

EFVET Newsletter

June 2006

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Message from the President (June 2006)

On EfVET

Next conference

The next EfVET conference in Cyprus from 25 to 29 October 2006. If you have not yet registered, do so as soon as possible. Places are limited. The conference programme may be found at http://www.efvet.org/index.php?categoryid=4&p2_articleid=347&s=&

If you want to share a good practise, or discuss any VET issue, the conference is the place to have a round table session for that purpose. You may ask for a round table at http://www.efvet.org/index.php?categoryid=4&p2_articleid=352

Learner Feedback

A brief three-page survey will be distributed to members shortly by e-mail. I hope that all EfVET members will take the few minutes necessary to complete and return the questionnaire.

EfVET's upgrade.

On request of the Steering Committee, EfVET's Policy Committee is working to investigate the need and possibilities to upgrade some of EfVET's features. It is recognised that both the EU policy environment and the context of VET institutions have changes drastically after EfVET was created. There is an additional Steering Committee meeting in September to prepare report to the AGM in Cyprus on this subject. National boards are invited to contribute to the process.

On European VET Policies

European Qualifications Framework (EQF)

The European Qualifications Framework is now in its final stages. The last draft is from May 15. We may remember that qualifications should be achieved and validated on local and regional level in the first place. That is the responsibility of our institutions and regional social partners. The EQF helps to relate those qualifications to a European framework for example to facilitate mobility. Students report also personal proud if their qualifications relate to the European framework, for example in the form of the new Europass.

Validating informal learning

Politicians might have a focus on the EQF. The work done on guidance and counselling and certainly the work done on the validation of informal and nonformal learning has direct impact on daily practice. You may stay informed or contribute with your experience by joining the Non-formal and Informal Learning Community of CEDEFOP.

<http://communities.trainingvillage.gr/nfl>

You may consult for example the work of the *Euroguideval* project to stay informed about the competences of staff for this purpose. http://www.euroguideval.org/mot.php3?id_mot=31

NGO platform on Future Objectives of Education and Training Systems in Europe: EUCIS (European Civil Society)

In my last message, I have informed you about the EUCIS platform. The general Assembly of EUCIS at the Economic and Social Committee in Brussels has been addressed by Odile Quintin, the Director General of the D.G. Education and Culture. You may find her speech at following link:

http://www.efvet.org/index.php?categoryid=6&p2_articleid=354

I wish you all a nice summer holiday.

Hans F. van Aalst
President
president@efvet.org

Méssage du Président (juin 2006)

L'EfVET

La Conférence Annuelle 2006

La prochaine Conférence Annuelle de l'EfVET aura lieu en Chypre du 25 au 29 octobre 2006. Si vous ne vous êtes pas encore inscrit, inscrivez-vous tout de suite! Les places sont limitées. Vous trouverez le programme à

http://www.efvet.org/index.php?categoryid=4&p2_articleid=347&s=&

Si vous voulez partager de bonnes pratiques, ou discuter des questions de VET, vous pouvez mener une «table ronde» pour atteindre ce but. Vous pouvez demander une «table ronde» à http://www.efvet.org/index.php?categoryid=4&p2_articleid=352.

Feedback des Etudiants

Vous recevrez par émel de trois pages sur l'efficacité et l'importance du feedback aux étudiants. J'espère que tous les membres de l'EfVET consacreront les quelques moments nécessaires pour répondre à ce questionnaire et la retourner.

La modernisation de l'EfVET

A la suite d'une demande du Comité de Pilotage de l'EfVET, le Comité de Politiques travaille à améliorer quelques-unes des fonctions de l'EfVET. On reconnaît que les politiques de l'UE et la situation des institutions VET ont radicalement changé depuis la fondation de l'EfVET. Il y aura une réunion supplémentaire du Comité de Pilotage au mois de septembre pour préparer un rapport qui sera présentée à l'Assemblée générale en Chypre. Nous invitons tous les comités nationaux de contribuer au processus.

Le Cadre Européen de Qualifications

Le développement du Cadre Unique pour la transparence des qualifications et des compétences arrive à une étape finale. La dernière version plus récente date du 15 mai. On vous rappelle que les qualifications devraient être atteintes et validées initialement aux niveaux locaux et régionaux. C'est la responsabilité de nos institutions et nos partenaires sociaux régionaux. L'CEQ nous permet de lier toutes les qualifications à ce cadre européen et ce lien pourrait faciliter, par exemple, la mobilité. Des étudiants sont vraiment fiers si leurs qualifications sont reconnues dans le cadre européen. On peut citer ici l'Europass.

La Valorisation de l'Apprentissage Informelle

Les politiciens concentrent sur l'CEQ, mais le travail fait sur l'orientation et certainement sur la valorisation de l'apprentissage informel et non-formel a de l'impact direct sur notre pratique quotidien. Vous pouvez vous informer ou contribuer vos expériences en vous adressant à la Communauté d'Apprentissage Informel et Non-formel de CEDEFOP.

<http://communities.trainingvillage.gr/nfl>

Consultez aussi les exemples du travail du projet Euroguideval pour vous tenir au courant des développements sur les compétences des enseignants à ce sujet.

http://www.euroguideval.org/mot.php3?id_mot=31

Le Plateforme NGO sur les Objectifs futurs des systèmes d'Education et de Formation en Europe : EUCIS (European Civil Society)

Dans mon dernier message, je vous ai informé de la plateforme EUCIS. Odile Quintin (DG Education et Culture) a fait un discours à l'Assemblée générale d'EUCIS à l'EESC à Bruxelles récemment. Vous trouverez son discours à

http://www.efvet.org/index.php?categoryid=6&p2_articleid=354.

Bonnes Vacances !

Hans F van Aalst

Président

president@efvet.org

EfVET Conference in Cyprus, October 25-28, 2006

Only a few months away from the Conference in Cyprus and many of you have already registered for the conference. End of October is part of the high season of tourism in Cyprus and the availability of the rooms is limited. The initial number of rooms reserved for the conference at the two hotels (Aneas and Christofinia) is nearly used up. I urge those who intent to register to do it now so that more rooms can be requested at the two hotels. All

available rooms at the Aneas hotel have being booked already and only a limited number of rooms are available at Christofinia hotel.

Flights can also be a problem so book your flights to Larnaca airport as soon as possible because if you wait for the last minute you may end up paying a lot more for the ticket or even worst you may not find any sits.

I wish you all an enjoyable summer and see you in Cyprus

Look at the programme and registration: www.efvet.org

Stelios Mavromoustakos

New Members from Lithuania are on the Way

In the future EfVET activities and events will be seeing more people from Lithuania. Joining EfVET was approved by the board and members of LIPRIA (Association of Innovative Schools of Lithuania) during the AGM which took place in Veisiejai TVM (Veisiejai Technological and Business School) on 25 of April, 2006.

LIPRIA is a NGO and being a member of it is not obligatory for schools. Still many senior managers of Lithuanian VET institutions find it useful to be part of the "club" where they can share views and experiences and good practice between teachers, students and managing staff. LIPRIA is also a good platform for disseminating projects.

Some more schools have shown interest in EfVET membership, hoping to find new partners for their EU projects applications and EFVET as a good dissemination partner. Summer holidays may be a small obstacle for a big flush, but joining in September will be enough time to register for Cyprus and help the Scandinavian teachers fill in the last spare seats in flights going that direction.

Rasa Zygmantaite
EfVET Lithuania

What kind of Students, Methodologies and Teachers do we need today? HETEL's Pedagogical Innovation Committee

HETEL, Association of 21 Vocational Training Centres of the Basque Country in Spain, is committed to Innovation, and this thirst for innovation, which we could define as a state of mind that leads organisations and individuals to constantly seek new challenges, solutions and methods of operating, has been the driving force behind the work of the Pedagogical Innovation Committee created at the heart of the Association in September 2004.

The concern for discovering and disseminating or facilitating the common usage of experiences with new educational methodologies (CREA – the IDEAL methodology for encouraging creativity; PBL or Problem Based Learning; e-Learning, or learning facilitated by the use of information and communication technologies, etc.), has been a constant factor of the work of the Association and its schools in recent years. Nonetheless, it was decided, in HETEL's strategic overview, to "*strengthen methodological and educational innovation and development*".

The Pedagogical Innovation Committee, which started work in October 2004 with a dozen people from HETEL schools, had three objectives:

- To define the profile of the student we aim at in VET
- To define the optimum methodological development/s for that student profile
- To define the teacher profile

The Committee met once a month to contribute opinions and reach consensus on a shared vision of these three questions.

With regard to the ideal student, fifteen desirable characteristics were determined, broken down into four categories: personal development, communication skills, social skills and professional qualities.

In terms of the second objective, thought was given to the different ways of learning, basic methodological principles were proposed and a series of methodologies and methodological tools were compiled which were regarded as suitable for developing this profile. In addition, an assessment was made of each of the methodologies or tools: to what extent could they contribute to developing one, some or all of the desirable qualities in a student? Finally, a compilation was made of some interesting educational innovation experiences carried out at some of the HETEL schools.

With regard to the teacher profile, fifteen competences were defined which were broken down into three categories: professional competences, educating competences and personal competences. In addition, a scale was established for each of these areas to distinguish basic, intermediate and advanced levels.

The results of this work, which was substantiated during the course of its development with a wider group of teachers in the participating schools, were presented to the directors and heads of education of HETEL schools during a seminar in June 2005. Additional contributions to the document were subsequently made. Later on, the 29th November 2005, the complete work was made public in a press Conference and Seminar in Vitoria - Gasteiz

Some of the conclusions:

- The profiles established for both VET students and teachers are ambitious but provide a good framework of reference for schools to work on these aspects and so has been a useful project;
- The use of methodologies and methodological tools that are different from the traditional form of "lecturing" is indispensable if we want to contribute to developing these desirable qualities in students;
- The challenge is a difficult one; changing methodological practices requires an effort involving the entire teaching staff at the school, and it is difficult to influence a student's profile if this challenge is only taken up by a few people on a voluntary basis;
- The work undertaken could represent an important contribution to developing one of the objectives of the Basque Vocational Training Plan 2004-2007, included in the Section relating to Innovation in Vocational Training (*"Stimulating actions that lead to the development of factors that respond to the profiles demanded by society and companies"*). In this respect, the report is available to other schools and the Administration or other interested entities (see: Pedagogical Innovation Committee's Full Work (ES, November 2005) in http://www.hetel.org/documentos-en/doc_innovacion-en/)

Finally, it is an unquestionable fact that making a commitment to educational innovation and the development of the qualities that have been identified as desirable in students is an arduous task, but we believe that the results are worth the time and effort involved.

Amaia Guijarro
HETEL Managing Director
aguijarro@hetel.org

What are the priorities of the Finnish EU Presidency?

Finland's EU presidency will soon begin, on 1st July 2006. What are the presidency's priorities in the field of education for the next six months? The main objectives identified by Finland are:

- To **finalise decisions on the multiannual programmes** (the Integrated Action Programme in Lifelong Learning, the Culture 2007, Media 2007 and Youth in Action programmes), and make these programmes operational by the beginning of the year 2007;
- To focus on **quality and equity in education** and their connection with the economics of education. These issues will be discussed during a conference planned for the 28th and 29th September in Helsinki.

The city of Helsinki will also be hosting on 4th and 5th December 2006 the third **ministerial conference on enhanced European cooperation in vocational education and training**, which follows the Copenhagen (2002) and Maastricht (2004) previous ones.

Beside the above-mentioned tasks, Finland will also work on the promotion of **students and teachers mobility between the EU and Russia**, and discuss the Commission's initiatives on the **European Institute of Technology (EIT)** and its latest communication on **modernising European universities** (see ACA's Newsletter *Education Europe* of May 2006).

 [Finland's EU Presidency website](#)

Source: ACA Newsletter

Speech of Mrs Quintin at the General Assembly of the EUCIS platform, EESE, 23 March 2006

Mister president, ladies and gentlemen,

It is with great pleasure that I am participating at the general Assembly of the EUCIS platform today. This conference gives me the chance to meet your organization for the first time at such an important moment for education. I know it is a subject that means a lot to you.

The theme that you have chosen for your work, "Lifelong learning and the European Construction: Perspectives" is of high importance.

As you may know, the Commission presented in July 2004 a new Lifelong learning integrated programme that will cover the years 2007-2013. Our proposition is currently discussed in the European Parliament and in the Council. I need to tell you that what is financially at stake is important, as the final budget will depend on the future inter-institutional agreements, to be defined in the coming days or weeks, on the financial perspectives.

It is now clear that the final budget will not correspond to the one that was first presented by the Commission. It should nevertheless enable us to continue and consolidate what we started a several years ago.

Many objectives have already been achieved. In my presentation, I will present you the Commission's views about lifelong learning and say some words on the works that are in progress.

1. The challenge of lifelong learning has never been that important.

The concept of lifelong learning is not a new concept. The major difference today compared to its emergence in the European and international institutions more than 20 years ago is that our social societies have changed tremendously. This is the reason why realizing this objective is essential to the European Union's economical and intellectual dynamism.

At the time of globalization, the ageing of our populations and the permanent technological change, our educational and training systems are under incredible pressure and expectations. Modernizing them is the only way possible to make this concept a reality, which is often too theoretical.

What is at stake is important:

- To give every one, especially to the part of the population that is the most vulnerable, the chance to get strong educational basis via the acquisition of key competences before the end of obligatory schooling. This includes a fundamental competence which is to learn how to learn. Future learning and updating of knowledge and qualifications cannot be realized without this.
- To develop new, flexible and open environments that would enable young people as well as adults to learn continuously.
- To train teachers and trainers for their new role. Without appropriate investment in their initial and continuous training, any attempt to modernize the system will be vain. They are the ones who will make the change possible. Reforms need to be made with them. We are now at a turning point as the great majority of the European countries will have to renew most of their teaching staff by 2015 (by this date, more than a million of teachers from primary and secondary school will be recruited in the EU).

2. Let's face up challenges!

The following data speaks for itself and shows us the importance of the challenge we have to face:

- Around 80 millions of adults in our developed Europe are said to be unqualified. They therefore live under the "necessary knowledge threshold" to live and work properly in the knowledge society.
- 15% of young people are not achieving properly within the school system.
- around 20% of our 15 years old people don't have sufficient read skills.

This situation is one of the reasons why the Union has such a weak economy and an increasing social instability.

As underlined in the second report (adopted last month) from the Council and the Commission, the modernization of the educational and training system needs to leads toward a system of quality, combining objectives of efficacy and equity, without opposing them.

For us, there is no compromise possible between these dimensions. We are preparing a communication on that issue and hope that it will mobilize all the persons concerned, as well as organizations like yours, which are concerned with these challenges.

Our second report made with the Council also very clearly underlines that the improvement of the system will also be managed thanks to the improvement of their governance, by the development of various learning partnerships and by giving more importance to these sectors when using the structural funds.

We hope that the European Council that meets today will consider these key messages of our report.

A core objective of the Lisbon strategy

As you know, the Lisbon strategy put education in the focus of the European agenda in 2000. This is very good news to us! The work was enormous.

The Lifelong learning challenge has been well integrated by the Lisbon Strategy since the beginning and is now a key component of the European social model.

As indicated by Mister Bono in his July 2005 report, and thus repeating the European Council of March 2005, the implementation of an effective lifelong learning strategy is a sine qua non condition for the success of the objectives decided in Lisbon.

More than ever in the years to come, we will have to make our project a reality and work towards concrete objectives.

However, the work that has been done since Lisbon should not be minimized. I could for example mention the mobilization of actors like your platform within the framework of the big 2001 debate on the Memorandum LLL. I could also remind you the Commission's communication that followed the Council's resolution of 2002 and finally the integrated work programme "Education and Training 2010" as well as the different groups that have been created within this framework.

We are on the right way and, thanks to an increasing cooperation on European level – particularly during the implementation of the declaration of Copenhagen on professional training- European tools and principles now exist (or will soon exist). They should contribute to the national reform processes.

I am going to mention the ones that are dealing with the crucial dimensions of efficient strategies for lifelong learning: European principles for the validation of formal and non formal competences, principles for the development of a lifelong orientation, principles for quality insurance in professional training.

I will also underline two tools that we consider to be a major progress since the cooperation concerning education exists:

- Firstly, the perspective to get in 2006, and after a wide consultation, a European qualification framework. The possible impact of this event on the citizens' mobility and the development of a real European labour market is huge. We wish it will be extremely useful to the states members to make national systems of qualification transparent and flexible.
- Secondly, the recommendation about the key competences for lifelong learning that is currently discussed by the European parliament and the Council. This is something new and extremely important and should seriously support important reforms that are implemented on a national level.

3. We must continue to follow up the progress as well as the exchange of good practices.

There are still much to do as shown by the evaluation made in 2003 and 2005. Even if progresses have been made, investing much more on lifelong learning as well as the mobilization of all actors concerned by the subject remain necessary if we wish to improve participation by 2010 (10,8% in 2005; the objective for 2010 is 12,5% of the adult population).

With the peer learning activities programme that we have launched last year and that will deal with 8 major themes in 2006-2007, we wish to bring the implementation of the Education and

Training 2010 programme closer to reality, to the reality of the reforms, to their strengths and weaknesses. We hope that the social partners and the major national actors in these fields will participate to these exchanges activities in the states members.

The states members have promised to make national strategies effective in 2006. This engagement is important and we will evaluate their implementation by working closely with all countries in the second part of 2006 and particularly in 2007 (preparation of the 3rd report Education and Training 2010 made by both institutions). We will then check the progress that will have been made and then show the results to the 2008 European Council.

Within the new integrated coordination structure of the Education and Training 2010 programme (ETCG) - which met last year for the first time- , we will work closely with the states members in order to have a see the situation clearer.

We wish this program of evaluation and reflexion implies not only the states but also the social partners that have their own action plan on this issue, like with the Lifelong Learning Memorandum in 2000/2001.

We have planned to do this consultation together with the ETCG September meeting. The cooperation work will be continued in 2007 with all the partners, as we will concretely evaluate the existence as well as the implementation of all these strategies.

Conclusion

I know one of your objectives is the appropriation of the "Lifelong learning concept" by NGOs and civil society. Your organization considers itself a place of exchanges, debates, meetings and proposals and suggestions. It also aims at being considered as an important and appropriate partner in this field.

We all agree on that point. Indeed, in our fields as in others, the Commission needs to be open to new ideas, innovative suggestions and to be ready to listen to advice about how to improve its practices and programmes. The BONO report, adopted last year, is an excellent example;

I, in my former job, have always valued dialogue and collaboration with organizations like yours. The recent political news showed us that the Commission has to pay high attention to the needs felt and expressed by civil society. I think that not doing so would be a serious mistake.

This is the reason why I would like to express my desire to maintain our collaboration.

Giving Learners a Voice

Last year's Annual Conference paper on learner feedback from John Berkeley of the University of Warwick provoked a great deal of interest and the subject is certainly attracting increasing political attention in several countries. EfVET is now looking at how we might do more to encourage this important area of activity.

As in many other aspects of VET, policies and practice vary widely and our first priority is to identify the ways in which learners' views are currently gathered and used by EfVET member organisations. We will shortly be distributing a brief three-page survey by e-mail and hope that all EfVET members will take the few minutes necessary to complete and return the questionnaire.

This is, as far as we know, the first time such information has been sought on an international scale and the results will help identify opportunities for sharing good practice. They may also reveal the potential for a major EU-funded development project. A national survey is currently

being conducted amongst more than 1500 schools, colleges and training providers in England and we will also be able to compare some of our results with this large UK sample. Do please complete and return your questionnaire to John Berkeley as quickly as possible and we look forward to reporting our findings at this year's Annual Conference.

John Berkeley, University of Warwick

Eurydice Website

Dear Colleagues,

We are pleased to inform you that the Eurydice website has been fully reorganised in order to facilitate access to the information we produce. Our new website has just become public! The home page address remains the same: <http://www.eurydice.org>.

However, our publication and database addresses have changed. In order to help you check the possible links from your web site to ours, please find attached a list amending present Eurydice web site addresses as appropriate for use with the new web site.

Yours sincerely,
Pascale Balcon
Coordinator
Promotional Strategy
Eurydice European Unit

www.eurydice.org <<http://www.eurydice.org>>

tel: +32.2.600.53.53

e-mail: pascale.balcon@eurydice.org <<liste_correspondances.doc>>

News from the Webmaster

When you visit the EfVET website you may notice a poll on the front page. The poll is one of several polls planned for the coming months with the purpose to ensure the best possible readability of the EfVET website (and hopefully keep an attractive design). Please use the poll, you can of course only vote once (Technically once for each I.P. number). Other coming polls will deal with the user friendliness (or opposite) of the website including navigation and ease of locating documents.

New documents that are added to the website (through the webmaster) will whenever possible have the new EfVET layout, i.e. the EfVET header as can be seen in this Newsletter.

Comments are welcome to ka@ots.dk

Kent Andersen
The EfVET webmaster

Impressum:

Editor:

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

Webmaster:

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

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