

Education & Training 2010

ETUCE Circular 1/2009

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Important Information Concerning the EU 'Education & Training 2010'

Process:

- **Update on the New Strategic Framework for EU Cooperation in Education & Training beyond 2010.**
 - *A Roadmap for the 'Joint Report 2010'*
- **The National Reports**
 - *Submission Date*
 - *Focus in the National Reports*
 - *Structure of the National Reports*
- **The Importance of Member State Commitment**

The New Strategic Framework for EU Cooperation in Education & Training beyond 2010, and the Joint Progress Report 2010 takes part in the general revision of the Lisbon strategy. The revision of the Lisbon strategy will be submitted in March 2010 at the European Council Summit.

Update on the New Strategic Framework for EU Cooperation in Education & Training beyond 2010

As the EU Member States have entered the last phase of the Education & Training 2010 process, the Commission has presented its strategic proposal for future EU co-operation in education and training until 2020, on the 16th of December 2008.

The Communication "*An updated strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training*"¹ The Communication, consisting of three parts, sets out;

- An overall framework of long term strategic challenges to guide the education and training system OMC to 2020.
- Immediate priorities for the years 2009-2010.
- Improved working methods for the education and training OMC, incl. an updated list of the EU benchmarks.

¹ COM(2008)865 is available at http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/doc28_en.htm

Currently discussions and consultations are taking place at several levels.

Three times during 2008 the High-level Group (representing only Member States), was consulted in meetings on the strategic priorities in education and training as well as to debate the use of indicators and benchmarks. The group met in April, June and latest in October 2008.

The Education and Training Coordination Group ETCG discussed the process beyond 2010 in April 2008 and again in the meeting in January this year. ETUCE is represented in the ETCG group where Member States and social partners have a seat.

The Commission has also invited European Social Partners and stakeholders to discuss the updated strategic framework. On the 9th of February 2009 the Commission held its 2nd Stakeholders' Forum on the future EU cooperation in education and training.

On the 16th February 2009, the EU education ministers met in Brussels at the Council meeting for 'Education, Youth and Culture'. The ministers exchanged views on the updated strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training, in particular the role of benchmarks. The next Education Council is expected to be on the 11th -12th of May 2009.

In preparation of the Council meeting the 16th February the ETUCE had prepared a statement, adopted by the Bureau on 11th February. In this statement, the ETUCE among other things emphasises the necessity of a future framework for EU cooperation based on a broader and more inclusive approach to education and training, which are not merely tools to foster economic growth and employment. The ETUCE also calls for a more systematic consultation of teacher unions and other stakeholders in the elaboration of the national reports. The progress towards the EU benchmarks has been limited, therefore the ETUCE express its concern for adding further Benchmarks. Instead the ETUCE stresses that more should be done to increase the national commitment in achieving the EU Benchmarks and include the social partners within this process. The entire statement can be found [here](#).

A Roadmap for the 'Joint Report 2010'

The implementation of the Education and Training work program is monitored through indicators assessing the benchmarks as well as Joint progress reports. This monitoring process makes it possible to identify strengths and weaknesses in the Education and Training 2010 process and provide guidance for a future strategy. The Joint progress reports are adopted biennially by the Education Council and contain so called key messages that are sent to the head of states summit meeting, which makes the final decision on priorities in relation to the overall Lisbon Process. The next Joint Progress report is expected to be adopted by the Commission in November and in the Education Council in February 2010.

The Education and Training 2010 Coordination Group (ETCG) who monitors and coordinates the operational management and implementation of the Education and

Training 2010 process met on the 26th of January. The ETUCE is a member of the ETCG and are representing its member organization at EU level in these meetings. The discussions at this specific meeting concerned the preparation of the 2008-2009 national reports including the roadmap to the adoption of the 2010 Joint Report and the guidance note for the preparation of the 2008-2009 national reports. These guidelines were conveyed to the member states on the 1st of February and it sets out the following timetable:

Deadline:	Activity:
15-16 December 2008	High Level Group to discuss 2009-2010 reporting, including possible priority themes.
26 January 2009	ETCG to discuss guidelines for national reports.
1 February 2009	Guidelines for the national reports to be sent out.
7 May 2009	<i>Deadline</i> for countries to send in national reports.
30 June 2009	Draft cross-country analysis
10 July 2009	<i>Deadline</i> for countries' comments.
Ultimo July 2009	Draft cross-country analysis ready for sending to Member States.
17 July 2009	First draft of joint report (Communication).
7 September 2009	ETCG meeting: discuss cross-country analysis.
18 November 2009	Adoption by the Commission: joint report (communication), Country assessments and cross-country analysis, progress report indicators and benchmarks.
26 November 2009	Council meeting: presentation of joint report.
December 2009-February 2010	Negotiation and adoption of joint report and key messages for the spring European council by the February council.
Marts 2010	Spring European council (post -2010 Lisbon strategy).

The next ETCG meeting will be on the 7th of September 2009 were discussions on the cross-country analysis will take place.

The National Reports

Submission date

The national reports are a key element in the joint report being made by the European Commission in 2010, and they are due **to be submitted to the Commission by the 7th of May 2009.**

Focus in the national reports

The Commission has changed the structure, simplifying the guidelines, incorporating the identification of best practise and adding a specific thematic focus to the reports. The thematic focus for the 2010 joint progress and the 2008-2009 national reports is *key competences*.

The key competences are as follows:

- Communication in the mother tongue.
- Communication in foreign languages.

- Mathematical competence and basic competences in science and technology.
- Digital competence.
- Learning to learn.
- Social and civic competences.
- Sense of initiative and entrepreneurship.
- Cultural awareness and expression.

The area of key competences policies which will form the basis of the national reports is identified in:

- An Updated Strategic Framework for European Cooperation in Education and Training².
- The Recommendation on Key Competences for Lifelong Learning³.
- Council Conclusions on Improving the Quality of Teacher Education⁴.
- Resolution on a European Strategy for Multilingualism⁵.
- Council Conclusion on Adult Learning⁶.
- The Bordeaux Communiqué on Enhanced European Cooperation in VET⁷.

Structure of the national reports

In the interest of receiving reports which are comparable and of a certain standard, the Commission has presented a proposal for the structure of national reports.

The national reports should:

- Describe and analyse the countries' progress on the implementation of the Education and Training 2010 program.
- Give the information necessary to present a valid and coherent view of the current priorities and developments within the specific countries, particularly in relation to the key competences.
- Clarify if references to new policies have been made: Title, year of adaption and state of play concerning implementation should be noted.
- Clarify if social partners and stakeholders have been consulted in the preparation of the national report.
- Not exceed 20 pages.

In addition to the report, the following should be included:

- Examples of good practise for illustrative purposes. These are not to be included in the 20 pages.

² http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/doc/com865_en.pdf

³ <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/en/oi/2006/l394/l39420061230en00100018.pdf>

⁴ http://ec.europa.eu/education/com392_en.pdf

⁵ <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cmsData/docs/pressData/en/educ/104230.pdf>

⁶ <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:20Q8:140:0010:0Q13:EN:PDF>

⁷ http://www.eua.be/fileadmin/user_upload/files/Newsletter_new/Bordeaux_Communique_EN.pdf

The Importance of Member State Commitment

European benchmarks and objectives are difficult, if not possible, to achieve unless Member States take responsibility and show commitment. In order to obtain objectives and benchmarks set by the Commission, it is crucial that the Member States feel obliged to and gain national ownership of the Education and Training 2010 process.

The ETUCE has previously criticized the Member States for their hesitation in relation to concrete plans of actions⁸. Furthermore, the ETUCE is concerned about the results of a recent ETUCE survey on the national implementation of the Education & Training 2010 process. In the survey only 13 of the 24 participating Member Organisations stated that there was a national follow-up structure in their country. Furthermore, only 8 out of the 24 Member Organisations stated that they were involved in such a follow-up structure⁹.

The ETUCE stresses the importance of:

- **That there is a national follow-up structure within the respective countries and that the reports of each country are anchored in national evaluation or monitoring.**
- **The national reports should not only be prepared by the national ministers, but also by stakeholders and social partners.**

The Commission itself is concerned about the lack of influence from stakeholders and social partners and it directly asks the national ministers to note the following in their reports:

“If you have consulted social partners and stakeholders in the preparation of the national report please let us know”¹⁰.

The ETUCE wants to emphasize, that the involvement within the process of the national reports should be viewed as an opportunity for Member States to influence the European policy, and the ETUCE calls upon all Member States to seek influence, take part in the national reporting and clarify the need for a national follow-up structure.

The Member States could for example write a letter to the national ministers, or take part in the process of consultation.

⁸ See “ETUCE’s statement on priorities for the new strategic framework for EU cooperation on education and training beyond 2010” (May 2008) & ETUCE draft statement on the European Commission’s communication “An updated strategic framework for European corporation in education and training” (February 2009).

⁹ ETUCE survey soon to be published.

¹⁰ Commission’s guidelines p.3

ETUCE recommend the following:

- Member Organisations should immediately seek influence on the national reporting, for example by contacting the national ministers of education, or by taking part in the process of consultation.
- Member Organisations should seek influence regardless of the existence of a national follow up structure. A missing structure should not prevent Member Organisations from seeking influence. Rather, it should be look upon as an argument to set up a structure.

The ETUCE will provide a strategy, which allows ETUCE and the Member Organisations to keep up with the entire process. Meanwhile, it is crucial that Member Organisations influence the national ministers of education and that they get involved in the national reporting. Only by doing so it is possible to ensure a positive momentum within the Education & Training 2010 process.