



EUROPEAN SECTORAL SOCIAL DIALOGUE IN EDUCATION

Working Group: Education in support of employment

Meeting 9 March 2015

Minutes

Chair: Michael Moriarty (EFEE)

1. Opening of the meeting – Approval of the draft agenda

The agenda of the meeting was adopted.

2. Key note speech: the European Alliance for Apprenticeships

Sigve Bjorstad gave a comprehensive presentation on the EAfA, explaining the rationale behind the initiative and its objectives and announcing the "new boost" event that will take place in June 2015 in Riga (see presentation in annex).

One of the elements of the new boost will be an enhanced attention to the "quality" of EAfA pledges, i.e.: as concrete as possible, going beyond "business as usual" and including specific success indicators. A "flagship" pledge is the "Alliance for YOUTH", launched by Nestlé and involving over 150 companies¹. The SSDC for the food and drink sector has adopted a pledge and a number of other committees are considering doing the same.

3. Examples regarding apprenticeships

Agnes Roman gave an overview of the actions undertaken by teacher trade unions to improve apprenticeships, which includes a pledge by ETUCE in the context of the EAfA. She also presented the main element of the related 2012 ETUCE policy paper on maintaining and improving quality education in VET² (see presentation in annex).

Manfred Polzin presented the features of the Dutch "polder" system in VET, explaining in particular the role of the Foundation of Vocational Education and Labour Market, where social partners play a key role (see presentation in annex).

¹ <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1149&langId=en&idPledge=26>

² [http://download.ei-
ie.org/Docs/WebDepot/ETUCE%20%20Policy%20Paper%20on%20VET_EN.pdf](http://download.ei-
ie.org/Docs/WebDepot/ETUCE%20%20Policy%20Paper%20on%20VET_EN.pdf)

4. "Opening up Education": presentation of the work of the ET2020 WG on Digital Learning, with focus on open educational resources, on teachers' and school leaders' ICT competences

As an inspiration for the social partners' discussion, Konstantin Scheller (KS) presented the policy challenges addressed by the ET2020 working group on Digital and Online Learning, and the pursued outputs corresponding to these challenges (see presentation and mandate of the WG in [annex](#)).

Responding to delegates questions, KS added: investment in digital equipment in schools can be funded under the European Structural and Investment Funds, which can contribute to reducing the risk of a technological divide between learners; open learning environments are those that fully integrate technology that allows for connecting to the world outside the classroom and actively involves outside actors (experts, entrepreneurs); open educational resources are indeed not new, but it is now acknowledged that this evolution should be supported (including through official OER repositories), rather than discouraged; the time schedules imposed to the working groups are indeed quite tight, but this is linked to their output-driven approach; any material produced by (external) experts/researchers will be discussed by the WGs; a study is ongoing on possible copyright issues related to education.

In the ensuing exchange, points made included the following:

- The introduction of ICT tools in classrooms and of the necessary infrastructure should be done in a coordinated manner, with due attention for reliable connectivity and appropriate security measures (i.e. sufficient while not hampering flexible use, including of own devices). Governments should accept that this requires major investments.
- Teachers should receive appropriate (initial and continuous) training on the use of ICT tools, how these can contribute to the learning process, as well as on a more individualised approach to teaching (differentiation in the classroom). Collective agreements should facilitate rather than hamper these evolutions.
- Non-teaching staff would also benefit from such training³.
- ICT should be supportive to learning, not replace human interaction. A collaborative culture, involving teachers, students, educators, parents, public authorities and other stakeholders must be developed.
- The structure of the school days (with the classical 40-50' course periods) should be reconsidered.
- Innovation should also focus on changing mentalities, which requires a "paradigm shift". Cooperation through European Schoolnet⁴ was highlighted as a way of promoting innovation in teaching and learning. School leaders also have key role to play in this respect.

³ See for instance: <http://www.skillsforschools.org.uk/>

⁴ <http://www.eun.org/>

- Addressing copyright issues is key; the "Creative Commons"⁵ approach may offer promising routes in this respect.

5. Supporting a new generation of educators (focus area of Education and Training 2020)

See point 4.

6. A Pledge for the European Alliance for Apprenticeships

Delegates of EFEE and ETUCE discussed the issue separately, after which each side reported on their conclusions and proposals. On the basis of the exchange of ideas, the following common themes for a possible joint pledge were identified:

- Contribute to the image/attractiveness of apprenticeships;
- Need for quality assurance;
- Foster cooperation between stakeholders, including companies and schools;
- Due attention for transversal skills, including ICT;
- Importance of continued professional development of teachers and trainers;
- Recognition of the diversity of national education systems.

On that basis, the secretariats will draft a proposal, with the aim of adopting it by the high level event in Riga on 22 June 2015 (see agenda point 2).

7. AOB

None.

Annexes

- Point 2 – Presentation European Alliance for Apprenticeships
- Point 3 – Presentation Teacher trade unions to improve apprenticeship
- Point 3 – Presentation The Dutch polder system in VET
- Point 4 – Presentation Outputs of the ET2020 Working Group "Digital and Online Learning"
- Point 4 – Mandate of the ET2020 Working Group on "Digital and Online Learning"

⁵ <https://creativecommons.org/>

List of participants 09/03/2015

<p><u>Employers</u></p> <p>EFEE</p> <p>Ms Franciska AL-MANSOUR (SI) Ms Kristin IVARSSON (SE) Mr Andreas KASOULIDES (CY) Mr Esa-Pekka KAUPPINEN (FI) Ms Sarah KIK (EU) Ms Annelise LARSEN (NO) Ms Malin LOOBERGER (SE) Ms Nives POCKAR (SI) Mr Joseph MICALLEF (MT) Mr Michael MORIARTY (IE) Mr Manfred POLZIN (NL) Ms Maria PONTIERI (IT) Mr Tonino PROIETTI (IT) Mr David SIMMONDS (UK) Mr Laszlo SOMOGYI (HU) Ms Bianka STEGE (EU) Ms Karine VAN THIENEN (BE) Mr Jens VERMEERSCH (BE)</p> <p>18 employer representatives (9 women, 9 men) (2 EU, 5 EU-13, 10 EU-15, 1 non-EU)</p>	<p><u>Workers</u></p> <p>ETUCE</p> <p>Ms Tatjana BRABAUSKIENE (LT) Mr Guntars CATLAKS (EU) Mr Johan ERNESTAM (SE) Ms Susan FLOCKEN (EU) Ms Gitta FRANKE-ZÖLLMER (DE) Mr John MACGABHANN (IE) Ms Tuovi MANNINEN (FI) Mr Sandi MODRIJAN (SI) Ms Claudie PAILLETTE (FR) Mr Soteris PAPAMOYSEOS (CY) Mr Igor RADEKA (HR) Ms Agnes ROMAN (EU) Ms Alexandra RÜDIG (EU) Mr Joaquim SANTOS (PT) Mr Stefanos SAVVA (CY) Mr Linas SUMSKAS (LT)</p> <p>CESI Mr Salvatore PIROSCIA (IT) Ms Aurélie QUINTIN (EU)</p> <p>EPSU Mr Jon RICHARDS (UK)</p> <p>19 worker representatives (8 women, 11 men) (5 EU, 6 EU-13, 8 EU-15)</p>
<p><u>European Commission</u></p> <p>Mr Sigve BJORSTAD (EMPL.C.5 – Vocational training and adult education) Mr Stefaan CEUPPENS (EMPL.B.1) Mr Konstantin SCHELLER (EAC.B.3 – Innovation in education, EIT and MSCA)</p>	