

Education and Training 2020

ETUCE Circular 1/2010

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1. Information concerning the EU ‘Education and Training 2010’ Process – news on the Education Council meeting in 2010:

- **The adoption of the Joint Progress Report by the European Council and the European Commission - February 15, 2010**
- **European Spring Summit meeting March 25-26, 2010: EU 2020 Strategy and key messages**
- **Education, youth and Culture council May 10-11, 2010**

2. Preparation for the Education Council meeting (19-20 November, 2010)

3. Cluster Reports: ‘Teachers and Trainers’

4. ETUCE Project: Co-Reg-LLL – objectives, activities and expected outcomes

News on the Council meeting on February 15, 2010

On February 15, 2010, the EU Education Ministers met in Brussels at the Education, Youth and Culture Council meeting. In the light of the preparation of the ‘EU 2020’ strategy, which was adopted in March 2010, the ministers exchanged views on how they saw the role of education and training in Europe’s efforts to promote growth and jobs together with social equity and social cohesion. The ministers discussed how to, in practical terms, contribute to the ‘EU 2020’ agenda and ensure adequate resources for the education and training sector.

The Joint Progress Report 2010 – trends and challenges

The Council formally adopted Draft Joint Progress Report on the implementation of the ‘Education & Training 2010 work programme’ for the period 2007-2009 (5394/10) ¹, thereby completing the monitoring process in education and training in the period between 2007 and 2009. According to the report education performances have improved across Europe facilitated by EU policies helping to promote reforms at national level. Nevertheless, important challenges still remain, in particular

¹ Read the report in its entirety here:

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2009:0640:FIN:EN:PDF>

concerning literacy levels. Prior to the adoption of the report, the ETUCE had launched a consultation among its member organisations and sent in a statement to the Commission on 20 November, 2009, to seek influence on the drafting. On December 9, 2009, Commissioner of Education, Youth and Culture Maroš Šefčovič replied to the ETUCE General Secretary Martin Rømer in which he expressed his appreciation of the contribution. He particularly noted the fact that ETUCE and the Commission agree on the importance of the involving the social partners and other stakeholders in the development of national reforms through the Open Method of Coordination. Mr. Šefcovic assured that the Commission continuously works towards enabling social partners' and stakeholders' involvement in policy discussions and peer learning activities.

Based on national reports submitted to the Commission, the report treats the four main priority areas: key competences; lifelong learning strategies and instruments; vocational education and training; and modernising higher education. The main focus of the report is the implementation of the 2006 Recommendations on Key Competences², but it also provides an overview on the development of national lifelong learning strategies, reforms in the area of Vocational Education and Training (VET) and the modernisation of Higher Education (HE). Finally, the report also considers strategies for meeting the challenges of the economic crisis. According to the report, the progress in implementing a competence based approach and the modernisation of VET and HE are key to Europe's successful emergence from the crisis.

Key competences

1. Communication in the mother language.
2. Communication in foreign languages.
3. Mathematical competence and basic competences in science and technology.
4. Digital competences.
5. Learning to learn.
6. Social and civic competences.
7. Sense of initiative and entrepreneurship.
8. Cultural awareness and expression.

"A large number of countries are introducing reforms that explicitly use the Key Competences framework as a reference point". This is one of the key results of the progress report. The work on implementing recommendation on key competences to a large extent derives from the work of the EU Cluster on Key Competences. Much however still needs to be done in this area, but progress has already been made in adapting school curricula to the competences framework. The report identifies supporting teachers' competence development, updating assessment methods and introducing new ways of organising learning as important measures to be taken in the wake of the current progress report. Ensuring that all learners, including the disadvantaged and those in the field of VET and adult learning, benefit from innovative methodologies is therefore clearly identified as a major challenge.

Remaining challenges in the Education and Training 2020 strategy

The Joint Progress Report shows that despite the improvements in education and training performances in the EU, the majority of the official benchmarks set for 2010 will not be reached. In fact, under the benchmark of literacy the percentage of low achievers is immensely increasing thus

² Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council on key competences for lifelong learning; <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2006:394:0010:0018:en:PDF>

2020 Benchmarks

- At least 95% of children between the age of four and the age for starting compulsory primary education should participate in early childhood education;
- The share of 15-year-olds with insufficient abilities in reading, mathematics and science should be less than 15%;
- The share of early leavers from education and training should be less than 10%;
- The share of 30 to 34-year-olds with tertiary educational attainment should be at least 40%;
- An average of at least 15% of adults should participate in lifelong learning

heading far below the expected number and sharply contrasting the benchmarks on Mathematics, Science and Technology (MST) students, which are rapidly exceeding the benchmark.

In meeting this challenge of reaching agreed benchmarks, the conclusion of the report is that more effective national initiatives are required and that the current economic crisis underlines the urgency of action. The ETUCE welcomed from the beginning the EU benchmarks in order to promote equity in education and society and criticised the Member States for hesitating in terms of concrete action within the benchmarks areas. ETUCE considers it vital increased efforts to reach the benchmarks. Other relevant benchmarks could be implemented but primarily stronger efforts should be made to achieve the current ones. ETUCE will therefore continue to monitor the achievement of both new and old

EU Benchmarks.

European Summit Meeting on March 25-26, 2010

The European Spring Summit met on March 25 and 26, 2010, to discuss the European Union's new strategy for jobs and growth – the EU2020 strategy³. Agreement was reached on the main elements of the new strategy, including key targets to guide the implementation of the strategy and to monitor it. There was also an exchange of views on competitiveness and a discussion on the preparation for the G20 Summit in Toronto on June 26-27, 2010. The Council concerned itself with the impact of the climate change and agreed on the emphasis on bringing a new dynamic to current and future negotiations and mapping out the next steps to be taken.

Regarding education, the Council unfortunately did not put any significant matters on their agenda. However, in the Council conclusions⁴ published on March 26, 2010, the EU2020 strategy focuses on the key areas 'knowledge' and 'innovation' thus raising many issues in the field of education and training. The Council agreed on the target of improving education levels in order to particularly reduce school drop-out rates and increase the rates of students completing tertiary or equivalent education. Taking into account the Commission's proposal, the European Council set the numerical rates of these targets on June 2010 and adopted them to ensure national parliaments, social partners, regions and other stakeholders' ownership of the strategy they will be involved in close cooperation with both the European Parliament and other EU institutions.

³ For extensive knowledge on the subject visit http://ec.europa.eu/eu2020/index_en.htm

⁴ See the Council Conclusions in their entirety [here](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/ec/113591.pdf) or on http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/ec/113591.pdf

The Joint Progress Report emphasised the continuing challenge of implementing lifelong learning through formal, non-formal and informal learning and increasing mobility. Therefore it was recommended that education and training in general and universities in particular should become more open to and relevant for the needs of the labour market and society at large. The Europe 2020 strategy follows in line with this concern and promotes education as being central to Europe's efforts to promote growth and jobs. It was therefore underlined that knowledge is the main tool for recovering from the economic crisis and will also be the key to ensure new skills to be used in new jobs. For several years, the ETUCE has been stating that education should not be seen as a means merely to contribute to growth and jobs, which is why the implementation of the EU2020 strategy is being closely monitored. ETUCE continues to follow developments in this area and thus participated in the seminar 'Thematic Forum for School and Business Cooperation' organised by the European Commission on March 25-26⁵.

Education, Youth and Culture Council on May 10-11, 2010

At the Council meeting on May 10-11 the EU Ministers of Education, Youth and Culture adopted Council Conclusions on several topics related to the Education & Training process. Conclusions included "The Social Dimension and Equity of Education and Training"⁶, "Competences Supporting Lifelong Learning and the New Skills for New Jobs initiative"⁷, and "The Internationalisation of Higher Education"⁸. The draft conclusions of all three topics were published on April 19, 2010, and the final versions were released on May 11, 2010.

In the area of key competences, the Council stressed that the key competences approach needs to be fully implemented in the school sector, as a part of the action agreed to be taken during the first Education and Training (ET) 2020 work cycle. Furthermore, it was stressed that teaching and assessment methods need to evolve and the initial and continuing professional development of all teachers, trainers and school leaders needs to be supported in line with the competence-based approach. In line with the work areas planned for the first 2009-2011 work cycle of the ET 2020, the Council invited Member States and the Commission to take greater account of transversal key competences in curricula, assessment and qualifications; promote creativity and innovation by developing specific teaching and learning methods; and develop partnerships between education and training providers, businesses and civil society.

Regarding the conclusions on Higher Education, the Council emphasised that international cooperation in higher education is an important and rewarding area which deserves support at both national and EU level. Moreover, the Council agreed that support is therefore needed for EU initiatives and programmes which promote higher education cooperation with a European dimension and which support higher education institutions in working on joint academic projects, thus reducing barriers between national systems. The Council suggested to the Commission to *"develop an (...) EU international higher education strategy which is aimed at improving coherence*

⁵ Read more about this in the upcoming ETUCE Newsletter, June 2010.

⁶ <http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/10/st08/st08260.en10.pdf>

⁷ <http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/10/st08/st08259.en10.pdf>

⁸ <http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/10/st08/st08261.en10.pdf>

and complementarity between existing international cooperation initiatives at both EU and national level (...)".

Recognising that *"education is neither the sole cause of, nor the sole solution to, social exclusion"* the Council found it crucial that Member States and the Commission promote the role of education and training as key instruments for facilitating social inclusion and social protection. In general, the Council argued that to strengthen the social dimension of education and training systems it is necessary to increase flexibility in the education system. Removing barriers to participation and mobility while developing closer links between the world of education and the world of work, gives at-risk and disadvantaged groups better chances for developing key competences.

Preparation for the Education Council meeting (19-20 November, 2010)

The Council of the European Union recently published two Draft Conclusions in preparation of the Education Council meeting in November, 2010.

The *Draft Council conclusions on Education for sustainable development* (Ref. No. 12540/10) emphasises the need to learn and teach how to be "green": Sustainable Development aims at improving quality of life for everyone and for future generations wherein education plays one of the most important roles to equip individuals to make conscious choices to preserve the world. The EU Sustainable Development Strategy (first adopted in Gothenburg in 2001) puts strong emphasis on education as means for promoting behavioural changes and providing key competences needed to achieve sustainable development to all citizens. Thus, Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) has a lifelong learning perspective. It is significant at all levels of formal education and training, as well as in non-formal and informal learning.

The Draft Conclusions stress that ESD cannot solely be a subject but a value-based and interdisciplinary learning that develops new knowledge and skills, such as responsibility, creative thinking, and long-term innovation from pre-primary schools to higher education. Therefore, the Draft Conclusions invite the Member States to raise awareness among teachers, trainers and school leaders, to equip them with tools and learning materials and to prepare them in both initial and continuous teacher trainings. Considering the fact that teaching ESD involves many subjects, the Draft Conclusions highlight that teacher to teacher and school to school networking and online exchange of ideas would be the best tool for sustainable development and implementation on ESD in the teaching activity. A stronger role of the ESD in schools contributes to the change of teacher education and training which have to cope with creating implementation methods and didactics for teachers in all subjects and at all school levels.

In this topic the recent publication of CEDEFOP, 'Learning to be green: future skills for green jobs'⁹ presents case studies from Denmark, Estonia, France, Germany, Spain and UK that integrated this ESD into existing qualifications.

⁹ <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/news/16611.aspx>

Regarding the expected re-launch of the Copenhagen process, the *Draft conclusions of the Council and the Member States on Priorities for enhanced European cooperation in vocational education and training for the period 2011-2020* (Ref. No. 12542/10) outline a 10-year image of the VET system. In this vision the attractiveness of IVET and CVET can be achieved with the help of qualified teachers and trainers, innovative learning methods, easy access to further education and training, quality development of teaching and through flexible pathway between all education levels.

The document would like to see a high quality IVET that can be the first option of both learners and their parents for studying in general education and it calls the Member States to offer flexible training provision and investment to improve initial and continuing training for teachers, trainers, mentors and counsellors. The reason explained in this document is that the present status of VET education is “critical”: the European teacher and trainer population is ageing and at the same time faces changing labour markets and working environments. According to the Draft Conclusions teacher training could therefore be designed in companies so that teachers gain knowledge on work practices, while the company trainers could study teaching methodology in schools during their study visits and further trainings. The ETUCE agrees that open and efficient education and training systems are elements of high importance in a time of global financial and economic crisis. However, the ETUCE regrets that education continues to be seen merely as a tool to meet the specific and immediate demands of the labour market. The most essential task of the education systems is to educate for life and the outlook on education must be comprehensive and cover various skills and key competences. Only a broad approach to education and training can contribute to personal and social competences, which are vital to social cohesion, equality, active citizenship, cultural diversity and personal fulfilment.

For more information visit the following websites:

Draft Council conclusions on Education for sustainable development:

<http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/10/st12/st12540.en10.pdf>

Draft conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, on the priorities for enhanced European cooperation in vocational education and training for the period 2011-2020:

<http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/10/st12/st12542.en10.pdf>

Cluster meetings – Teachers and Trainers and Key Competences

The Education and Training 2010 work programme established eight Peer Learning Clusters in line with the open method of coordination. Their main working method is the identification and planning of Peer Learning Activities (PLAs), which are a way of cooperating at European level where policy makers and practitioners from one country learn from the experiences of their counterparts elsewhere in Europe in implementing reforms in areas of shared interest.¹⁰

The Cluster for Teachers and Trainers was established with the aim to provide policy conclusions on following themes: provision of teachers' initial education, early career support (induction) and further professional development; improvement of the quality of teacher education, and making the teaching profession a more attractive career choice. The purpose of the Cluster for Key Competences was initially to prepare a move from teaching only knowledge to a broader competence-based approach that put emphasis on acquiring skills and attitudes. Hence, the Cluster aimed towards ensuring the presence of key competences in school curricula and furthermore towards adapting learning materials toward it. Recent objectives have included the assessment of key competences and improvement of policies to facilitate improvement in reading and other basic skills.

In line with the Council conclusions on the Strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training (ET 2020), the new Open Method of Coordination (OMC) was set out – thematic working groups that will work during a period ranging from six months to a maximum of two years on a clearly defined theme. Thus, the clusters will be replaced by thematic working groups. The groups will be composed of experts and policy makers appointed by the countries interested in working on a specific theme, as well as experts appointed by the Commission, and key stakeholders. They will set out their programme which includes planning of peer learning activities and preparations for a major dissemination event at the end of their mandate. Registration for OMC thematic working groups starting work in 2010 was closed in March 2010. ETUCE is represented in three thematic groups by Jens Vraa Jensen (Modernisation of Higher Education), Mrs Birgitte Birkvad (Assessment of Key Competences) and Mrs Marjatta Melto (Professional Development of Teachers).

Developments in the Cluster on Teachers and Trainers

The last meeting of the cluster Teachers and Trainers took place on 14 April 2010 in Brussels. The objectives of this meeting were to

- Plan the Peer Learning Activity in Iceland: the profession of Teacher Educator (Monday 21 to Thursday 24 June 2010. Location: Reykjavík. Thematic focus on Teacher Educators' work description, quality and education);
- Plan the Peer Learning Activity in Cyprus: School Leadership; Thematic focus on the understanding of roles and tasks of School Leaders as well as their recruitment, selection and professional development; (18 – 21 October 2010)
- Exchange of news on developments in Member States (indicating that in several Member States proposals are being prepared and regulations being reviewed regarding teachers' certification,

¹⁰ To know more about the Clusters and the peer learning activities visit this [website](http://www.ksll.net/PeerLearningClusters/Default.cfm):
<http://www.ksll.net/PeerLearningClusters/Default.cfm>

professional recognition, Initial Education and ongoing professional development – Sweden, Spain, Portugal, Hungary).

Some preliminary ideas currently being analysed by the OECD concerning the content and form of a possible second TALIS survey were briefly discussed with the representative of the DG EAC.A.4, namely the use of video recordings to identify good classroom practice, the development of an on-line platform to allow teachers in participating countries to share good practices, and linking data on teachers from TALIS II to data on students from PISA. It was concluded that it would be useful if Cluster members could make contact with the colleague in their country dealing with TALIS II. The future thematic working group on teachers would be kept informed of progress in this matter.

The future of peer learning in education and training 2020 was another issue discussed at the meeting. Recent developments in the Education and Training 2020 programme include replacement of the Cluster by a Thematic Working group, a faster rhythm of work, and a greater emphasis on producing products of value to policymakers (such as policy handbooks). The new focal areas of the 'Thematic Working Group on Professional Development of Teachers' set out by the European Commission include the following:

- Selection and education of teacher educators
- School Leadership
- Quality Assurance in CPD
- Alternative pathways into teaching
- Selection of entrants to the teaching profession

As this was the last meeting of the Cluster in its original form, future meetings will be conducted in the thematic working groups.

Developments in the Cluster on Key Competences

The remit of the Key Competences-cluster on curriculum reform derives from the 2006 'Recommendation on key competences for lifelong learning' and the European Framework of eight key competences. The main aim of the Cluster is to move from 'teaching only knowledge' to a broader competence-based approach that put more emphasis on acquiring also skills and attitudes. In particular, the aim is to ensure cross-curricular competences such as social and civic competences, entrepreneurship, learning to learn, digital and cultural competences. The concern for key competences has won great impetus in the EU institution. One of its priority areas of the Joint Progress Report by the Commission and the Council are the key competences and also the European Parliament has stepped up its interest in the topic. The Culture Committee adopted the report 'Key competences for a changing world: implementation of the Education and Training 2010 work programme' on April 27, 2010, thereby making use of their new power facilitated by the Lisbon strategy and increasing the involvement in the Education and Training 2020 process.

In July 2010 Working group on 'Key competences' developed a background paper ("Assessment of Key Competences") addressed to the Belgian Presidency of the EU. This background paper discusses the evaluation and monitoring of key competences and suggests the creation of a handbook for policy makers on how to address evaluation of Key competences; an evaluation which not only relates to knowledge but also other competences, defined as skills and attitudes. It is recommended

that this new handbook should be based on former 'peer-learning activities', where best practices have been detected in several schools and projects in the member states.

The participation of the ETUCE in new Thematic Clusters

In relation to the Education and Training 2020 Process ETUCE has been asked by the Commission to continue representation in following working groups.

- Thematic working group on *Modernisation of Higher Education*
(ETUCE representative: Jens Jensen)
- Thematic working group on *Assessment of Key Competences*
(ETUCE representative: Birgitte Birkvad)
- Thematic working group on *Professional Development of Teachers*
(ETUCE representative: Marjatta Melto)
- Thematic working group on *Mathematics, Science and Technology*
(ETUCE representative: To be confirmed)
- Thematic group on *Languages and Employment*
(ETUCE representative: To be confirmed)
- Thematic group on *Early Language Learning*
(ETUCE representative: Anna Tornberg)

The first Thematic Working Group meeting has already taken place. The Working Group concerned with the *Professional Development of Teachers* met on 13 September, 2010. Here 23 representatives agreed on four main priorities for their future work, namely;

- How to make teaching an attractive profession;
- The development of competences needed in the teaching profession;
- How to educate teacher educators;
- How to improve teacher education and the quality of teaching.

Ideas on how to approach these themes will be developed by sub-groups and be presented on the next Thematic Work Group meeting in November, 2010.

An EFEE/OBESSU/ETUCE project on national lifelong learning strategies

Lifelong learning (LLL) has become a key concept in the education sector since 2002 when EU Member States committed themselves to set in place coherent and comprehensive national lifelong learning strategies (NLLS) by 2006. Unfortunately, the implementation of the national lifelong learning strategies has so far been insufficient and therefore it appears crucial to facilitate a stronger involvement in the implementation process by all national education stakeholders. In relation to the NLLS, it is general school education that holds a key role in preparing young people to get involved in LLL throughout their lives by providing them with the necessary key competences, as defined in the European Reference Framework from 2006.

The Co-Reg-LLL project focuses on generating a common understanding of the existing national LLL strategies among the main education stakeholders and thus facilitating their involvement in the

implementation of their respective NLLS at national level. Co-Reg -LLL therefore aims at developing a trans-regional cooperation and exchange of experiences between teacher unions, student organisations, employers in education and national governments on possible ways of implementing these strategies. Finally, it is also key objective of the project to assess how general school education helps the acquisition of key competences for lifelong learning and to identify how to improve school education contribution on enhancing people's capacity for lifelong learning.

Activities and outcomes

Co-Reg-LLL is based on a strong project partnership composed of, in addition to the ETUCE, the Organising Bureau of European School Student Unions (OBESSU) and the European Federation of Education Employers (EFEE). To achieve the project objectives, two sub-regional workshops take place during 2010 and aim at engaging a dialogue between the three project target groups: employers in education, teacher trade unions and student organisations. During the workshops the stakeholders are provided with the opportunity to discuss and study how NLLS respond to their demands and needs and therefore how they could contribute to the implementation of the strategies.

As the main outcome of the project will develop some joint guidelines from the three partner organisations on how to improve school education contribution to the achievement of the eight key competences for LLL; on how learners and education practitioners' needs and demands are and should be included in the NLLS; and finally on how to successfully involve all stakeholder groups in the implementation process. The guidelines, including five examples of good practise on stakeholders' involvement in the implementation of the NLLS, will be gathered in a booklet produced in English, French and German to be used by teacher unions, students and employers in education across Europe.

To learn more about ETUCE projects, visit our [website](http://www.csee-etuice.org). (www.csee-etuice.org)

Calendar of meetings of the Belgian EU Presidency on education and training (September – December 2010):

28-29 September	Conference: <i>Breaking the cycle of disadvantage – Social inclusion in and through education</i>
5-6 October	Conference: <i>Youth on the move – Achieving mobility for all!</i>
20-21 October	Lifelong learning – Directors of National Agencies meeting
19 November	Council of the European Union meeting, Education Council topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Council conclusions on Schools for the 21st century: increasing the level of basic skills in the context of European cooperation• Council conclusions on Education for sustainable development• Draft conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States on the Priorities for enhanced European cooperation in vocational education and training for the period 2011-2020
1 December	SynerJob Conference: <i>The vision for Public Employment Services for 2020</i>
6 December	Conference: <i>Quality assurance and Transparency as Interface between Vocational Education and Training, Schools and Higher Education to enhance mobility and to support easier pathways to lifelong learning</i>
6 December	Belgian Presidency Dinner with European social partners
7 December	Informal Council of Ministers for Education and Training: <i>Towards a stronger European collaboration on vocational education and training</i>

For more information on the events please visit the Belgian Presidency website: <http://www.education2010.be/en/calendar/>