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Directorate F: Social statistics
Unit F-5: Education, health and social protection

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Draft-Final minutes

**Meeting of the
Education and Training Statistics Working Group
Luxembourg, 19-20th June 2014
BECH Building – Room QUETELET**

Participants from all EU countries (except Greece), all EFTA countries (Iceland, [Liechtenstein](#), Norway, Switzerland), candidate countries (Montenegro, former Yugoslavian Republic of Macedonia, Serbia and Turkey), and potential candidate countries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo) attended the meeting together with representatives of the European Commission Directorate responsible for Education and Culture (DG EAC), the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP), the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the UNESCO Institute of Statistics (UIS).

1. OPENING OF THE MEETING

The chair welcomed the participants and introduced the staff of Eurostat working on education statistics. The chair person also reminded the participants about the main achievements since the previous meeting: adoption of the UOE regulation, positive votes by the ESSC about the AES and CVTS regulations. She also mentioned pieces of work concerning the project on the modernisation of social statistics, the implementation of ISCED 2011 and the preparation of the 2014 UOE data collection.

The draft agenda was adopted with this change.

2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the previous meeting, held 25-26 April 2013 were adopted.

3. GENERAL BACKGROUND

3.1 Recent developments on education and training policies in the EU
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Presentation

DG EAC mentioned 7 priority areas in the field of education and training (Education investment, Vocational education and training, Entrepreneurship in education, Opening up Education through new technology, Teachers, European Area of Skills and Qualifications, as well the new needs which may come from the new Commission and the ET2020 and Europe 2020 review) as well as the recent Council conclusions of February 2014 ([Efficient and innovative education and training to invest in skills](#)) and May 2014 ([Promoting youth entrepreneurship to foster social inclusion of young people](#), [Effective teacher education](#), and [Multilingualism and the development of language competences](#)).

DG EAC also highlighted the growing importance of education in the 2014 European Semester reflected by the number of countries which received related country-specific recommendations. In the context of the mid-term stocktaking of the ET 2020 strategy a review of the framework of indicators and benchmarks is going to take place. The review of the framework should bring a discussion on the lifelong learning benchmark and possible new policy areas (Language skills, Adult skills, Educational attainment of the population, Teachers and trainers, Investment in education and training, ICT in education, Entrepreneurship education and competence, and VET).

Discussion

The participants took note of these recent developments and of the importance of the European Statistics for the compiling of the indicators on education. Questions related to the benchmark on language skills and the referencing of the National Qualification Frameworks to the European Qualification Framework in Austria.

3.2	2015 Eurostat Annual Work Programme on Education statistics
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2014-ETS-02

Presentation

Eurostat informed the participants about the draft 2015 work programme regarding education and training statistics as well as on the on-going consultation steps both with countries and Commission services. As a follow-up of these consultations the output of two actions (repealing of CVTS and indicators) are going to be redrafted.

4. LIFELONG LEARNING AND OUTCOMES OF EDUCATION

4.1	Modernisation of social statistics
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2014-ETS-03

Presentation

Eurostat introduced the current status of the overall project on the modernisation of social statistics including the preparation of the future framework regulation governing social statistics. The participants were also informed on the various items (periodicity, target population, proxy interviews, reference, data collection and data transmission periods, and precision requirements) under discussion concerning the future Adult Education Survey (AES) depending on whether the new legal act will be developed under the existing or the new framework regulation.

The ETS Working Group should be consulted in December 2014 on the proposals regarding education and training statistics, particularly on the AES.

Discussion

A few countries (SE, NL, BE) showed some interest for the possible reduction of the periodicity of AES from 4 to 6 years although it is closely related to the general discussion on 'peaks and valleys' and to the success of the implementation of the participation variables in the Labour Force Survey. DG EAC observed that 6 years is a too long interval for policy monitoring.

Despite a large support within the AES Task-Force, Norway and Sweden expressed reticence about extending the reference population beyond 25-64.

Conclusions

The Working Group was informed about the two possibilities concerning AES beyond the 2016 wave. The possible changes will be further discussed for both AES and LFS.

4.2	Implementation of the Adult Education Survey
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2014-ETS-04

Presentation

Eurostat presented the state of play regarding both 2011 and 2016 AES waves.

The production of the 2011 AES has reached its end. All expected microdata are validated, and data are disseminated through Eurostat's online database¹. Five new tables on participation in employer-sponsored non-formal education and training were

¹ http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/statistics/search_database

introduced in May 2014. Additional tables might be added later in the year: the ETS WG will be informed before any new indicators are released.

AES 2011 microdata are available to researchers since January 2014 through a scientific use file. The anonymisation method applied had been approved at the last ETS WG meeting in April 2013.

By now 20 national statistical authorities in charge of the AES have agreed to share their microdata. The Shared Database of these 20 countries was either given to delegates during the meeting or will be sent via post. Eurostat invited countries not yet participating in the Shared Database to join the project.

A workshop based on the 2011 AES data will take place later in the year in the scope of the "Data without boundaries" project aiming at promoting European social surveys and run by the German research institute Gesis. An ad-hoc 'campus file' will be used for that purpose and deleted after the workshop.

The ESSC adopted the 2016 AES draft Commission Regulation in May 2014. Its adoption by the Commission is expected before the end of the year. The preparation process for the draft Commission Regulation worked well thanks to the work of the AES Task Force mandated to provide inputs for the Regulation. The fieldwork shall take place between 1 July 2016 and 31 March 2017. Supporting material (AES manual and revised Classification of Learning Activities – both discussed by the AES Task Force) will be finalised before the end of 2014. Eurostat intends to be pro-active during all phases of the 2016 AES data collection through regular follow-up of the project phases, starting before the fieldwork. The actions taken will first consist in listing national delegates responsible for AES in each participating country and then circulating a form to be filled in with characteristics of the project (tentative dates for testing, fieldwork and data delivery).

Discussion

Belgium asked if the shared database could be also sent to the Ministries of Education and would like to be informed on the list of research projects that have already been submitted to Eurostat as they might also be relevant at national level.

The lifelong learning team will consult the competent service in Eurostat for the question on the shared database. Eurostat reminded that countries were always consulted for every research project submitted to Eurostat but a list could be made available on the secure CIRCABC platform.

Sweden asked why some comments were not taken on board during the consultations for the 2016 AES Regulation. Eurostat explained that during the consultations each national comment is scrutinised in view of European needs.

Conclusions

The ETS WG took note of the state of play regarding both AES waves and positively welcomed Eurostat's proposal for a regular follow-up on the 2016 data collection.

4.3	Implementation of the Continuing Vocational Training Survey (CVTS)
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2014-ETS-05

Presentation

Eurostat presented the state of play regarding both the Continuing Vocational Training Survey (CVTS) 2010 and 2015 and provided an outlook on the future of CVT statistics beyond CVTS 2015.

The ETS WG was informed on the data availability and the dissemination of the results of CVTS 4 (reference year 2010). Based on the anonymisation method agreed for the scientific use file for researchers for CVTS 3 (reference year 2005), anonymisation rules for CVTS 4 were proposed to the ETS WG for discussion and general approval.

Eurostat provided information on the two-step approach for CVT data collection agreed by the Directors of Social Statistics (DSS). In view of the non-availability of alternative data sources for CVT data provision in 2015, a (simplified) CVTS is to be carried out based on existing CVTS legislation for the reference year 2015. Beyond 2015, further methodological work on alternative sources is required.

In line with step one of this approach, a draft Commission Regulation for CVTS 5 (reference year 2015) was presented to the ESSC meeting in May 2014 and voted favourably. Its adoption by the Commission is expected before the end of the year. Similar as for the 2016 AES, measures to support countries in the implementation of CVTS 2015 will be taken. For that purpose, a CVTS manual should be made available before the end of this year. The draft of the CVTS 2015 manual will be sent to the ETS WG for comments.

Eurostat also presented the future work envisaged for CVT data collection beyond 2015 (step two). The focus will be on possible integration of (parts of) CVTS into the Labour Cost Survey (LCS). A first discussion should take place at the Labour Market Statistics WG in October. Countries were strongly encouraged by the chair to take part in the tests needed to evaluate the feasibility of the approach. Depending on progress, a Task Force meeting might be held in 2015 in order to further develop the possible use of alternative sources for collecting CVT statistics.

On this occasion, the chair of the meeting reminded the ETS WG that current CVTS legislation cannot be repealed without having sound and reliable alternative data sources (including legislation) that ensure provision of main CVT indicators.

Discussion

Some ETS WG members insisted on the quality concerns which were at the origin of the will to repeal CVTS (high non-response, lack of information to properly fill-in the questionnaires within the companies – in general or at the time of the interview). Some other ETS WG members confirmed that the use of alternative sources was crucial to achieve the streamlining of the data collection on CVT and the repeal of the survey dedicated to CVT.

Eurostat acknowledged that the quality of the data could be debatable but insisted on the fact that the response rate was very good in some countries, often depending whether the survey had been made mandatory at national level or not. Countries were also reminded that the feasibility to use alternative sources needs to be studied soon as possible and in particular early enough to allow for testing during the 2016 LCS implementation.

Conclusions

The ETS WG took note of the state of play regarding both CVTS 2010 and CVTS 2015 waves. The proposed anonymisation method for CVTS 4 was generally agreed but Eurostat will take the need for (limited) exceptions into account. Countries can specify their needs during the written consultation on the participation in the scientific use file for researchers.

The ETS WG and Eurostat both agreed that there is a need to further study the options within the ESS to streamline the data collection on CVT beyond CVTS 2015. Further methodological work as well as actual testing is needed in order to pave the way for an alternative CVT data provision without a dedicated CVT survey.

5. LEARNING MOBILITY STATISTICS

Pilot data collection 2014 on IVET mobility and youth learning mobility

2014-ETS-06

Presentation

Eurostat reminded the aim of the pilot 2014 data collection on learning mobility and the ESS agreement in this respect from November 2012. All countries, those included in the agreement and those not participating in it, were demanded to provide information about the situation in the country as concerns data on learning mobility to be provided to the Council in 2015.

Eurostat presented the format for transmission of data from 2014 pilot surveys (by March 2015). Variables mentioned in the filters are proposed as well to be sent to Eurostat for validation purpose. Labels for duration of the stay abroad (in optional variables) will be still modified to clearly define intervals.

Discussion

Interventions of participants concerned mainly the situation of the 2014 national pilot surveys and availability of data in countries not participating in the ESS agreement.

In nearly all countries participating in the ESS agreement pilot surveys will be conducted as foreseen. The Czech Republic and France informed that they ~~would be~~ not ~~able to collect data~~ conduct any pilot survey in 2014 but had intention to do it in the near future. In addition the Czech Republic will try to provide estimates of the requested indicators based on available administrative data.

As concerns 8 countries not participating in the ESS agreement, the main source of data on IVET mobility could be Leonardo da Vinci programme (in terms of students). DG EAC will check if these data are available in the Commission.

Some participants expressed their concerns on the definitions of the benchmarks and the future of the statistics on learning mobility. Discussions on this should start after the analysis of the 2014 pilot exercise.

Definition of "other learning mobility", variable used to collect information on general youth mobility, is one of the issues to be clarified in the future.

Conclusions

ETS WG approved the format for transmission of results of these pilot surveys. Eurostat will change the labels for duration variables as explained at the meeting.

Eurostat took note of the situation of the national 2014 pilot data collections. For countries not participating in the ESS agreement, data on IVET mobility related to the EU programmes (as Leonardo da Vinci) could be available.

The analysis of the results of the 2014 pilot data collections will be done in 2015, allowing discussion on the future of statistics on learning mobility (including indicators and benchmarks).

6. IMPLEMENTATION OF ISCED 2011

6.1 ISCED mappings

2014-ETS-07

Presentation

Eurostat presented the overview of the 2013 ISCED mappings review process and the main observations from this exercise. For the first time, the review has been conducted jointly by the three international organisations. The majority of the replies have been already received from the countries. The bilateral contacts with countries to clarify and close any pending issues will take place in July and August 2014. The aim is to finalize the review process by September 2014. Eurostat asked the ETS WG to approve the dissemination of the revised 2013 ISCED mappings on CIRCABC in public domain in September 2014.

Eurostat informed about the main issues regarding the mappings such as the need to provide precise information on entry requirements and access to higher education and to clarify if enrolments and graduates are reported by countries in UOE. Eurostat also highlighted the need for the rearrangement of the numbering of programmes in the 2014 ISCED mappings and, if applicable, a provision of the national definitions of the orientation (academic and professional). Eurostat informed that only 13 countries provided information in the sheet on formal qualifications outside UOE scope.

Eurostat presented the template for the 2014 ISCED mappings. The 2014 ISCED mapping will include also the sheet on the main qualifications from old programmes that will be very useful for surveys. On the request of UIS, it was also proposed to include a new short sheet informing on compulsory and free education.

Discussion

ETS WG members commented on the ISCED 2013 review process and the public dissemination of the mappings. As the provision of information on EQF is optional and EQF referencing is not considered as final in several countries, some ET WG members proposed not to make this information available in the public space of CIRCABC. DG EAC expressed interest in the information on EQF correspondence and asked if it could be shared with the EQF Advisory Board. Eurostat proposed to exclude the EQF column in the public dissemination and to reconsider the issue of releasing this information in the future.

Following the comments and questions from participants, Eurostat clarified that ISCED mappings should reflect the ideal situation how programmes should be classified according to ISCED. Any deviations in the actual reporting of programmes in the data collections should be highlighted in the Notes area of the mappings. Eurostat also reminded that ISCED mappings should be transmitted together with the standard quality reports required by the Commission Regulation (EU) No 912/2013. Apart from the information relevant for UOE, the ISCED mappings collect also information on formal qualifications outside UOE scope and qualifications from old programmes that are important educational attainment statistics (collected by surveys).

Eurostat confirmed that information on the number of enrolments is valuable as it shows the relative importance of the programme in terms of pupil/student population covered.

CEDEFOP stressed the importance of the public availability of the ISCED mappings for users and expressed its interest in the inclusion in the mappings of the information on the work-based components of programmes.

Conclusions

The ETS WG members took note of the 2013 ISCED mapping review process and approved the dissemination of the revised 2013 ISCED mappings on public space of CIRCABC without the column on EQF.

The ETS WG approved the 2014 ISCED mapping template with the additional sheet on compulsory/free education proposed by UIS. Some minor modifications of the sheets can be still suggested by mid-July 2014.

The request from CEDEFOP on the inclusion in the mappings of information on the work-based component in the educational programmes was taken on board by Eurostat for the work on the ISCED mappings templates in the future.

6.2	Joint UNESCO/OECD/Eurostat ISCED 2011 operational manual
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2014-ETS-08

Presentation

OECD informed about the finalisation of the joint ISCED 2011 operational manual (JOM), carried out in collaboration with the UIS and Eurostat. The draft operational manual includes now chapters on all ISCED 2011 levels and three annexes. Introduction will be still elaborated. The draft manual includes many national examples; in the final document some of them can be removed and new examples added with the aim to balance the content between different example groups and countries.

The proposed calendar foresees last comments on the current draft by 1st July 2014 to allow send-out of the manual with other instruments of the 2014 UOE data collection (questionnaires, UOE manual) at the beginning of July 2014. Publication of the final JOM is planned for December 2014.

Discussion

Slovenia and Portugal provided comments on the examples of their countries included in the manual.

Conclusions

The ETS WG took note of the presented timeline for finalisation of the JOM. Possible comments (especially concerning national examples) are still welcome by 1st July 2014. Draft JOM will be sent to the countries at the beginning of July 2014, in the same time as other UOE 2014 instruments and will be a reference for UOE 2014 data collection.

Finalisation of the JOM (last improvements not changing the substantial content, including editing) is foreseen for December 2014.

6.3	Guidelines on the measurement of educational attainment in household surveys
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2014-ETS-09

Presentation

Eurostat briefly introduced the second version of the guidelines on the measurement of educational attainment in household surveys. Changes compared to the 1st version which was approved by the ETS WG in April 2013 largely refer to clarity of the text and additional precisions. Moreover, the OECD LSO network was consulted in the meantime.

The document consists of two parts: the main text proposes common guidelines for both organisations (Eurostat and OECD) while in the annex, Eurostat's approach for the classification of ISCED level 3 programmes of partial level completion is outlined. This issue (which only applies for few countries) is of particular importance for surveys where data are collected at the 1-digit level only as all ESS surveys should follow the same approach. Information on this approach will also be included in Eurostat's metadata.

Discussion

OECD informed that some countries of the LSO network may still have additional comments. The OECD acknowledges that there is no agreement between Eurostat and the OECD on the classification of programmes of partial completion at 1-digit level and is reluctant to present Eurostat's approach as an annex of the document.

The ETS WG expressed some concerns as regards the different treatment of partial completion programmes by Eurostat and OECD. Eurostat explained that (1) only very few countries have this type of programmes and that (2) Eurostat's approach under ISCED 2011 is the same as under ISCED 97 and (3) this approach was already explained and approved at the ETS WG in April 2013.

Belgium proposed to send additional comments after the meeting. The problem of allocation to ISCED 2011 of foreign qualifications was raised and Eurostat explained that the integrated ISCED mappings (at least for EU Member States) will be available to help countries to define the educational attainment.

Conclusions

There was a broad agreement of the ETS WG on the guidelines and its annex. However, additional comments by ETS WG members and also by the OECD LSO network are still expected. Eurostat will fine tune the guidelines in view of the suggestions received by 1st of July. The revised version of the guidelines will be sent to the ETS WG by mid-July for final approval.

6.4	Fields of Education and Training (ISCED-F)
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2014-ETS-10

Presentation

UIS informed about the final version of the ISCED-Fields 2013 main document and the plan for the implementation of the new classification. Eurostat, OECD and UNESCO will adopt the ISCED-Fields 2013 in their education surveys from 2016. For the UOE data collection it will concern the reference year 2014/2015, for the LFS the first quarter of 2016.

UIS will prepare the detailed field descriptions (similar to FOET 99) including, where appropriate, both inclusions and exclusions to better define the boundaries between similar fields. The detailed field descriptions will be published electronically in the third or fourth quarter of 2014 and accompanied by the alphabetical and numerical lists for easy reference (in Word and Excel).

Discussion

The ETS WG representatives from several countries raised the issue of the Erasmus data collection requiring the use of ISCED-F 2013 directly from the higher education institutions and reported on the problems encountered by these institutions. DG EAC took note of these concerns and assured that it did its best to provide the support and advice when needed.

Denmark informed about the work carried out at national level on classifications of fields of education and proposed to share this experience with colleagues in other countries.

Conclusions

The ETS WG took note of the information on the planned ISCED-F 2013 supporting documents and of the calendar of implementation of this classification.

7. EDUCATION AND TRAINING SYSTEMS

7.1 Overview of 2013 UOE data collection
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Presentation

Eurostat informed the group on the assessment of the data transmitted by the countries in 2013 in application of the Commission Regulation No 88/2011 regarding statistics on education and training systems. A report has been presented in April 2014 to the Directors of Social Statistics within the compliance monitoring. As regards the timelines only ten countries sent all the questionnaires according to the legal deadlines. Countries were recommended to respect the deadlines without jeopardising data quality and to inform Eurostat in case of structural difficulties. The quality of the data has been assessed as globally good or acceptable. Countries were recommended to estimate missing information, to provide appropriate metadata so that end users are properly informed and to anticipate the end of existing derogations. On the data transmission, the situation has improved and only four countries (CZ, IE, GR and LU) did not use Edamis. Nineteen countries sent data on graduates by country of origin within the framework of the pilot data collection, and only 9 of them used the "prior education" concept to define the country of origin. In 2014 data on mobile graduates will be collected on a mandatory basis.

7.2 UOE quality reports

Presentation

Participants were reminded the legal and technical frameworks of the quality reports and the obligation from now on to provide them by the 31 of January every year. They were also informed on the state of play on the 2012 and 2013 quality reports.

Discussion

Some countries welcomed the improvement of the IT tool.

Conclusions

Countries who have not should submit as soon as possible their 2012 quality reports and edit them (if needed) in order to publish and then proceed to finalize the 2013 quality reports. Countries who have submitted their 2012 quality reports but not yet published should review them and edit (if needed) in order to publish them and then proceed to finalize their 2013 quality reports. Countries who have published their 2012 quality reports should finalize their 2013 quality reports.

Countries should keep in mind that the 2014 quality reports, to be provided by the end of January 2015, will refer to the 2014 UOE with ISCED 2011.

(a) 2014 UOE data collection – State of play**Presentation**

Eurostat reminded the participants about the legal framework of the 2014 UOE data collection. Since the adoption of the new Commission Regulation the 3 international organisations have started to revise the UOE questionnaires with the collaboration of a group of volunteer countries with the objective of improving/simplifying them. Within this context new specific sheets have been created to include metadata, to manage missing data, to copy/paste data, to include specific definitions/guidelines (help sheet), and to issue automatic checks. In addition, the questionnaires have been made compliant with the SDMX requirements (see next item on the agenda). As regards the UOE manual a revised version focusing on concepts, definitions and classifications has been made available. The countries are also provided with complementary information through the operational manual on ISCED 2011 and the specific sheets included in each individual questionnaire providing more practical information on how to fill in the questionnaire and on the validation rules to be applied. On the timetable, draft versions of the ENTR and PERS questionnaires and of the manual have been sent to the countries on the 17th of June. It is foreseen to make available final versions of the ENTR, PERS and ENRL questionnaires by the 4th of July and the other questionnaires by the end of July. Countries were also reminded that according to the conclusions of the last ETS WG meeting back data on the reference years 2000, 2005 and 2010 to 2012 should be sent beginning of 2015.

Discussion

Some countries expressed their concerns on the late availability of the questionnaires while acknowledging the huge work of the international organisations in order to improve the layout. There could be an impact on the delivery of the questionnaires according to the legal deadlines, acknowledged by Eurostat. The Danish delegate informed the group that they are quite advanced in the adaptation of their national system and offered his technical support to the other countries. The difference between the specific metadata to be provided in the questionnaires (to gather all non-data information necessary to process the data and calculate indicators) and the quality reports has been reminded. General valid information already available in the quality reports have not to be duplicated in the questionnaires.

Conclusions

The final questionnaires will be sent to the countries as soon as individual versions are available. In the second wave, a certain priority should be given to the FIN questionnaire, to be provided before the end of July. Concerning back data, Eurostat and OECD will harmonise their requirements and inform the countries before the end of the year.

(b) 2014 UOE data collection – SDMX**Presentation**

Participants were informed on the justification and plan on the implementation of SDMX in the UOE data collection. In particular, SDMX should allow an efficient data sharing between Eurostat-OECD-UIS. The 3 international organisations have developed an SDMX conceptual framework for the UOE questionnaires: 2 Data Structure Definitions cover the UOE data collection and the UOE Excel questionnaires are now SDMX-compliant (they can be converted to an SDMX file). The objective is to gradually abandon Excel questionnaires in favour of SDMX compliant transmission. During the

transition period, questionnaires will be converted by Eurostat into SDMX-ML files, which will then be uploaded into the database (no action is needed from the countries). Participants are invited to comment on the developments and to participate in a pilot exercise.

Discussion

Some countries expressed their doubts on the advantages of SDMX at country level, on the feasibility to adapt their national systems to SDMX and on the implementation costs. Eurostat informed them that a co-financing of the national implementation could be envisaged in the future.

Conclusions

Countries are welcome to provide feedback on the Data Structure Definition (to be used for the 2015 data collection) up to November 2014. They should confirm their interest in participating in a pilot exercise to send fully or partially this year 2014's data using SDMX compliant transmissions. The results of the pilot will be discussed during the next ETS working group meeting in 2015.

7.4 European register for tertiary education institutions

Presentation

The participants have been informed on the new European Tertiary Education Register (ETER), providing easy access to information on universities in 36 countries, including all EU Member States. For the first time at European level, ETER will provide a one-stop-shop for detailed and comparable data on 2 250 institutions hosting more than 16 million students. Using information from national statistical authorities, ETER will build a permanent and regularly updated database on Europe's universities. It will help policy makers to better manage the European higher education system as a whole, allow universities to compare themselves with others, and to identify opportunities for research collaboration or specialisation. It complements other data on university performance, such as U-Multirank and UOE statistics.

The project is managed by DG EAC, with the assistance of Eurostat. It will continue in 2014-2015 and countries have been ~~thanks~~ thanked for their collaboration in providing data.

8. AOB

8.1 Dissemination activities by CEDEFOP

The participants have been informed on the more recent activities of CEDEFOP (Statistics and indicators on IVET and CVT; Medium term skills demand and supply forecast; Skill mismatch survey - EU-SKILLS).