

## Education and Training 2020

# *ETUCE Circular 2/2011*

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the EU 'Education & Training' 2020 Programme  
and the EU 2020 Strategy*

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## Polish presidency priorities

Following the Lisbon Treaty the so-called trio presidencies consecutively takes over the leadership of the Council of the European Union. The second Trio Presidency of 2011-2012 is made up by Poland, Denmark and Cyprus on 1 July 2011. The Trio will prioritise the creation of European benchmark on mobility and employability as well as on languages and will examine the future EU funding of Education, Youth, Culture, Audiovisual and Sport sectors with the European Parliament.

The Presidencies will also promote the subject of education for democratic citizenship to promote the concepts of democracy, justice, equality, citizenship and respect for civil and human rights as well as equitable access to education. The priorities of the Polish Presidency will be education for mobility, the modernisation of universities and enhancing Eastern partnerships. The focus will shift to the development of language competencies of young people and adults for study and working mobility, enhancing cooperation between vocational training, higher education and employers and finally to better quality of education

In the framework of the future Lifelong Learning Programme the strategic objectives of the Polish Presidency are the followings:

- Strengthening permeability among the education systems.
- Wider international dimension in the Eastern Partnership Programme.
- Recognition of skills, review of transparency instruments: Europass, ECVET, ECTS.
- Stronger cooperation between education and labour market, greater involvement of enterprises.
- Qualitative, rather than quantitative indicators in mobility.

Concerning the new policy in education the following initiations are expected: *Commission communication on Modernisation of Higher Education; Commission communication on Validation of non-formal, informal learning; Commission communication on Continuation of the LLP*. As regards to equality issues a *Council conclusions on Commission report on the fight against racism and xenophobia* are expected in autumn.

The programme of the Polish Presidency is available via [http://pl2011.eu/sites/default/files/users/shared/o\\_prezydencja/programme\\_of\\_the\\_polish\\_presidency\\_of\\_the\\_council\\_of\\_the\\_eu.pdf](http://pl2011.eu/sites/default/files/users/shared/o_prezydencja/programme_of_the_polish_presidency_of_the_council_of_the_eu.pdf)

## Education as a tool in the Roma inclusion policies

The inclusion of the approximately 10-12 million Roma EU citizens remains an unsolved problem in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Though the Hungarian presidency put Roma issues on the agenda the ETUCE, in the statement "*Education as a tool in the Roma inclusion policies*" for the Education Council meeting (20 May 2011), pointed to the fact that the issue is still approached in a very one-sided manner in EU policy papers.

The following points were highlighted in the statement on Roma inclusion policies:

- The emphasis of The European Commission (EC) on a top-down approach is unacceptable
- The EC should include the opinion of people with significant and real experience in Roma culture.
- A greater focus on adult and especially intergenerational learning is necessary.
- Education should be viewed in a more holistic approach where there is a greater emphasis on alternative ways of teaching.
- It is unacceptable that a parallel is drawn between drop-outs of disadvantaged students and so-called mismatches between education and labour market need.

However, the strategies cannot place all responsibility and workload exclusively on schools and teachers. The ETUCE also stressed the need for Roma inclusion strategy papers to contain suggestions on how to prepare teachers to cope with new demands, paying for the teacher's continuous development or how to secure teacher replacement while they participate in training courses. In order to ensure social support for the Roma students to remain in school and in an education and career path, the role of social workers and school mediators dealing with the children's families has to be underlined.

#### ***The European Commissioner's response to The ETUCE statement***

The European Commissioner for education and culture Androulla Vassiliou, subsequently responded the ETUCE in July and addressed some of the issues raised in the statement. According to the response, in answering the need to include the views of people with knowledge of the Roma culture, a European Academic Network on Romani Studies 2011-2012 has been set up in order to highlight Roma contributions to European culture.

Regarding the issue of preparing teachers to cope with new demands and to increasingly include other actors such as social workers, the commissioner's response noted, that there are current negotiations with the European Council on an agreement to support more training for schooling and cultural mediators. However no specifics, regarding either the issue of decreasing current teacher workload or how to replace teachers while on training, were addressed. Furthermore, no comments were made on the need for a more holistic approach to education or the issue of adult Roma education.

The ETUCE statement "*Education as a tool in the Roma inclusion policies*" can be found via:

[http://etuce.homestead.com/Statements/2011/ETUCE\\_Statement-Education\\_for\\_Roma\\_inclusion\\_eng.pdf](http://etuce.homestead.com/Statements/2011/ETUCE_Statement-Education_for_Roma_inclusion_eng.pdf)

## **Early school leaving and Early childhood education**

In May, the ETUCE conveyed two statements on respectively the Draft Council Conclusions on Early Childhood Education and care, and on the Proposal for a Council Recommendation on Early School Leaving. The ETUCE strongly support the draft conclusions to enhance the attractiveness of early childhood education and care (ECEC), however, it is unacceptable that in most EU countries the level of

teacher salary depends on the pupils age. Furthermore, ETUCE opposes private investment in ECEC as education is a fundamental right and must be publicly funded and regulated. Early school leaving must be combatted by taking into account the heavy workload facing teachers. The ETUCE therefore, stresses that more investments in education, which enables recruitment of more teachers, are necessary.

ETUCE Statement on the Proposal for a Council Recommendation on Early School Leaving is available via: [http://etuce.homestead.com/Statements/2011/ETUCE\\_Statement\\_-\\_Early\\_School\\_Leaving.pdf](http://etuce.homestead.com/Statements/2011/ETUCE_Statement_-_Early_School_Leaving.pdf)

ETUCE Statement on the Draft Council conclusions on Early Childhood Education and Care is available via: [http://etuce.homestead.com/Statements/2011/ETUCE\\_Statement\\_-\\_Early\\_Childhood\\_Education.pdf](http://etuce.homestead.com/Statements/2011/ETUCE_Statement_-_Early_Childhood_Education.pdf)

## Report from the Open Method of Coordination Working Groups

In the framework of the EU2020 Process, The European Commission opened possibility for representatives of Ministries of Education and other relevant social partners, like the ETUCE, to discuss on education policy development within working groups, setting up political recommendations within a shorter period (6-24 months). In May 2011 the ETUCE got an invitation to nominate representatives to seven more working groups, increasing ETUCE representation to 10 Education and Training Open Method of Coordination Working Groups as of September 2011: Modernisation of Higher Education; Assessment of Key Competences; Professional development of teachers; Mathematics, science and technology; Languages and employment; Entrepreneurship Education; ICT and Education; Professional development of VET Trainers; Quality Assurance in Adult Learning and; Financing Adult Learning.

### *'Professional Development of Teacher' Working Group*

The 4th Meeting of the working group took place on 13 May 2011, in Brussels with ETUCE representative, Mr Hans Laugesen. The Working Group is planning several Peer-Learning Activities for 2011-2012, such as: Policy approaches to defining and describing teacher's core competences; Policies supporting the acquisition and development of key teaching competences; Policies supporting Teacher Educators' selection and professional development and Policies on attracting and selecting the best candidates for the teaching profession.

## EU's Digital Agenda Assembly, June 2011, Brussels

The Conference marked the launching of the EU flagship 'The Digital Agenda' - a part of EU's 2020 goals. The scope of the conference topics (1500+ participants) was broad, covering the role that ICT plays in society – focusing on education in one of the parallel workshops.

On the first day the educational workshop was titled "Mainstreaming e-learning in education and training", where Hans Laugesen, from the Danish union GL<sup>1</sup>, represented the ETUCE as one of the panellists. *Khalil Rouhana, EC Director INFSO/E* and *Godelieve Van den Brande, EC EAC/A* opened the workshop emphasising the need for all stakeholders to cooperate including a closer liaison between DG EAC and DG INFSO.

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<sup>1</sup> Gymnasieskolernes Lærereforening

*Hans Laugesen, on behalf of ETUCE*, stressed that teachers are in favour of developing the learning process. However, teachers have many duties regarding teaching and preparing students for exams besides teaching the use of ICT. To change practice, changes in the curriculum are required in all subjects as well as in exam and assessment forms. Besides, more pedagogical research is needed on how to increase the learning outcome with the use of ICT. This research should be used to change initial teacher training and be used for in-service training of teachers so they have confidence in using new ICT pedagogical teaching approaches

## OECD – Education at a glance 2011

ETUCE attended a conference in Brussels which launched the 2011 OECD report entitled “*Education at a glance*” on 13 September, 2011.

According to the report, education remains a priority, as it demonstrates that groups without a baseline education have suffered more in the economic downturn and consequently face greater challenges in entering and staying in the job market.

The following points were highlighted in the presentation:

- In general, countries remain dedicated to education despite the current crisis.
- The report does not contain data on public educational expenditure after 2008, which means that the real effect on the current crisis is not fully covered.
- In 7 of 30 countries spending on education on tertiary level has dropped already before the economic crisis due to increase in the number of students.
- The OECD stresses the need for more investments in education.

Although the social benefits of education were mentioned in the presentation of the report, there was a clear emphasis on the role of education to meet the labour market needs. Several questions were filed from the audience which regarded the social elements e.g. social mobility and the access to tertiary education. The report lacks information on how social background influenced people’s access to tertiary education and whether public educational grants could ensure further access. According to the OECD no current international reports on the subject exists.

The report pays little attention to the importance of vocational education and training and focuses on higher education despite the fact that attention to VET can significantly reduce youth unemployment.

The OECD report is available via:

<http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/61/2/48631582.pdf>

## EURYDICE: Modernisation of higher education

The Eurydice report “*Modernisation of Higher Education in Europe: Funding and the Social Dimension*” was published on 16 September 2011 and reviews the effects of social dimensions of higher education. This includes the process of providing access to higher education to as large a proportion of the population as possible.

Overall, there has been a 25% increase in student numbers in the past decade, however, since 2008 funding trends have been diverging between countries as some countries have experienced, or will experience, cuts while others increase public educational spending. Student fees and support have a very significant impact on the social dimension in many ways and a balance between student fees and support is critical to higher education policy. Fees can deter socially disadvantaged groups from higher education, while student support mechanisms can act as counterbalances. The report emphasises that continuous public spending is vital to the expansion of the sector and for realising the commitments made in regard to widening access and participation.

The report also concludes that almost all countries aim to work for widening participation in higher education, however, empirical studies on the subject illustrates that higher education systems in most countries are still far from having reached the stated goal of European policy declarations. Though comparisons between countries remain difficult due to differences in policy approaches, it remains clear that widening educational participation is often given a lower priority than other educational issues. Very few countries have set specific targets to improve participation of under-represented groups in higher education and only about half of the Bologna countries systematically monitor the issue. In conclusion the report stresses that there is an urgent need to address social dimension issues more forcefully and coherently both at EU and national level, particularly in the view of the economic downturn.

The Eurydice report “*Modernisation of Higher Education in Europe: Funding and the Social Dimension*” can be found via:

[http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice/documents/thematic\\_reports/131EN.pdf](http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice/documents/thematic_reports/131EN.pdf)

## Languages for jobs report

*Languages for jobs – Providing multilingual communication skills for the labour market* is a report, from the thematic working group “Languages for Jobs” set up by The European Commission under the European Strategic Framework for Education and Training (ET2020), and published in the summer 2011.

While the social benefits of language learning are recognised, the report has the objective of giving recommendations on better matching between language demand and supply on the labour market. Generally, there is a call for improvement of language skills as it increases mobility, flexibility, cultural and communicational skills and therefore also employability.

The report also underlines the followings:

- A new approach to language learning is required in order to respond to present and future language needs.
- It is essential to teach a wider selection of languages.
- Teachers need to be specially trained in order to teach content and language integrated learning methodologies (CLIL).
- The shortage of teachers with necessary competences is the greatest obstacle to CLIL.

Furthermore, the report emphasised that specialised teacher training is essential for teachers in Vocational Education and Training (VET). VET students commonly acquire fewer languages than those in general streams, therefore more language training is necessary for the VET teachers. It is also suggested that ideally both public and private actors should be involved in financing vocational oriented language

learning. General mobility for both teachers and learners in all sectors is also highlighted in conjunction with the Youth on the move, New Skills for Jobs and lifelong learning programmes.

The languages for jobs report can be found via:

<http://ec.europa.eu/languages/pdf/languagesforjobs-report.pdf>

## Recommended readings

### ***1. NESSE: The challenge of shadow education - Private tutoring and its implications for policy makers in the European Union***

The report was prepared for The European Commission by the NESSE network of experts and published in May 2011. It includes the latest developments in the extent of private tutoring and describes how private tutoring is increasing due to several reasons, such as the lack of time for teachers to carry out individualised teaching for all pupils. The report also deals with the consequent social and educational implications in private tutoring.

The report can be found via: <http://www.nesse.fr/nesse/activities/reports/the-challenge-of-shadow-education-1>

### ***2. Eurydice Publication Alert: Teaching Reading in Europe: Contexts, Policies and Practices***

The new Eurydice study, which covers 31 countries (EU Member States, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Turkey), reveals that while most have made progress in developing literacy policies, they often lack focus on the groups most at risk, such as boys, children from disadvantaged households and migrant children. EU Education Ministers have set a target to reduce the share of poor readers from 20 % to less than 15 % by 2020. Only Belgium (Flemish Community), Denmark, Estonia, Poland and Finland have already achieved this target.

It also reveals that only eight countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Ireland, Malta, Norway, Sweden and the United Kingdom) provide reading specialists at schools to support teachers and pupils. To order any Eurydice publication free of charge, please send your request to [eacea-eurydice@ec.europa.eu](mailto:eacea-eurydice@ec.europa.eu)

### ***3. OECD PISA report: Students on Line: Reading and Using Digital Information***

PISA Digital Literacy report says 'digital natives' do not automatically know how to operate effectively in the digital environment. The report is available via:

[http://www.oecd.org/document/48/0,3746,en\\_21571361\\_44315115\\_48236734\\_1\\_1\\_1\\_1,00.html](http://www.oecd.org/document/48/0,3746,en_21571361_44315115_48236734_1_1_1_1,00.html)

## Dates to remember

10-11 October 2011 :	ETUCE Committee meeting
17-21 October 2011:	Polish presidency conference: Mobility as a tool to acquire and develop competences, Sopot, Poland
7 November 2011:	Conference on Modernising the Professional Qualifications Directive
24-25 November 2011:	CEDEFOP conference: The role of the social partners in implementing European tools and principles
28-29 November 2011:	Education Council meeting
24-25 April 2012:	HERSC meeting, Bucharest