



Newsletter Archive

## EFVET Newsletters

### December 2000

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## Message from the President

Dear Members,

The Thessalonica conference was a success. First of all because 150 participants joined discussions, shared their experience and contacted colleagues all over Europe and certainly in Greece. We owe a lot of thanks to the Greek hospitality, and to CEDEFOP for their enormous help and support and the beautiful venue. The conference-committee, the secretariat, the Steering Group members, they all played their role and illustrated the enormous enthusiasm and energy of EfVET.

We appointed three honorary members for life: Jan Willem Hollanders, who started EfVET, Jo Clough, who was the driving force and secretary for many years and Paddy Carpenter, who chaired EfVET until this conference. It is an honour to have them with us. We thank them for all the work done. The theme of the conference was Values and European Citizenship. You may read more about this theme in this newsletter. I am sure that this theme will stay on the agenda, even now the conference is over.

We started a discussion about the future of EfVET and I proposed a series of fields of actions. Those fields include: Communication with the EU, Added value for Members, Membership and International contacts. You may find a couple of bullet points under these headings on our website: **[www.efvet.org](http://www.efvet.org)**.

There is a lot of work to do, and the steering committee will meet on January 13<sup>th</sup> to discuss this in more detail. I hope that I may assist you in the coming period as your new president to keep the organisation as vivid and productive as it has always been.

I wish you all the best for the year 2001, and I hope to meet you all at the Maastricht Conference.

Hans F. van Aalst

President

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## Report of EFVET conference

Values and European Citizenship: challenges for Vocational education and Training

Introduction

It was pointed out at the beginning of the conference that discussing the theme of European citizenship in Thessalonki held a special significance. So much of what we know as European society today started here in Greece. Its great writers, its great thinkers, its great artists laid the foundations of our institutions and our aesthetic. They gave us our earliest lessons in citizenship and the rights and responsibilities of the citizen.

In their welcoming speeches, both the retiring president of EFVET and the vice president of OEEK, a sponsor of the conference and EfVET member, made reference to the works of Aristotle and Plato and their contribution to the notion of citizenship. As the vice president of OEEK, Mr Papaconstantiou, pointed out it was in this region that Alexander the Great set out on his travels to bring the values and principles of his tutor Aristotle to the known world. Mr Papaconstantiou looked upon globalisation and the Knowledge Society as bringers of benefits to humanity on the one hand, but also of great challenges to our moral values and behaviour on the other.

**The political and legal perspective.**

Speakers from Greece in the first session concentrated on the political and legal perspective of the theme. European citizenship was a notion no longer to be neglected if a true People's Europe was to be created. The rights and responsibilities of the citizen were stressed by Mr Valissopoulos, General Secretary of Central Macedonia. He looked to the vocational training sector to make a major contribution to ensuring that young people grew up as responsible citizens.

Professor Paroula Naskou-Perraki, from the Centre for European Law at the University of Thessaloniki, described the work of her centre which for the last three years had been assisting Balkan countries to prepare for accession to the EU. Its library is the biggest in the Balkans region and her special area of interest is in European Community law. The move from an economic union to a community of people brought with it the issues of human rights. Measures to formalise these issues in European law are to be written into the new treaty which will hopefully be signed at the Nice summit in December.

### **The research perspective and the role of CEDEFOP.**

Dr van Rens, the director of CEDEFOP, described how the notion of European Citizenship was not a static affair. The Amsterdam Treaty had opened the door to a broader notion of citizenship where there are no pre-fixed values and norms. For him citizenship had four dimensions: political/legal; social; economic/employment and cultural. Learning for active citizenship is a bottom-up process where young people create their own learning strategies. The teacher becomes the facilitator. This learning should take place at three levels: at a personal level involving the person's values and identity; at the cognitive level where information, skills and knowledge are concerned and at a pragmatic level where its need for action and participation are paramount. So, taking the social dimension as an example, the young person needs to develop mutual respect for minorities, to become fully informed about their predicament and refrain from discrimination, the three levels at which this learning process should take place.

CEDEFOP's resources can be used in several ways to assist this process. It keeps a close watch on social problems effecting young people, such as unemployment. It holds information on a vast range of good and bad practice across Member States and it contributes to the provision of labour statistics, all of which can assist colleges in their efforts to teach their students the facts about Europe.

### **The perspective of the colleges**

David Gibson, chief executive of the Association of Colleges in the UK, changed the mood of the conference by introducing a much appreciated sense of humour and a fair amount of criticism of what is happening currently in the UK. The AOC represents some 99% of colleges in the UK. Of these only two have black principals, although 6% of the UK population is non-white. He stated how important it was to look at one's own house first to ensure that it fulfilled the democratic, inclusive policies one was trying to inculcate in others. Do you involve your students in staff appointments? Are there students on the governing body or on the curriculum development board? And if so, are they there simply as tokens?

Following a UK government decision, citizenship is now a high priority in schools and colleges and covers seven key areas: sustainable development; social justice; values and perceptions (and, as he put it, not the values exclusively of a white ruling class); diversity; interdependence; conflict resolution and human rights. He regretted that sexuality had not been included.

How to teach citizenship was still an open question. Should it be part of subject teaching such as geography and history or should it inform all subjects and include voluntary activities within the college? How seriously the new subject will be taken depends to a large extent, no doubt, on whether it will be part of any assessment of the student's work. It will also be largely dictated by the extent of funding that is made available.

In answer to a question, he defined citizenship as being a process freeing individuals to take an

active part in their own lives. He did not want to see a government- inspired social control programme dressed up as a course in citizenship. And there is no one version. Different ethnic communities have different answers and they should all be respected.

### **The perspective of the employers and employees.**

Konstantinos Pagarliotas, a trade union member of the board of OEEK, spoke with feeling about the problems of the Greek labour market. He was speaking also, as far as he could, for the employers' side whose representative had been prevented from attending the conference because of illness. He lamented anomalies such as the 2500 accountants who are trained in Greece each year in a country only needing 500. He pointed to the urgent need for retraining for the tens of thousands of agricultural workers who have now left the land and have arrived unemployed in the cities. He pointed out that there were now some 600.000 workers from the war stricken parts of the Balkans out of an overall work force in Greece of only 3 million.

In a crisis situation without adequate resources it was too difficult to give the teaching of citizenship its deserved importance. There were still people who could not read street signs or who could not use bankcards. Teaching them how would contribute to their rights as citizens.

He pointed to the need for scientific support for the work of the social partners and government in solving the problems of the labour market.

### **The perspective of a college principal**

María Celeste Lé de Matos, principal of a college in Portugal, described briefly the changes in the organisation of education in recent years. Citizenship has been the subject of much discussion at ministry level in a country which retains a considerable amount of centralisation. It has remained at a very abstract level and little progress has been made. It has remained a voluntary activity. Placing the pupil in a family, community context as a good basis for starting

adult and working life seems an essential. She expressed her joy at attending this conference which she felt was making a major contribution to the launch of citizenship in the life of schools.

## **CEDEFOP**

*The conference was generously hosted by CEDEFOP and besides the contribution of the director, Dr van Rens, two of his colleagues also addressed the conference on two aspects of their work: the Electronic Training Village and Mobility.*

Colin McCullough, from CEDEFOP, unveiled the most recent achievements of the Electronic Village. The Village now had at least 20.000 "residents" who have logged in to the service provided by the Village requesting information, seeking partners and above all asking to communicate in discussion groups. It was revealing that, in reply to a survey, some 87% were not as interested in national perspectives, the usual CEDEFOP approach to studies and surveys, but were seeking information about other member states.

E-learning was growing at a very great speed. In 3 years he predicted it would be known simply as learning. In the US, 50% of all training will be through the Web and US firms were making considerable headway into European training markets. European universities and colleges needed to take note and find some reply. Fortunately, the Lisbon summit had put its weight behind the development and the site of the Village is now growing by 700 newcomers a month.

There is still however a major problem with referencing of data. The WEB has no librarian and some 7 tenths of all relevant training data has been missed by current search engines. CEDEFOP is working in this in the VET sector.

*Mobility as a didactic tool*

Soeren Kristensen of CEDEFOP described the importance taken on by mobility activities in the

programmes developed by the EU in support of education and training. For example, some 230.000 trainers and young people are expected to take part in Leonardo da Vinci placements under the second phase of the programme, an increase of 100.000 over those who were funded under the first phase. This constitutes 40% of the total budget for Leonardo, a figure of some 600 million Euro.

Looking at the statistics is not of course the only criterion for measuring the success of this activity and its educational and training value. Mobility projects vary considerably and have different objectives. Some of the outcomes of these projects are more visible than others. Foreign language reinforcement is an example of this. Much depends on the length of the project, the nature of the activity, the target group and host country. Much depends on the three distinct phases in the learning process of a transnational placement: preparation, implementation and follow-up or debriefing. The first and last of these are often neglected and more should be done in the preparation and debriefing of participants to ensure maximum benefit.

He expressed regret and concern that there is still no effective mechanism in place for ensuring the quality of mobility activities. There is no proper European forum where effective practice can be disseminated and discussed. The challenge is to concentrate on these quality issues, to develop proper evaluation tools at individual, project and programme levels, and to create a research body for reflection and research.

### **Message from Ioannis Koukladis MEP**

Mr Ioannis Koukladis, member of the European parliament, was unable to attend the conference but his speech was read by the chairman, Mr Charalabos Lukissas, head of European Affairs at OEEK. Social exclusion, which used to be applied to an inability to read or write, is now extended to those who are computer illiterate. The Lisbon summit placed education and training at the centre of the European agenda and the development of training for an electronic era has become a priority. Targets have been set within the EU: by the end of the year 2001, all schools

should be equipped with a computer; by the end of 2002 all teachers should have access to computers and by the end of 2003, all pupils should have the opportunity to be digitally literate. All of this has implications for teacher training. Netdays, organised across the EU has attracted 35.000 participants which displays young people's enthusiasm for the new technology.

### **Summing up**

In the final session, Paddy Carpenter provided a brief overview of some of the major statements and recommendations made by conference speakers and distributed a copy of his report. He regretted that the voice of the students themselves had not been heard very much during the conference. Their concerns, judging from recent youth conferences he had attended on the subject of citizenship, were less to do with national identity or civic duties and responsibilities and far more to do with the personal issues of growing up in an ever more complex society. He quoted from a recent conference attended by young people still at school from all over Britain and Ireland. Sex education at a relevant age, information about drugs given by appropriate people, advice on how to cope with a society more and more dominated by money- these were some of the issues which young people felt were being neglected in schools which seemed to be more and more obsessed with examination results, qualifications and preparing young people for employment.

### **Conclusion**

The conference was closed by Dr Hans van Aalst, the new president of Efvet, who thanked all the speakers and the many people who had worked long hours to make the conference a success. He made special reference to the role of CEDEFOP for providing such excellent conference facilities and to the Greek colleagues who had shown warm hospitality. The next EFVET conference in 2001 will be held in Amsterdam.

Paddy Carpenter

October 2000

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## **Organisation for Vocational Education and Training (O.E.E.K.)-Greece**

The Organisation for Vocational Education and Training (O.E.E.K.) is the authority which plans, guides and supports vocational training in Greece. It has administrative and financial independence and is supervised by the Ministry of National Education and Religious Affairs. It is in charge of the Institutes of Vocational Training (I.E.K.), both public and private ones.

Its actual work consists in:

- a. upgrading the Initial Vocational Training,
- b. introducing modern specialities,
- c. reforming the curricula of the I.E.K.,
- d. creating "training manuals",
- e. educating the trainers,
- f. determining the professional rights,
- g. realising the project for the infrastructure of Initial Vocational Training,
- h. acquiring Regional Branches(the 140 public I.E.K. are distributed in regional branches).

O.E.E.K.'s co-operation with social partners aims at covering the needs of the labour market by specialist executives. There is a tripartite partnership among Public Administration-Employer-Employees in the structure of the Organisation and especially in the Administrative Council.

The Organisation is financed from its establishment till today by the Structural Funds of E.U. for

most of its actions. In particular, O.E.E.K. applied Actions and Works of a total budget of 65,6 billion GRD, within the framework of Hellenic Education and Initial Vocational Programme (that is part of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Community Support Framework 1994-1999) and it will also be financed by the 3<sup>rd</sup> Community Support Framework 2.000-2.600.

The Actions and Plans to be approved are among others the spreading of a libraries' network, the development of the buildings' and laboratories' infrastructure, the trainee's mobility, the realisation of the Complete Data Processing System and the establishment of the National Register of Certified Trainers.

TODAY there are about 40.000 trainers in the 140 public I.E.K. and 25.000 in the 81 private I.E.K. 65.000 people have already obtained the Diploma of Vocational Education.

#### *INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITY*

O.E.E.K. participates through a series of programmes in community actions and initiatives and attends the proceedings of various committees and work groups of the E.U.

O.E.E.K.'s aim is to promote new initiatives and to claim new programmes, especially for the Balkans, the Mediterranean and the Black Sea Regions.

It is actively participating in the LdVII programme of 2000-2006 and it is also authorised to approve, issue, supervise and certify the whole process of the Europass-Training, as far as the Initial Vocational Education is concerned. Furthermore, O.E.E.K. participates through administrative representation in the E.U. institutions such as D.G.V.T., A.C.V.T., E.T.F, and in other International Organisations such as UNESCO, OECD, the Council of Europe, the International Labour Organisation, etc. Finally O.E.E.K. is Greece's official member of CEDEFOP's Documented Information Network.

*Vicky Apergi*

*OEEK – Greece*

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## Vocational Training Agreement between Denmark and USA

For the first time within Danish and American vocational training system there has been signed an agreement between Denmark and USA, where the two countries in future will co-operate on various areas:

- A. The Participants plan to encourage and develop co-operation and exchanges in the field of education on the basis of equality, mutual benefit, and reciprocity.
- B. Such exchanges and co-operation are subject to the constitutional and applicable laws and regulations of the respective countries, and to the availability of funds. Within this framework, the Participants intend to make every effort to promote favourable conditions for the fulfilment of this co-operation and these exchanges.
- C. The co-operation contemplated in this Understanding is not intended to affect relations currently established between educational agencies, institutions, or school systems of the Participants. Rather, the Participants intend to identify new areas for joint activities, or, where deemed appropriate by all concerned, to strengthen or expand existing programs.

To promote this agreement the Government of Denmark is using 6,3 million DDK. This agreement has been signed 16 November 2000 by Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley and the Danish Ministry of Education Margrethe Vestager. This agreement can be a model for the future co-operation of other European countries with USA within the area of educational training.

More information about this agreement <http://www.ed.gov/> and <http://www.uvm.dk/>.

*Leif Haar, Vice Director*

*Tietgen Business College*

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### A visual presentation

For the first time ever, it is now possible to get a comprehensive view of "The Danish VET-model", as we call it in Danish – in English. EfVET Denmark instigated this idea, and we would like to explain the process as it developed during the past year.

In co-operation with the Danish Ministry of Education some EfVET-members prepared the project, which was meant to result in a video-film and some explanatory notes in English.

The video department at Odense Technical College was involved, and all of a sudden the project was changed. Today it is a CD-ROM, which in a unique way uses all aspects of this media to explain the Danish educational system.

This autumn a provisional edition of the CD-ROM was presented at the annual EfVET conference in Thessalonica, Greece. It was a great success.

In Denmark as well as in the rest of the world, the interest in the project is big. It looks as if we are also going to make a Danish version of the CD-ROM, as it is the first time such a highly visual presentation has been made.

This work will begin as soon as the English version is published in March 2001. With the CD-ROM in Danish, EfVET will get an outstanding chance to establish its profile to all actors in the Danish educational world.

### ***Dynamic***

The Danish VET-system is a dynamic thing. Especially because of the reform, which will be fully implemented by January 1<sup>st</sup> 2001, there are constant changes in connection with the test drives done during 2000. Therefore the CD-ROM is supplemented with a website, where you will be able find all the latest information.

Here are some of the subjects to be found on the CD-Rom and the website:

- a total view of the more than 100 existing VET-education in Denmark.
- a standardised description of the Main Programs of all Danish education.
- a thorough presentation of the new Basic Programs.
- examples of the pedagogical planning in details.
- a visual presentation of all seven "gateways" (i.e. Foundation Courses).
- more than 250 photos and illustrations.
- many video presentations.
- 28 interactive scenarios in 360 degrees from Danish VET-schools and the industry.
- a presentation of Reform 2000 including the Minister's comments on video.
- a historical presentation of the VET-system.
- political views on the reform.
- a presentation of the economic flow and the financing of the educational system.
- the users' view on the reform, i.e. the students, school management, the social partners.
- more to come.

### ***Background***

"Describe the Danish VET-system" so that people from other countries can understand it, and do it in a way so that everyone can use it, if they are to tell about "The Danish Model". This assignment sounded simple enough for the team of teachers and representatives of management from four Danish vocational schools – at first!

This task came from people who are connected to EFVET. People who have experienced how difficult it is to explain our successful but complicated educational system to foreigners. The idea was approved by the Ministry of Education and they granted some money for the project, which supplemented by financing from the schools made the project possible.

If you want to purchase the CD-ROM (the price: 25 €) on the day of its publication, or if you want further information, you can order on our website: **[video.ots.dk/vetdk](http://video.ots.dk/vetdk)**.

*Paul Andy Andersen*

*Odense Technical School – Denmark*

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## La formación profesional en el nuevo milenio

Dentro de un planteamiento esquemático, como el se trata de proponer, el plan de este trabajo consiste en presentar las grandes variables europeas y españolas que generan tendencias en el ámbito de la fp. De una parte, las que proceden de la COMISIÓN EUROPEA: que anoto desde dos ópticas: la de la propia Comisión, y las de los trabajos desde el Foro de las Cualificaciones. De otra, las que proceden de análisis técnicos, como los que realiza el CEDEFOP; también la contribución del programa LEONARDO genera unas tendencias.

Otras vienen marcadas por el desarrollo previsible de la fp en el escenario español: desde la próxima Ley de fp que anuncia la Ministra de Educación y Cultura; desde el mundo de la formación continua, descentralizado tras los traspasos de competencias a las CCAA y a la vez fuertemente influido por el desarrollo de FORCEM. Finalmente los aspectos relacionados con la impartición de la formación: los centros, las metodologías de trabajo, los sistemas técnicos y el avance de la tecnología en la formación son las variables presentadas.

### 1º: EUROPA

ESCENARIO	Aspectos políticos	Aspectos prácticos	Previsiones

<p>FORO TRANSPARENCIA</p>	<p>Decisiones comunitarias</p> <p>Decisiones Estados</p> <p>Movilidad</p> <p>Transparencia</p> <p>Europass</p>	<p>Idiomas</p> <p>Curriculum Vitae</p> <p>Centros de referencia nacionales /Internet/ Información</p> <p>Suplementos</p>	<p>Reconocimiento</p> <p>Movilidad</p> <p>Unidad europea</p>
<p>COMISIÓN EUROPEA</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● construir un espacio educativo y cultural europeo</li> <li>● incrementar los conocimientos y las competencias de los recursos humanos</li> </ul> <p><i>tres cuestiones esenciales:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● El papel de la educación y de la formación en las políticas de empleo</li> <li>● La calidad de la educación y de la formación</li> </ul> <p>El fomento de la movilidad</p>	<p>Relación formación y empleo</p> <p>Sistemas de calidad</p> <p>Idiomas</p> <p>Financiación de la formación</p>	<p>Idiomas en la fp</p> <p>Sistemas de calidad generalizados</p>

<p>LEONARDO:</p>	<p>Decisiones Estados</p> <p>a) mejorar las aptitudes y competencias individuales</p> <p>b) mejorar la calidad y el acceso a la formación profesional continua, así como facilitar la adquisición, de capacidades destinadas a fortalecer el intercambio tecnológico y en materia de organización.</p> <p>c) promover y reforzar la contribución de la formación profesional al proceso de innovación</p>	<p>Relación escuela-empresa</p> <p>Programas de calidad en fp</p> <p>Tecnología en la fp</p> <p>Sistemas de asesoramiento y de información</p>	<p>Mercado de trabajo y formación europeo</p> <p>Relación escuela-empresa</p>
<p>CEDEFOP: ESTUDIOS</p>		<p>Tendencias europeas en las profesiones y cualificaciones</p>	<p>Un sistema europeo de cualificaciones</p> <p>Nuevas profesiones basadas en las TIC</p> <p>Un espacio europeo para las pymes</p>

## 2º: ESPAÑA

SUCESOS Y AGENTES	Aspectos políticos	Aspectos prácticos	Previsiones
LEY DE LA FP EN ESPAÑA	Consenso entre Administraciones y CCAA y agentes sociales  Una discusión parlamentaria  Puesta de moda de la fp  Relación fp-empleo  Imagen pública de la fp  Coordinación Estado-CCAA	Mejora de los sistemas de formación  Trabajo del Instituto de las Cualificaciones	Mejor imagen pública de la fp  Acreditación de la población ocupada  Mejora del sistema de fp  Relación empresa-escuela

FORCEM	Acuerdo de los Agentes Sociales y Trabajo y CCAA Estándares en la formación continua  Consenso  Financiación de la formación  Participación empresa	Un sistema de gestión  Un sistema de financiación	Crecimiento de la formación a distancia  Cofinanciación de la formación
TRANSFERENCIAS FORMACIÓN OCUPACIONAL	Acuerdo Estado- CCAA - AASS Unidad Mercado de Trabajo	Desarrollo de programas formativos  Creación de observatorios	Protagonismo de la empresa

### 3º: ASPECTOS ORGANIZATIVOS Y PRÁCTICOS

ASPECTOS	Aspectos sociales	Aspectos prácticos	Previsiones

<p>FUENTES DE LA FORMACIÓN: LOS CENTROS</p> <p>De diversa titularidad</p>	<p>Acuerdos marco con agentes sociales y administraciones</p> <p>Crecimiento de la oferta de calidad</p>	<p>La gestión eficaz de los centros</p> <p>Relaciones centros-empresas</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Sistemas de calidad ligados a los centros de fp</li> <li>● Sistemas de acreditación ligados a los centros</li> </ul>
<p>PROGRAMAS DE FORMACIÓN</p> <p>E INTRODUCCIÓN DE LAS TIC</p>	<p>Informatización de las empresas</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Programas a medida</li> <li>● Uso de simuladores</li> <li>● Gestión del conocimiento</li> <li>● Incremento de capacidades transversales</li> <li>● Metodología</li> <li>● Uso de las TIC's</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Aparición de plataformas de teleformación</li> <li>● Formación on line</li> <li>● Crecimiento de la tecnología</li> <li>● La mejora de los equipos docentes: como clave de la calidad de los centros de fp</li> </ul>

***Pronósticos y previsiones: desde los análisis y datos anteriores***

Pueden acompañarse unas previsiones razonables para la formación profesional, como las que siguen:

*En el escenario europeo y con influencia en el español*

1. Reconocimiento a la formación de cualquier socio comunitario y de cualquier subsistema (en el caso español)
2. Movilidad de los trabajadores
3. Unidad europea: un escenario común
4. Introducción generalizada de idiomas en la fp
5. Sistemas de calidad generalizados
6. Progresiva creación de un mercado de trabajo y formación europeo
7. Creación de un sistema europeo de cualificaciones
8. Desarrollo de un espacio europeo para las pymes que dé respuesta a sus necesidades de formación

*Acerca de la formación en general*

9. Flexibilidad y modulación de los programas formativos
10. Crecimiento de la formación continua
11. Aparición de nuevas profesiones basadas en las TIC
12. Crecimiento de la tecnología para la formación: de la teleformación, de la formación mediante simuladores, del uso de herramientas informáticas, etc.

*En relación con los aspectos inmediatamente ligados a la empresa (y con alguna referencia al caso español)*

13. Soluciones empresariales a medida para el acceso y la implementación de la formación
14. Cofinanciación o desgravación de la formación y para la formación
15. Tendencia a la formación on-line
16. Protagonismo de la empresa en la formación, en su gestión y en sus contenidos
17. Profundización en la relación escuela-empresa: con la creación de redes y consorcios

*Acerca del desarrollo de las instituciones ligadas a la formación*

18. De los centros de formación con un progresivo influjo y ampliando su entorno mediante el uso de recursos electrónicos
19. De los organismos creadores de estándares y coordinadores, como generadores de una cultura común y constituyendo puntos de referencia
20. Mejora de los equipos docentes como constitutivo de calidad de los centros de formación.

*Un escenario final para la formación profesional: modo en que progresivamente se va configurando*

- Como nexo de unión entre los ciudadanos, que, desde una mejor comprensión del importante papel que realiza en la sociedad comprenden su capacidad de articular y vertebrar una sociedad dando respuesta a necesidades vitales de esa sociedad: de las personas, de las empresas.
- Como herramienta para la mejora de las empresas y de la sociedad en su conjunto.
- Como medio de comunicación en una cultura común

*Mariano del Castillo*

*Vicepresidente del Consejo General de la Formación Profesional-España*

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## The EU eLearning initiative

Within the framework of the eEurope initiative launched by Mr. Prodi and aimed at doing whatever it takes to help Europe enter the electronic era at 'full capacity', three major objectives have been set:

- •Generalise access to the internet
- •Standardise and foster the new competencies and skills required
- •Guarantee a socially inclusive Information Society

The eLearning initiative focused on education and training, has been put forward by Commissioner Vivian Reding to meet the eEurope initiative and to approach it from the education and training perspective. Last March, at the Lisbon European Council, the Heads of State and Government acknowledged Europe's relatively low involvement in new information and communication technologies (NICT), while recognising its high education level and economic potential. The objective put forward for Europe was that of becoming "the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-driven economy in the world".

The eLearning initiative aims at:

- •Providing citizens with a "digital culture"
- •Avoiding the increase of the technology generational gap

The initiative targets:

- •New generations, through the educational system and the re-evaluation of educational systems goals
- •All citizens through lifelong learning, and definition of employment guidelines

Four components are entwined into the eLearning initiative:

- **•Equipment:** to provide all schools in the EU with an Internet connection. Centres for acquiring knowledge must also be as well equipped as possible
- **•Training:** to integrate the "digital culture" into teacher training, to favour critical learning of new technologies by pupils, apprentices and students as well as to develop vocational guidance services in the field of information and communication technologies.
- **•Content:** to develop European educational services and software.
- **•Networking:** to accelerate the networking of teaching and learning centres in Europe.

The necessary resources to implement such a programme need to be combined from:

- National governments
- **•Community instruments** (Structural Funds, EU programmes for practice, IST for research)
- **•Partnerships** between public authorities and industry

In this context, member States, regions and local governments are invited to make schools and learning centres more open to the outside world, and thus involve them in lifelong learning initiatives. Support will be given to any initiatives that will make these technologies accessible to non-formal education and training centres and institutions, such as social partners, associations and NGOs.

*Several documents are available on the Internet:*

Communication from the Commission eLearning - Designing tomorrow's education <http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/education/elearning/comen.html>

Report from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament "Designing tomorrow's education - Promoting innovation with new technologies" <http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/education/elearning/rapen.html>

The Commission welcomes comments and ideas at [elarning@cec.eu.int](mailto:elarning@cec.eu.int)

*Source: <http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/education/elearning/index.html>*

*EUR-OP NEWS 2/2000 (excerpt from ATEENews 59, September 2000)*

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The EFVET Newsletter is published electronically on the EFVET Website and sent to members by e-mail.

New deadline for manuscripts: **March 1<sup>st</sup> 2001**

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