



EFVET Newsletter

December 2004

- **Message From the President**
- **December Conference "VET for the future" in Maastricht**
- **EfVET as platform**
- **From the Treasurer**
- **Make more use of your membership of EfVET**
- **New Member in the Steering Committee representing Germany**
- **Latest Changes in the German VET Sector**
- **13th EfVET Conference in Lucca, Italy**
- **EfVET continues its participation in the European Civil society Platform for Lifelong Learning**
- **The 14th IVETA International Conference
Vocational Education and Training – International Development Catalyst**
- **WFACP (World-federation of Associations of Colleges and Polytechnics
3rd World congress in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, 8-9 March 2005**
- **Impressum**

Message from the President (December 2004)

Annual Conference in Tuscany

The unexpected amount of rain and fog did not hinder about 180 participants to enjoy the 13th annual conference in Tuscany. I would like to thank Stefano Tirati and his staff (in particular Benedetta Masolini) for their hard work and hospitality. The conference was varied in terms of content and learning styles. Probably too many plenary sessions. Several members have sent comments about the conference – many of those well earned thanks to the organising committee. There have also been valuable suggestions for improvement and offers for help. You may find the **evaluation report** on our website. I would like to invite you to read it and add your comments in our communication area.

To do this, please follow the following steps:

1. go to <http://www.efvet.org:8001/~members/login>

2. most of you are probably new users, so click: “new user” and share your details. You get access to the conference-area.
3. click the “+” at the “EfVET Conference 2004” thread.
4. download or read the conference evaluation report (sent by Kent Andersen)
5. add your comment by clicking on “Reply to: "Evaluation Report"“
6. If you want you may go to “MORE” (at the top of the page) and select E-Mail notification. This will result in an E-mail each time that a comment has been added to this thread.

Thank you for participating!

Annual General Meeting

The **Activity Report 2003-2004** was presented by Pete Hodgson, our Vice-President and the **2003 Financial Year Audited Accounts** by Frans Schneider, our treasurer. Both were accepted. I re-presented the **Policy Statement 2003-2005** and explained that the Steering Committee is undertaking a process to re-define the portfolios of its members and engagement in the whole range of projects, as communicated to you in the last newsletter.

Membership has increased following the activities of National Representatives and the Treasurer.

Kent Andersen will continue as EFVET Webmaster and members were requested to update their details on the **EFVET Website**. The Website is an invaluable tool, not only for EFVET members but also for people around the world. There have been more than 15000 hits in 2004 so far.

There were changes in personnel in that Wolfgang Stutzmann, who had represented Germany for several years, was moving to a new post and would pass the **German National Representation** to Birgit Hook. A warm welcome to Birgit and many thanks to Wolfgang!

The Steering Committee has re-elected the following Officers: Hans van Aalst as **President**, Marián de Villanueva as **Secretary** and Frans Schneider as **Treasurer**; all to serve a two-year term until October 2006. I thank the members for their trust, as do Frans and Marián.

EfVET accommodation in Brussels

The Treasurer reminds members that they could use the EFVET office accommodation in Brussels for meetings and other activities. There is a four star hotel opposite which would offer very competitively priced accommodation at a special rate for EFVET members.

You can read more about this in the article: “Make more use of your membership of EfVET”

Maastricht Conferences on VET policies

From 14-16 December, several EU conferences will take place in Maastricht in order to improve and strengthen European and National VET policies. There has been some confusion about these different conferences, so I list them for you:

14 December: EfVET/BVE-Raad conference "VET for the future"

This conference is organised by the Dutch BVE-Raad and EfVET. Managers and directors of VET institutions from each of the 25 EU countries have been invited. The conference will produce recommendations on key issues affecting Vocational Education and Training, in order to achieve the Lisbon goals. Margo Vliegthart (president BVE-Raad) and myself will address the conference and the recommendations will be produced in two workshops:

- *The different VET systems and their readiness to meet the Lisbon challenges, from the point of view of structure and conditions.*
- *Social inclusion issues surrounding the European labour market, with reference also to the increasing amount of immigrants from non-EU countries.*

Results will be brought to the next conference on the 15th of December.

You may find further details at:

<http://www.bveraad.nl/web/show?id=121962&framenoid=117210&&contentid=3169>

There will be a press conference on the EfVET/BVE-Raad conference in addition to the press conference of the **meeting of Ministers of Education** who will meet on the same day, together with the European Commission and the European Social Partners. One of the main topics will be the “Maastricht Communication” which will set the scene for VET policies in the coming years on European and national level.

15 December: High level conference ‘Strengthening European Cooperation in Vocational Education and Training’.

This conference is organised by the Dutch Presidency and the European Commission. It is for invited participants only. There are 5 formal EfVET delegates, who have been asked to report to members about this conference. Several participants of the EfVET/BVE-Raad conference will also participate in order to transmit the conclusions from the conference of the 14th of December. Apart from several plenary sessions, three workshops will run:

- *The Challenges of Lisbon: Assessing the Readiness of Vet Systems, Institutions and Companies*
- *Innovation in Teaching and Learning*
- *Towards a European labour Market: Mobility, Transparency and Recognition*

16 December: Information day: A Bridge from Policy to Practice.

This conference is organised by the Dutch National Leonardo da Vinci Agency in close cooperation with the Dutch Presidency of the European Union, and the European Commission. Participation is open for practitioners, providers and promoters of vocational education and training. Simultaneously more than 10 European and national seminars and meetings will take place. And there will be a wide variety of Leonardo projects will be showing their efforts and results. EfVET will be present with an information stand.

Further information about the EU-conferences for VET can be found at www.vetconference-maastricht2004.nl

14th Annual EfVET Conference in Hungary 26 – 29 October 2005

Krisztián Forrai is the local organiser for the EfVET conference 2005 in Budapest. The theme of the conference will be *‘Bridging the Skills Gap’ - opportunities for co-operation with new member states in European VET*”. Possible sub themes will include: *Making the most of European Funding opportunities, Transferability of skill within the enlarged European Union and Managing change and strategic development of lifelong learning - toward a single transparency framework for European VET*.

This will be your opportunity to establish cooperation between VET institutions of the “old” and the “new” member states. Information and registration forms will appear on the website as soon as possible.

Happy New Year

I would like to wish you all a Happy New Year. May EfVET assist in making your work even more rewarding, for the benefit of those many citizens who depend on vocational education and training to fully participate in life.

Hans F. van Aalst

President

president@efvet.org

December conference “VET for the future” in Maastricht

On 14 December 2004, EfVET and the Bve Raad, the Dutch council for vocational and adult education, organise a conference titled ‘VET for the future’. For this conference, mainly principals and strategic managers of VET institutions from all over Europe have been invited. The central aim of the conference is to formulate a package of key conditions and critical success factors needed to realise the Lisbon ambitions.

As well as formulating these conditions, VET institutes will also demonstrate their willingness to contribute to the Lisbon ambitions and the important role they can play in this process. The conference also affords the opportunity to comment on strategy and instruments of the European Commission, both current and planned for the future.

That this is a necessity is clearly shown by the two reports by working groups chaired by the former Dutch Prime Minister Wim Kok. In his first report, titled *Jobs, jobs, jobs*, the employment taskforce presented some recommendations on European employment issues, in the light of the Lisbon ambitions. The VET sector, despite its close link with the companies and its large contribution to the economy, is only mentioned sideways. In the part of the report dealing with human capital, governments are urged to cut the number of early school leavers and invest in life long learning, by translating the European targets (the Lisbon goals) to national policy.

The same happened in the report *Facing the Challenge*. In this report, published in November 2004, it appears that the VET sector is only playing a marginal role in the knowledge based economy. A lot of attention is paid to research and development and higher education. The report mentions the calls of the Lisbon strategy for education and human capital, but no key recommendations are proposed for reducing the number of early school leavers. Concerning life long learning, the key recommendation is that “Member States in close cooperation with social partners should adopt national strategies”.

So it is clear that there is still a lot of work to be done for and by the VET sector. Our conference ‘VET for the Future’ in December should be considered as a step forward, but nothing more than that. The work is not done yet, and the Lisbon goals have not yet been reached. The VET sector should keep raising its voice, and make sure to be heard on all policy levels and in all countries, and contribute actively to the Lisbon strategy.

Jos Leenhouts
Steering Committee EfVET

From the Treasurer

The Data base: Highly important !!

To keep the database up to date we urge you to inform the Central Office of any changes in the information of your organisation.

This can be done in two ways:

If you have a web page on our web site, please take a minute now and check whether the information is still correct !!

If changes are needed please use the following procedure: Go to:

www.efvet.org/membership_edit.html

put the changes in the e-form that will be on your screen and submit the form as prescribed.

If you don't have a web page on our web site, please send the change of information in writing to the following address:

EFVET Central Office, Rue de la Concorde 60, 1050 Brussels, Belgium,

or by e-mail to:
efvet@efvet.org

Only if you stick to this we can guarantee that all the information you are entitled to as a member will be send to you.

The membership fee for 2003 and 2004:

There are still members who have not paid the membership fee for 2003 and/or 2004. Reminder invoices were send out last July. This is a very expensive exercise, money we could spend in a better way to serve our members. If you are one of the debtors, please could you pay as soon as possible. A list of these debtors was send out with the papers of the AGM in Lucca during our 13th International Conference last October.

The membership fee for 2004

This month you can expect the invoice for the membership fee for 2005, swift payment would be highly appreciated.

I would like to take this opportunity to send you all my best wishes for the festive season and wish you a prosperous, healthy and happy 2005.

Frans Schneider, Treasurer.

Make more use of your membership of Efvet

As many of you may well know by now, our Central Office is situated in Brussels at the Rue de la Concorde nr. 60, right behind the Avenue Louise, the main shopping street of Brussels. It can easily be reached with the subway; if you get out at the Place de Louise it is a two to five minute walk, depending in how many shop windows you would like to look. It is also between a five and ten minute walk to the offices of the European Commission and the building of the European Parliament, either in the Rue de Loi or the Rue de Belliard.

In our Central office we have two meeting rooms, one for up to 15 people and one for up to 25 people, which you, as a member of EfVET can use free of charge. During the week the coffee and tea breaks will be included. At the court yard of our Central Office is a parking lot, where you can park your car, also free of charge.

We also agreed a corporate fee for our members with the Torus Hotel Group in Belgium, of which the four star hotel Floris Louise, across from our Central Office at the Rue de la Concorde nr. 59-61, is a member.

The normal price for this hotel is €204 for a single room per night and €214 for a double, including a full American breakfast buffet.

As a member of EfVET you pay only €70 for a single room and €75 for a double at the weekends (Friday, Saturday and Sunday) and every day during the week in the low season: January, February, 9 July – 5 September, 1- 7 November and December.

In the high season the prices are for the weekdays: €107 for a single and €117 for a double room.

If you would like to make use of these facilities, please mail to the Central Office:

efvet@efvet.org or either phone Frans Schneider: +31 228 521 402 or the Central Office: +32 2 511 0740

New member in the Steering Committee representing Germany

My name is Birgit Hook and I replaced Wolfgang Stutzmann as a National Representative of Germany in the Steering Committee at the last EfVET Conference in Lucca/Italy. From November 2004 onwards Wolfgang Stutzmann has been obtaining a senior management position at another College and his current boss kindly asked him to reduce his European activities. All members of EfVET Germany would like to thank Wolfgang for his work and the efforts he made for EfVET.

I work at BBS Wirtschaft I in Ludwigshafen/Rhein (Rhineland-Palatinate) teaching English and Business Administration/ Economics. BBS Wirtschaft I is a VET College mainly focussing on Business. In total, we have 1,900 students, 400 full-time and 1,500 part-time. The address of our homepage is www.bbsw1-lu.de and if you wish to contact me directly my personal e-mail address is birgit.hook@t-online.de.

The German vocational education system, the so-called “Duales System”, consists of two partners. Our part-time students are all employed by companies and they are trained both in the College and at work. BBS Wirtschaft I’s partners involved in vocational training are industrial (e.g. BASF AG), insurance, real estate companies as well as banks (Deutsche Bank AG etc.), lawyers, tax consultants, protection/security specialists (e.g. DaimlerChrysler AG) or freight forwarding agencies (e.g. DHL, Wincanton).

The full-time students either take their GCSEs or A-Levels at our College.

Birgit Hook

Latest Changes in the German VET Sector

There are quite a few changes in the German VET sector. Competence-based learning and e-learning is still being implemented. Also self-guided learning is a major keyword. Some moduls also have to be taught in English. Consequently, all the curricula need to be amended and teachers to be re-trained.

There are some minor reforms in the VET sector regarding GCSE level. National standards for the Federal Republic of Germany have been defined by the KMK-Konferenz and will be tested from this year on.

Moduls for English, Maths, German, Social Studies and Sciences, so-called “Lernbausteine”, have been implemented in August 2004, enabling students to do their AS-Levels or even A-Levels while being trained in the *Duales System*. So career guidance is of major importance in that respect.

There are special aids to reduce the failure rate especially among deprived students.

Some colleges have gained increased autonomy and this “experiment” will be evaluated by the Ministries in a year.

Two years ago all VET Colleges had to set up a Quality Management Programme which is currently being evaluated.

As far as my opinion is concerned there are a lot of reforms taking place in the German VET sector requiring both a re-training of teachers and a re-definition of the role of teachers in general.

Birgit Hook

13th EFVET conference in Lucca, Italy

"Government representatives may think of themselves as dignified headwaiters in a well-run restaurant but more often they operate a snack bar and expect you to be grateful that at least they got the food to the table lukewarm."

13th conference in Lucca, Italy

As in all its previous years, many members and guests from the EU and outside flock to the annual EFVET (European Forum for Vocational and Educational Training) conference. EFVET has an important advisory role on a political level, both nationally and on EU-level. The forum is a serious discussion partner when important decisions concerning VET education in Europe need to be taken and that feature attracts like honey does bees!

In all, 168 people attend the 13th EFVET conference in IL Ciocco Conference Centre in Lucca; coordinators of International Affairs, school management and representatives from several EU organisations make up this impressive number. This year to highlight the topic, to exchange ideas and to experience Best Practices in this area. An impression of 4 days of giving and taking.

"As if attending a schoolreunion, only to find out you are at the wrong school!". This is how new attendants to the conference must feel. On arrival of yet another member to the venue, a cacaphonia of languages and noises erupt spontaneously as if long lost sons and daughters are welcomed back into the tribe. Funny really, when one considers that most members do not see each other more than once or twice in this type of setting or otherwise in projects. To me it shows the success formula that EFVET has managed to brew: it's formal, almost businesslike at times, effective, yet in balance due to the many social events it offers where *real* communication takes place!

The EFVET formula to success: Presentations, Workshops and Round Table sessions!

The formula comprises presentations, workshops and Round Table sessions. These activities form the main course of the conference. The titbits in between are supplied by the social activities, the coffee and tea moments, dinner, lunch and breakfast. Altogether an attractive and inviting menu for all to enjoy.

However, every EFVET meal, unfortunately, has its tough bits and when these are presented at the beginning of the menu, it is sure to raise some eyebrows in grim anticipation of what's to come next.

The annual obligatory presentations by European Commission representatives, members of government institutions, trade unions and such important delegations are indeed very dry and, yes, boring. With a variation on a famous quote: "government representatives may think of themselves as dignified headwaiters in a well-run restaurant but more often they operate a snack bar and expect you to be grateful that at least they got the food to the table lukewarm."

It makes one wonder whether such speakers at the conference should not be asked to follow a course on *How to conduct a PowerPoint presentation* first, with emphasis on time, topic, audience and how to lace the presentation with funny anecdotes and with a minimum of slides. Say a max of 5 with as little text as possible. Leaves time to turn away from the slide content and to enjoy the lively explanations of the speakers. Sounds almost like what teachers experience in their daily practice, doesn't it? The word (in-) competence jumps to mind here, which seems appropriate at this conference. Of course most texts are available in hand-outs, but it does make one think that the menu card is to be more appetizing than the actual meals! Surely, there are better ways to communicate important matters? Let's make that an item on the Need to do (much) Better – list, shall we?

Workshops

The workshops offer a warm relief after the lukewarm start. Small groups, short introduction into the topic followed by some sort of interactive event, be it discussions or working together in smaller groups still and to report the outcomes to the bigger group. A quick, effective and social way of familiarising the attendants with the topic and to offer them possibilities to present opinions.

I attended a good example of such an approach: a workshop given by Tess van Dongen en Hans Kaspersen, ROC Amsterdam, familiarised its participants with the very difficult concept of MTS^{plus} (Man, Technology and Society) by a concise and clear introduction and then by having small groups find solutions to problems the way MTS^{plus} students would. Indeed a difficult task in view of the complex nature of MTS^{plus}. I can say from experience.

The Maastricht Declaration workshop too deserves to be mentioned: the effects of the Lisbon and Copenhagen declarations seem to gradually find budding roots into the educational systems of the EU memberstates. In Maastricht, in December 2004 under Dutch chairmanship, a new declaration will be prepared. The Dutch Council for Vocational education (The BVE-Raad) and EFVET are organising their own conference prior to the Ministers' conference to make sure developments views and opinions are conveyed unequivocally to the ministers. Jos Leenhouts from the BVE-Raad offered an expert possibility to exercise one's influence at that event.

Round Table Sessions

To me the Round Table sessions are the highlight item on the menu: small scale, almost intimate, direct, efficient, effective! Involvement and participation is optimal: after all, you choose to attend the session, you're up on the stage with the presenter yourself, as it were, and your questions are quickly responded to by the presenter or others at the table. A Round Table session offers even more involvement than a workshop, again as a result of its scale. It won't come as a surprise, therefore, that most new or stronger relationships between partners are forged right there and then at a Round Table session.

For sure a recommendation to EFVET to offer more of this type of session. Perhaps even the dreaded formal introductory presentations can be cast into similar moulds?

Horizon College, from Hoorn, Holland, also organises a Round Table with its OTS (Denmark) and BBS Ludwigshafen (Germany) partners about the Best Practice-Best language Teaching Methods. (www.languages.dk) This project was aimed at teaching minor languages through 5 different language teaching methodologies. The 5 DVDs as part of its final products again attract many interested in innovative language teaching methods. However, do not underestimate the magnetic force of a free T-Shirt!! Adults squeal with delight when the Wheel of Fortune stops at their chair...just goes to show...we are all students who love to be surprised by a varied menu. The great expense of the conference, -knowledge doesn't come cheap with EFVET- entitles us to the best menu we can put together. Besides, the restaurant is big enough to host many more of our Southern European partners. Despite the annual appeals from participants to lower the cost of the conference, it still maintains too high, causing the great divide between Northern and their Southern countries. And that to me, somehow, defeats EFVET's main objective, which is to unite all EU countries in VET. Definitely another item for the Need to do (much) Better-List!

The Venue

This year the EFVET venue was Il Ciocco Conference Centre in Lucca. A luxurious conference centre perched on a mountain overlooking the villages and towns in the valleys. The morning fog hung like a heavy veil between the mountains; normally to quickly evaporate at the first sign of the sun. Normally, but not this year. A rainfront replaced the fog, condemning us to imprisonment in what was soon aptly named Alcatraz hotel. In previous years the conference centre was situated in more convenient settings allowing us to withdraw into shopping streets

and local pubs, theatres and exhibition centres. Over the years the programme on Friday night has become synonymous to dancing, drinking and being merry. If it hadn't been for the modest yet earsplitting in-house disco, drinking and being merry would have been the only options whereas dancing is unanimously the favourite by far.

So, less of that this year, but instead ample opportunities to make new friends, forge valuable contacts, even with Russian delegates, and to look forward to yet another successful EFVET conference next year, in Budapest Hungary. Hope to see you there again!

Frans van Schaik
International coordinator
Horizon College,
Hoorn,
The Netherlands.
f.w.vanschaik@horizoncollege.nl

EfVET continues its participation in the European Civil society Platform for Lifelong Learning

Dear Member

Those of you attending the Conference in Tuscany last October will have heard of our role in partnership with the other European networks for education and Training (EVTA, EAEA, Solidar, EuroWEA and CSR). This partnership known as the European Civil Society Platform for Lifelong Learning has recently completed a project on behalf of the European Commission to support the activities and work of the EC Objective working groups as part of the development activity toward implementation of Education and Training 2010. The last project gathered some 120 examples of good practice in the field of Skills for Life and Basic Skills / key competences from across Europe. The final report and conference recommendations and findings were published in two booklets and all 120 good practice examples can be viewed on the Platform's web portal www.eucis.net. The reports can also be downloaded should you wish to circulate more widely within your institutions.

The Platform began by invitation of the EC DG Education and Culture as part of the consultation on the EU Memorandum for Lifelong Learning. Its work continues apace with a new project recently submitted to the EC based on further consultation of the Joint Interim report to the Council of Ministers relating to progress toward Education and Training 2010. It is hoped that approval to commence this consultation will allow an early start in the New Year. Your National Representatives will be in touch with you as we move forward on this front and I would encourage you to get involved and make your views known. The new project will involve at least 3 seminars / workshops over the next year with a final conference. Details will be circulated following our next planning meeting in early January.

For further information please contact Pete Hodgson, Vice President, EfVET on phodgson@nortcoll.ac.uk or telephone +44 1761 433161

The 14th IVETA International Conference Vocational Education and Training – International Development Catalyst

The 14th International Conference of IVETA (International Vocational Education and Training Association) in co-operation with Austrian partners was held at the conference center of the

Austrian Federal Economic Chamber , Vienna 25 – 27 August 2004. Over 250 delegates from 45 countries attended. The six keynote speakers addressed different aspects of the conference theme “Vocational Education and Training – International Training Catalyst” and over 80 papers were presented during the busy three-day period.

The conference brought people and systems together in an atmosphere of tolerance and goodwill to renew former contacts and friendships , to forge new ones, and to go forward in ways which otherwise would take much longer to achieve. It also paved the way for IVETA to focus on, among the others, the very important and inter-related roles of VET in sustainable development and poverty alleviation. All conference attendees received a CD-Rom disk of all the papers presented.

The gala reception hosted by the Mayor of Vienna in the beautiful Town Hall provided also opportunities to highlight IVETA Awards recipients. One of the recognized award recipients was Christopher Parkin, IVETA Vice President for Europe and EFVET member. In his thanking remarks he promoted the good co-operation with EFVET.

The pre- and post-conference activities, including the educational tours, were valuable and the conference dinner unforgettable.

In the conference were ten EFVET members represented.

The conference was organized by Ingrid Trenner and her K.I.S.T team and the Chair of the Programme Committee was Klaus Sodemann from GTZ. Chris Parkin and IVETA Past President Jeanette Daines co-operated in co-ordination.

Thank you for the excellent conference

Leila Lahti, National Representative of Finland and Past General Secretary of IVETA

كليات التقنية العليا
HIGHER COLLEGES OF TECHNOLOGY

WFACP 2005

3rd World Education Congress

**RIDING THE WAVE...
EDUCATING
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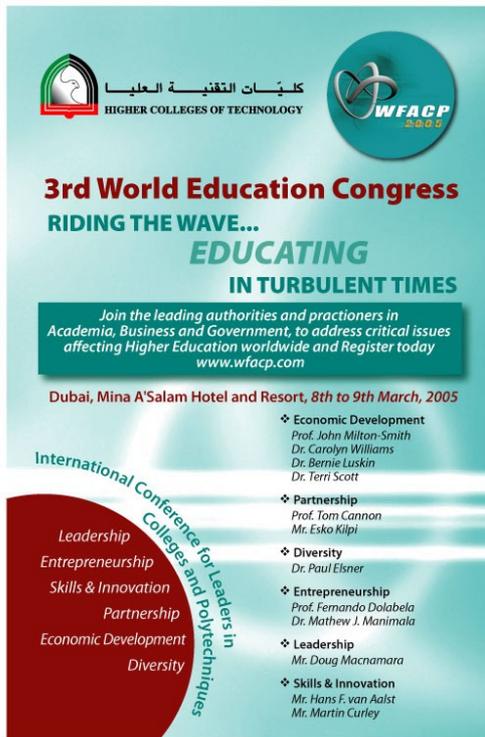
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- ❖ Diversity: Dr. Paul Elsner
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- ❖ Skills & Innovation: Mr. Hans F. van Aalst , Mr. Martin Curley

Leadership
Entrepreneurship
Skills & Innovation
Partnership
Economic Development
Diversity

International Conference for Leaders in Colleges and Polytechnics



WFACP (World-federation of Associations of Colleges and Polytechnics) 3rd World congress in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, 8-9 March 2005

The idea of setting up a “World federation of associations of colleges and polytechnics” was launched at the 1st World Congress of colleges and polytechnics in Canada in the year 1999. On behalf of EFVET I have been involved in the setting up of this association by being part of the Steering Committee with the task to making this happen.

The WFACP was officially launched in Australia at the 2nd World Congress of colleges and polytechnics in March 2002, where I was elected as treasurer in the Executive team.

At the moment we are busy preparing the 3rd World Congress, which will be held in: Dubai, United Arab Emirates, 8-9 March 2005 and is entitled:

Riding the waves: Education in turbulent times.

The host for this Congress is the Higher Colleges of Technology.

I commend the following web-site to your attention and would encourage as many members as possible to attend this event: www.wfacp.com. I can say without equivocation that the team of the Higher Colleges will put on a remarkable Congress, having attended their E-Education Without Borders conference 2 years ago. Needless to say that our president, Hans van Aalst, is one of the keynote speakers.

Frans Schneider.

Impressum:

Editor:

Leif Haar, Tietgen Business College, e-mail: leha@tietgen.dk

Webmaster:

Kent Andersen, Odense Technical College, e-mail: ka@ots.dk

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

New deadline for manuscripts: 15th February 2005

Merry Christmas and a Happy EfVET New Year to all of you.