez ci-dessous dans ce bulletin.

Votre Nouveau Président

Le comité de pilotage a nommé Peter Hodgeson comme nouveau Président de l'EfVET. On n'a probablement pas besoin de vous présenter Pete. Vous connaissez sa grande expérience de VET et de l'EfVET. Son dévouement à l'amélioration de l'EfVET est impressionnant. Son travail pour l'EUCIS – le plateforme des organisations non-gouvernementales – l'accord de coopération entre l'EfVET et l'EVTA et ses efforts d'encourager la participation de l'EfVET aux projets européens ne vous montrent qu'une partie de sa productivité Je vous souhaite un avenir inspiré et productif!

J'attends avec impatience de vous rencontrer encore une fois en Chypre.

Hans F. van Aalst
Président
president@efvet.org

What inspired my Presidency during the last 6 years

In my address to the Annual Conference in Maastricht (2001) I have welcomed the EU agenda for Life Long Learning:

- Universal & continuing access and renewing skills
- Increase investment in human resources (knowledge as investment)
- Effective teaching and learning-contexts
- Recognise and certify the outcomes of different types of learning (informal and non-formal)
- Guidance and Counselling – quality advice
- Bring learning closer to the learner (home, workplace, communities)

These issues should still be our common concern.

In Sevilla 2002 I have suggested a framework for a new pedagogy for Life Long Learning:

- The new pedagogical triangle:
Person – Environment - Meaning
- The balance between:
guided, experiential and action-learning
- Knowing in stead of knowledge

In 2003 in Cardiff I shared with you the troublesome public awareness of VET:

- 1% of newspaper articles on education covers VET
- 60% of public does not know what a VET institution is
- Only 1/3 of public knows that 60% of the workforce has been educated by VET

I suggested to better signalling and branding VET in the public arena

- Clear pathways and links throughout the educational arena
- Clarity of information
- Visibility of investment in quality, assurance, consistency and recognition.

I suggested to reorganise institutions as **service-oriented** and networked rather than product-oriented and concentrated.

The theme of service-organisations was further developed at the Tuscany conference of 2004, where I explained the difference between supply-based education and education for competency. I referred to recent guidelines for Human Capital development.

And in 2005 in Budapest, I made the case for a "*European Vocational Learning Space*" to further develop the use of best practises to enduring quality improvement of VET.

All of these issues do still inspire me and I do hope that EfVET will carry them onwards.

Hans F. van Aalst
September 2006-09-22

Note: all my publications and presentations will appear on my web-site: www.hansfvanaalst.info

Presentations at EfVET conferences may also be downloaded from the EfVET website.

For any contacts in the future: hfaalst@ision.nl

New Vice President

Up to September 30, I received three nominations for the position of Vice President: from Italy, Denmark and Lithuania. All three nominated Stelios Mavromoustakis from Cyprus. This means that Stelios is elected. I have understood that Stelios accepts the position.

May I congratulate Stelios and EfVET with this excellent choice!

Hans F. van Aalst

Cyprus 2006 Conference:

VET: A different route to excellence

Rationale: For many years, Vocational Education and Training and Lifelong Learning has been the 'Cinderella' of the Education systems across Europe with a major division between 'Academia and VET' as routes to higher qualifications and prosperity. This artificial divide has created a perspective within society of two classes with VET being perceived as the learning route for the less able. Increasingly, however, European Union member states have recognized that if Europe is to face the challenge of globalization and to allow its citizens to grasp the opportunities afforded through Europe – then the VET framework is a key to raising the potential of its citizens to play a full and active role in society. A key to this is providing learning for all which offer greater flexibility and choice for the learner/citizen whether young or adult. It requires movement on several fronts:

- a) Equal valuation of different learning routes
- b) Developing new routes, combinations of academic and vocational
- c) European Qualification Framework and the status of VET and general education at all levels
- d) The different modes of mobility in academic and vocational education. What can we learn from it?
- e) Good practices in enhancing VET in the EU

The Conference will seek to address these issues in two primary ways:

Firstly – to consider the issues and look at models and approaches drawn from different member states

Secondly – look at the ways in which the European policy issues are being implemented at National level

Please find the programme and workshops in the attached files at the end of this Newsletter

**If you want to attend the conference please contact Stelios Mavromoustakos/
mavromoustakos.s@intercollege.ac.cy as soon as possible.**

Leif Haar

Contribution of EUCIS-LLL Platform on the Trüpel report

Please see the attached pages/files at the end of this Newsletter

Peter Hodgson

Conference Report - The European Social Model

26-27 June 2006

EESC, 99 rue Belliard, Brussels

This first joint conference of the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) in Brussels and the International Labour Organisation (ILO) in Geneva was the first concrete step in the implementation of a protocol of cooperation between the two organisations signed on 1st December 2005. Both parties believed that a better understanding and appreciation of the European Social Model as an integral part of European society is of utmost importance not only for the European Union but also for the whole world.

This was particularly true when it came to issues like social justice, social protection, equal opportunities and minimum social and labour standards – all of which were crucial for people's well being and sustainable economic progress. Many of these values were reflected in the international labour standards of the ILO.

The second objective of the conference was to contribute significantly to the substance of the EESC's biennial conference on "European Identity" which took place on 18 and 19 September 2006 in Brussels. As the Committee promotes awareness that the cultural and the social dimensions, built on typical European values, objectives, institutions and practice, play a key role in forging and strengthening European identity, the outcome of the conference was of particular interest.

The originality of the conference lay in the fact that the "European Model of Society" with its specific social values and its particular identity was examined critically from a European perspective as well as from the outside. The differences in perception and judgement were of special interest and stimulate further ideas and debates.

The central guiding questions were "What can Europe be particularly proud of?" and "What, beyond economics, can Europe contribute to the development and cohesion of the world?"

For further information on this first joint conference please contact Mr. Alan Hick, head of the SOC section: alan.hick@eesc.europa.eu

Geoff Scaplehorn

Conference Report

Towards an ECVET model: New Approaches to transparency, mobility and international recognition of competences

**Czech University of Agriculture, Prague
18 September 2006**

In the course of the "Bruges-Copenhagen Process" projects and initiatives are being promoted that are working on the exemplary development of a credit transfer system for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET). The development of an ECVET is seen as one of the common measures necessary for the promotion of transparency, comparability, transferability and

recognition of competences and/or qualifications, between different countries and at different levels of VET.

One such model was the approach taken by the "Competence Matrix" that had been developed in the Leonardo da Vinci project VQTS (Vocational Qualification Transfer System), a large pilot project focussing on the sector of "mechanical engineering" ("Mechatronics") This approach in particular offered a solution for the description of the acquisition of competences within VET which could support understanding between the world of education and the world of work.

In plenary sessions, there were presentations on the preliminary results of the Technical Working Group on ECVET; the status quo of the European Qualification Framework (EQF) in relation to the ECVET and the core results of the VQTS project.

Four workshops explored the following issues:

- The relationship of ECVET and European and National Qualification Frameworks
- International recognition of competences/qualifications and practical approaches to improve the quality of mobility.
- Transparency, allocation of credit points and the interface with Higher Education
- Descriptions of competences – Methodological questions

For a fuller report on this Conference, please contact Geoff Scaplehorn: geoff@acer.ac.uk
More details on the VQTS project can be found on www.VocationalQualification.net

Geoff Scaplehorn

2007: 'European Year of Equal Opportunities for all'

The European Commission has welcomed the decision by the Council and Parliament to designate 2007 as 'European Year of Equal Opportunities for All'.

Through a number of initiatives, the Year will promote the awareness among Europeans citizens on their right not to be discriminated against, equal opportunity and diversity, as values for strengthening Europe.

The various initiatives will focus on a number of issues linked to gender, race or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation and on four main themes:

- ✓ Rights
- ✓ Representation
- ✓ Recognition
- ✓ Respect

The EU Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, Vladimír Špidla has recently stated: 'Europeans have a right to enjoy equal treatment and a life free of discrimination. The European Year of Equal Opportunities for All in 2007 aims to ensure they all know this. For a whole year, we will be putting the spotlight on equal opportunities and the benefits for Europe of a diverse society. Too many talents in Europe are poorly utilized and we can't afford it'.

The overall budget approved is €15million and via the national, regional and local initiatives an additional co-financing of €7.6 million will be ensured.

The typology of initiatives that can be promoted is wide and range from information campaigns to schools prizes, from surveys on discrimination attitudes to awards for best practices within companies.

Further information about the Year can be found at the official website:
http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/equality2007/index_en.htm

If you are interested in promoting projects and initiatives in this area, please contact:
Stefano Tirati
EFVET Italia
stefano@cscs.it

HETEL – 21 VET Schools of the Basque Country in Spain (www.hetel.org)

NEW EUROPEAN PROJECT COORDINATOR

Ms. Anabel Menica takes the place of Carlos San Juan in the coordination of HETEL European projects from 1st September onwards. Her work will ensure the collaboration of 19 out of the 21 different VET Schools from all over the Basque Country in Spain that belong to HETEL. She will carry out various tasks to reach the objectives set up in our 2006-2007 Work programme in relation to European projects and International Relations. **She will be your HETEL contact person!**

During the 2005-2006 academic year, more than 185 students belonging to HETEL Schools participated in 13 - week work placements in enterprises of countries such as the United Kingdom, Ireland, The Netherlands, Finland, Austria, Poland, Italy, etc... Our aim is to promote our students' technical and personal competences by means of living and working in an unknown environment. After having been trained for about 1.700 hours in the School, the students are given the opportunity to use their knowledge doing practical labours at companies. The evaluation on their life and work experience in other countries has been very positive.

Apart from these mobility projects, our VET Schools want to get involved in inter- exchanges and pilot projects too. Some centres have also submitted applications under Socrates and Grundtvig so that both teachers and pupils can share their interests by travelling and working together with other Schools in a different European country.

On the other hand, more and more of our VET Schools are ready to welcome foreign students in their premises and allow them to have work experiences in companies ranging from three to twenty weeks. Residence halls, flats or families are normally available. When possible, we try to send one of our local students together with the coming one to the enterprise, in order to make communication easier, although some Spanish knowledge is desirable.

We have received the approval of different student mobility projects to be developed from March to June 2007 and would like to contact similar institutions or Schools willing to welcome our students. As a receiving partner we would organize work placements in different Areas of Vocational Training. If you are interested in being one of our partners or you need any further information, do not hesitate to contact our new coordinator:

Ms. Anabel Menica, HETEL European Projects Coordinator, amenica@txorierri.net

Anabel will also participate in the EFVET 2006 Annual Conference in Cyprus, where you can contact her.

Carlos Sanjuan
HETEL European Projects Coordinator

IVETA 15th International Conference in Moscow Russia at August 21-24th 2006

The Union of VET Principals of Russia and the Centre for VET Studies (National Observatory) organised the IVETA 15th International Conference in Moscow in August 2006. Theme for conference was Life Long Learning. Life Long Learning was dealt with several speakers and viewpoints. In conference was 140 official participants from 23 different countries and 5 continents. The biggest group was naturally from Russia, then from South-Africa and Finland. The Ministry of Education of Russian Federation, European Training Foundation and UNEVOC supported the conference.

The Russian Federation Minister of Education and Science, mr Andrei Fursenko pointed the development of the Russian VET education. The economic situation in Russia has improved and it has influenced to the development strategies of education generally and VET education. The quality management, developing of infrastructure and modernisation of standards and development of social partnership are among the means to increase the effect of VET in economic development.

Three parallel work groups handled topics of a) Concept of Life Long Learning and barriers to learning, b) Building the National Qualifications Systems and c) Quality Assurance of VET. In these work groups were 36 different presentations. It's very difficult to draw together the content of those presentations, but generally speaking we can rise two main challenges to the VET: firstly the distortion of the demographic curve in industrialized countries including all the countries from USA to Russia and Germany to Japan. It's causing in very near future the lack of working age people in those countries. Secondly at the same time developing countries have a challenge how to educate the masses of youth to increase welfare in their own countries. The problems caused by this demographic situation are global. And we all are involved to it.

On national qualification systems the most challenging work is to be done in the linking the occupational standards and educational standards. Can we have any world class qualifications is a very good question and discussion, because in all countries we do not even have necessarily nation level standards. By the quality management systems we can create operating environment which can make sure the certain level of education.

The venue of conference was Golden Ring -hotel in the downtown of Moscow. Conditions were excellent. Generally saying the content and arrangements of conference were compact and qualified to give all the participants possibilities to get useful information and have fruitful discussions with colleagues all over the world.

Raimo Sivonen
IVETA vice-president (Europe)
National Representative of Finland in EFVET Steering Committee

Report on Participation in Hearing European Transparency Initiative

Brussels- 11July 2006-09-06 European Economic and Social Committee

On 11 July, 2006 I was delegated by the EfVET SC to represent the organization in EC Hearing on European Transparency Initiative, which was held by EESC. This Hearing is a part of the consultations on Transparency Initiative, Green Paper being part of it. The consultations on the Initiative was opened 3 May and closed on 31 August 2006, and organizations as well as public bodies, whose interest and activities include lobbying or being possible beneficiaries of the EU funds, could express their opinion and views.

The European Commission was represented by such officials, as Siim Kallas, vice-president of the EC, Margot Wallström, Vice-president of the EC for Institutional Relations and Communication Strategy, Dimitrios Dimitriadis, Vice-president of the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) and others.

Other organizations present at the Hearing: Civil Society organizations(EfVET among them), Think Tanks, Public Affairs practitioners, Lawyers organizations and law firms, a representative of the Office of the European Ombudsmen.

The objective of such Hearing:

The Green Paper

The Commission launched the European Transparency Initiative on 9 November 2005 by publishing Green Paper. This Green Paper is a key component of the Initiative and was the starting-point for this consultation. The consultation allows stakeholders to have their say on three aspects of transparency in the European Union. These are covered by the three chapters of the Green Paper:

1. Transparency and Interest Representation: this part underpin a debate on lobbying activities in the EU
2. The Commission's minimum standards for consultation: this part provides a structured framework for feedback on the application of the standards.
3. Publication of Data on Beneficiaries of EU Funds: this part launched a debate on the disclosure of data about the recipients of various EU funds managed by the Commission in partnership with Member States, notably the Structural Funds and Common Agricultural Policy.

The Hearing was opened by Mr. Dimitrios Dimitriadis and welcomed by Mr. Siim Kallas.

The first session was devoted to the question about the functioning of lobbying units- whether it is necessary to have a register of lobbying organization, and only by such a register the organizations/lobbying units could function.

The voices of the organizations present at the Hearing were divided into "for" and "against" register almost equally.

I couldn't express position of the EfVET, as the SC hasn't discussed the question and I didn't have the official point on this topic (even though we are talking about having a lobbying group in the EP, working for VET sector).

In Session II a joint code of conduct for civil society organizations and other interest group was discussed. The discussion was based on the ideas and statement of the Green paper. There is no doubt that the Commission considers lobbying as a legitimate part of the democratic system. At the same time, certain standards must be applied when lobby groups seek to contribute to EU policy development. In particular, it must be clear to the general public which input they provide to the European Institutions, who they represent, what their mission is and how they are funded.

Useful contact: Henrik Kröner, representing EMI (European Movement International) for building relationship and useful partners with Byelorussia, as new calls appear for introducing European democratic values to this country.

Minutes of the hearing can be found on the website:

http://ec.europa.eu/comm/eti/index_en.htm#top Rasa Zygmantaite, EfVET Lithuania

News from EfVET Netherlands



As per 1 September 2006, the Bve Raad, the organisation representing all government funded VET colleges in The Netherlands, changed its name into "MBO Raad" (Netherlands Association of VET Colleges). The name has been chosen by the members of the MBO Raad, after an extensive election process. The new logo can be interpreted as open doors, books, or numbers 1.

drs. M.E. (Michiel) Geursen
Advisor, MBO Raad (Netherlands Association of VET Colleges)

Project news

The second Leonardo Pilot project on European Middle Management Training is now successfully completed.

You can find information on www.emmt.dk

Louise Rosthøj

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New deadline for manuscripts: 1 December 2006.