



Brussels, 1 February 2019

## **MEETING OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON VOCATIONAL TRAINING**

**3-4 December 2018, BRUSSELS**

### **MINUTES**

#### **1. OPENING AND INTRODUCTORY REMARKS BY THE CHAIR**

The Chair, Ms Manuela Geleng, Director for Skills, DG EMPL, welcomed the participants, in particular the members who were attending for the first time. It was also her first meeting as new Director appointed on 01 July 2018. She provided a short update on the negotiations for the MFF, the launch of the European Semester and the Cedefop Founding Regulation, which had recently been agreed in the ‘trialogue’.

UEAPME informed the meeting about their new name SMEunited.

#### **2. OPINION ON THE FUTURE OF VET**

Ms Dana Bachmann, Head of Unit EMPL/E3, VET Apprenticeships and Adult learning, and Mr Jan Varchola, Team Leader for VET policies, instruments and evidence, presented the latest version of the draft Opinion on the future of VET based on the inputs received through the written consultation among the ACVT and DGVT members.

The Committee discussed the changes proposed in the interest groups’ meeting. Suggestions were taken on board and clarifications provided, in particular concerning light monitoring, lifelong guidance for youngsters and adults, industrial relations, end user’s assessment, training entitlements, development of key competences or learners’ specific needs. Several participants stressed the dual objectives of VET for fostering social inclusion and excellence, the role of VET in supporting acquisition of job specific and transversal skills, and calls for a better balancing of investment and funding between initial and continuing VET.

The Committee finally adopted the Opinion on the future of Vocational Education and Training post-2020 setting the building blocks of future fit VET in the context of the overall societal and economic trends. Three key objectives are identified related to a) the content of VET, b) provision of VET and c) governance of VET systems and the future European cooperation in VET with the possible actions to be carried out at European level. The Governments’ group asked the Commission to prepare a roadmap connected to this Opinion as a rolling agenda with milestones for the further take up of the ACVT Opinion.

The Chair reminded that the Opinion is the result of extensive consultations since 2017, with the Directors General for VET, the ACVT Bureau and ACVT plenary as well as with a wider VET community in Europe. It also builds on the available evidence, notably from the Commission, CEDEFOP and the ETF and other sources.

Mr Georgios Zisimos (ETF) provided a short update on the latest data on Riga medium-term deliverables that had been collected for candidate countries. He reminded that the final monitoring report on Riga deliverables by Cedefop and ETF is foreseen for end of 2019/beginning 2020.

### **3. CENTRES OF VOCATIONAL EXCELLENCE**

Mr Joao Santos, Deputy Head of Unit EMPL/E3, VET Apprenticeships and Adult learning, presented the initiative of 'Platforms of Centres of Vocational Excellence'. Their aim is to bring together a variety of local/regional partners such as initial and continuing VET providers, tertiary education institutions including universities of applied sciences and polytechnics, research institutions, companies, chambers and their associations, social partners, sectoral skills councils, national and regional authorities and public employment services, etc.

These aim to create comprehensive skills ecosystems for vocational training in specific sectors/trades or by thematic approaches to tackle social challenges (such as integration of migrants, and upskilling people with low qualifications).

BE and RO Governmental members emphasized the importance of the thematic work that could be undertaken in the future through the Centres of Vocational Excellence.

The DK Government highlighted suggested that SDGs could be an interesting topic for thematic approach.

The FR Government announced that the 'Centres des métiers' would be very interested in participating in the initiative of Centres of Vocational Excellence.

Social partners underlined the importance of allowing Chambers of commerce, Professional Sectoral Funds and VET providers led by social partners to participate.

The Commission explained that, in the future calls for proposals, a broad approach to different stakeholders will be possible. ACVT members could contact Unit E3, if interested to be involved in a study that will map out existing examples of such centres or similar initiatives.

### **4. LATEST DEVELOPMENTS ON APPRENTICESHIPS**

Mr Bjorn Bertheussen and Mr Tamas Varnai from the Team 'Skills for the Young' of EMPL/E3 provided an update on the new pledges and the 5 years celebrations for the EAfA and announced the launch of the Apprenticeships Support Services (AppSS).

EAfA has now mobilised 282 pledges with more than 906 000 offers. The EAfA events planned for 2019 were also announced, including one organised together with the European Parliament on 21-22 March 2019, focusing on the mobility of apprentices.

The objective of AppSS is twofold: (1) to support Member States in reforming their apprenticeship schemes and (2) to scale up EAfA work through the provision of different services to EAfA stakeholders. In addition, the Services will provide technical assistance to Member States for the implementation of the Council Recommendation on a European Framework for Quality and Effective Apprenticeships.

The set-up of these services will benefit from the steer of the stakeholders, through joint meetings of the ACVT Bureau and additional representatives of the members of the EAfA (VET providers, intermediary bodies, apprentices etc.). Meetings will be organised back to back to ACVT Bureau meetings.

## **5. EU SOCIAL PARTNERS' PROJECT ON EMPLOYEES TRAINING**

ETUC, BusinessEurope and SMEUnited presented the recommendations from their joint project on employees' training, funded by DG EMPL.

The project highlighted the need for joint agreement between employers and employees through a mix of collective and individual arrangements.

National social partners, in discussion with governments, are best placed to organise training provision in a way that will increase access, take up, relevance, validation and guidance for employees.

## **6. ADULT LEARNING POLICIES: UPSKILLING PATHWAYS AND EAAL**

Mr Paul Holdsworth, Team Leader for Skills for Adults, provided an overview of the steps to the adoption of the Commission's report on Member States' plans to implement the Upskilling Pathways Recommendation.

Preliminary conclusions included that: most Member States were planning to build their implementation work on already existing initiatives; the scale of ambition varies from millions of beneficiaries in one country to a few thousand in others; taken together, the plans do not appear to target a significant share of the potential target population of 61 million adults. Furthermore, the three-step approach is present in only a few initiatives; skills assessments generally do not target the three basic skills and few of the planned measures give each individual a tailored offer of learning specifically designed to take into account the results of the assessment. A large majority of the measures described do not specifically address basic skills needs. Financial resources mainly stem from ESF. A great majority of the funding targets the unemployed, indicating that securing funding for the upskilling of people in employment remains a challenge.

In response, social partners recalled that they are providers of tailored training and asked to be more involved in implementation at country level and in reporting. ETUC welcomed the monitoring exercise and asked for some clarifications; in their view, in light of Member States' heavy reliance on ESF to implement Upskilling Pathways, the sustainability of funding should be addressed.

The BE trade unions pointed out that low skilled people in employment seemed not to be a main target in Member States' planned actions, although they are more at risk of losing their jobs due to technological changes.

The AT Governmental considered that, building on the whole of government approach implemented through the National Skills Strategies, it could be helpful for the Commission to provide a platform to bring together all national stakeholders.

Cedefop announced their next Policy Learning Forum in cooperation with EESC in February which would be supported by a draft analytical framework for designing and implementing pathways for low skilled adults, which will include a detailed quantitative country analysis to map adult populations to identify which are the target groups (based on available data).

ETUC underlined that the planned Presidency Conference in June 2019 was also important for complementing the process and hoped that ACVT social partners would be invited.

Ms Bachmann recalled that, via an EASI Call for proposals, a further seven countries had started mutual learning on the implementation of Upskilling Pathways.

Ms Bachmann noted that the next ACVT Bureau could discuss how to take the proposals further.

Mr Holdsworth then outlined the Commission's steps to review the impact of the European Agenda for Adult Learning and consider possible orientations for future European policy on Adult Learning. A discussion paper had been circulated to the Committee and comments had been collected via an on-line survey of ACVT members. A main feedback from the responses received so far concerned the need for a broad approach (recognising that every adult should undertake learning, whatever his or her level of skill) but at the same time a more focused approach based on the specific needs of specific groups of adults.

ETUC noted that some elements of the recently adopted ACVT opinion on VET were also relevant for the future of AL, which provided opportunities for synergies. Guidance should be available for everyone.

The PT and CH Trade union underlined the importance of coherent national structures – and national budgets - for adult learning and the need to keep the skills of the over-45 age group up to date.

The Employers side argued for a broad policy approach that would be adaptable to the different contexts in Member States and stressed the need to find ways to incentivise involvement in AL, and to create greater demand from adults themselves.

The BE Governmental considered that unemployed people should be targeted. Areas of work for future AL priorities could be reaching hard-to-reach adults, lifelong guidance and co-financing of adult learning. They also suggested that the work of National Coordinators for AL would benefit from greater continuity based upon a longer term funding mechanism.

Ms Bachmann reminded the Committee that the future proposal for a post ET2020 framework for European cooperation would include orientations on adult learning.

The on-line survey was extended until 18 December to allow more ACVT members to contribute.

## **7. RESULTS OF ET2020 WORKING GROUPS ON VET AND AL**

The NL and HU Government representatives, as members of the working groups held between 2016 and 2018, presented the results respectively for VET and AL.

The VET ET2020 group had developed 12 policy pointers for supporting teachers and trainers involved in apprenticeships and work-based learning. The final report contains also interesting country specific examples.

The AL ET2020 report aimed at promoting and fostering the availability of work-place learning of adults, especially those with low or medium skills. It contains 10 'building blocks' for effective policies that promote the setting up or improving of work-place learning, accompanied by country examples.

## **8. ERASMUS+ 2019 LATEST NEWS**

The recently published *Calls of Erasmus+* were presented by Mr Joao Santos, Deputy Head of Unit EMPL/E3, together with key statistics on VET mobility and VET and AL strategic partnerships. It was also announced that the KA3 forward-looking call for proposals would be published soon and some priorities would refer to low skilled adults.

Concerning the new ErasmusPro (long duration mobility), applications for mobility above 3 months had doubled compared to the past, so it could be concluded that the initiative was successful.

In general, the demand for VET mobility exceeds largely the available funding which shows the relevance of the proposal for the future Erasmus Programme to significantly increase the financing.

ETUC asked clarifications on participation of social partners as VET providers in the Erasmus+ calls. They suggested the priorities for the E+ programme would be discussed in ACVT. They asked observer seat for European Social Partners organisations in the Erasmus+ Committee.

The Chair informed that in the next ACVT meeting a study on mobility, currently under finalization, will be presented.

## **9. STUDY ON ECVET AND EQAVET**

Mr Koen Bois d'Enghien and Mr Jan Varchola, Unit EMPL/E3, presented the draft final findings and conclusions of the study on the ECVET and EQAVET, which had also involved DG EAC and the Unit on Skills in DG EMPL. The study contains proposals on 5 options for the future developments of the tools. Participants expressed their views on the different options, which would be finalized by the contractor at the end of the study.

As a direct follow-up to the ACVT Opinion, a call for experts among the ACVT members will be launched to form an ad-hoc ACVT group to discuss proposals on the future developments of the tools with a view to increase synergies between ECVET and EQAVET and other lifelong learning instruments. The group is expected to report back at the next ACVT meeting in June 2019.

Some participants highlighted the need for a more structured dialogue between HE and VET for permeability and for synergies among the tools.

They also pointed out to the key role of EQAVET as a toolkit for enhancing quality assurance arrangements in the Member States and mutual trust between the Member States, while ECVET was useful for mobility. Others highlighted that recent developments in other tools might have made EQAVET and ECVET less relevant. The finalized study should be shared with ACVT (NL Gov).

## **10. ANNUAL GROWTH SURVEY**

Mr Federico Lucidi, from DG EMPL/A1 for the European Semester, provided an overview of the AGS and JER, including a substantial section on Skills.

The PT Trade Union asked clarifications about the aim of reforms.

The Commission explained that one of the purposes of the Semester is to find a shared understanding of the challenges at country level from all perspectives, like citizens' needs and finances. The Employment Guidelines agreed with Member States establish the basis for reforms.

## **11. UPDATE BY THE UPCOMING ROMANIAN PRESIDENCY**

The upcoming Romanian Presidency presented their priorities for the first semester of 2019 and the main events related to VET (DGVT on 17-19 March and a Presidency Conference on Adults' upskilling and reskilling on 6-7 June).

## **12. INFORMATION NOTE ON EDUCATION AND TRAINING ISSUES**

Under this agenda item, participants were offered the possibility to ask questions on different topics mentioned in an information note sent ahead of the meeting.

Concerning statistics, Mr Mantas Sekmokas, DG EMPL/E3, complemented the information provided in the information note with the results of a recent expert meeting which discussed possible future VET and AL benchmarks.

No questions were asked by participants.

### **13. EUROPEAN VOCATIONAL SKILLS WEEK**

Mr Joao Santos, Deputy Head of Unit of EMPL/E3, provided an overview of the Vocational Skills Week held in November in Vienna, Austria.

The Week initiative was growing every year. Among the 2018 Ambassadors, was also the first lady of Germany. There had been more than 1800 events organised throughout Europe.

The 2019 European Vocational Skills Week will take place in Finland between 14-18 October.

### **CLOSING OF THE MEETING**

The Chair informed participants that the next ACVT meeting will take place on 4-5 June 2019

She reminded the follow up foreseen from this meeting, with the finalization of the Opinion and its distribution among the EU Institutions, the launch the call for expression of interest to participate in the ad-hoc ACVT expert group and the possibility for ACVT members to be involved in the study on the centres of Vocational excellence.

The PowerPoint presentations have been uploaded in circabc (already prior to the meeting, when available) <https://circabc.europa.eu>. Also the final version of the ACVT Opinion is stored there.

**ANNEX – Participants’ list to the meeting (3 and/or 4 December 2018)**

<b>Family Name</b>	<b>First Name</b>	<b>Delegation</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>
HORAK	Bernhard	Austria	Austrian Federal Chamber of Labour
MAYR	Thomas	Austria	Austrian Federal Economic Chamber
HORSCHINEGG	Jürgen	Austria	Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research
SCHINWALD	Julia	Austria	Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research
HOCHWALD	Josef	Austria	Federal Ministry of Science, Research and Economy
MICHEL	Isabelle	Belgium	Centre d'Education Populaire André Genot FGTEB Wallone
COENEGRACHTS	Sandra	Belgium	Federation of Enterprises Belgium
BOOMGAERT	Wilfried	Belgium	Flemish Department for Education and Training
OP DE BEECK	Christel	Belgium	Flemish Department for Education and Training
CLARKSON	Lora	Bulgaria	Permanent Representation
ROGOV	Emil	Bulgaria	Union for Enterprise Initiative
HRVOJ-ŠIĆ	Vesna	Croatia	Ministry of Science and Education
ŠENJUG UŽAREVIĆ	Vedrana	Croatia	Ministry of Science and Education
ELEFThERIOU	Andreas	Cyprus	Ministry of Education and Culture
KALOSINATOS	Pavlos	Cyprus	Pancyprian Federation of Labour (PEO)
PECENKA	Petr	Czech Republic	Czech-Moravian Confederation of Trade Unions (CMKOS/CMOS PS)
STARÁ	Marta	Czech Republic	Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MEYS)
HOOSHIAR-N	Alireza	Denmark	Confederation of Danish Employers (DA)
SMISTRUP	Morten	Denmark	Danish Confederation of Trade Unions (LO)
LIV	Mogensen	Denmark	Ministry of Education
PALTS	Mait	Estonia	Eesti Kaubandus-Tööstuskoda (EKTK)
SIILIVASK	Rita	Estonia	Ministry of Education and Research
KURVITS	Ülle	Estonia	Permanent Representation
HANNULA	Mirja	Finland	Confederation of Finnish Industries (EK)
NOUSIAINEN	Riina	Finland	Finnish Confederation of Professionals (STTK)
TAMMILEHTO	Mika	Finland	Ministry of Education and Culture
PERRIN	Michèle	France	Confédération française démocratique du travail (CFDT)
SCHMITT	Christine	France	Ministère du Travail, Emploi, Formation Professionnelle et Dialogue Social
NERGUISIAN	Nadine	France	Ministry of National Education, Higher Education and Research
SAIDI	Siham	France	Mouvement des Entreprises de France (MEDEF)
WYSS	Laura Karin	Germany	Bundesvereinigung der Deutschen Arbeitgeberverbände e.V. (BDA)
NORDHAUS	Hans Ulrich	Germany	Deutscher Gewerkschaftsbund (DGB)
HESS	Erik	Germany	Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF)

FABIAN	Barbara	Germany	German Chambers of Commerce and Industry (DIHK)
ZIOGA	Aikaterini	Greece	Ministry of Culture, Education & Religious Affairs
TAUSZIG	Judit	Hungary	Ministry for Innovation and Technology
VUJKOV TOMORNE	Krisztina	Hungary	Ministry for Innovation and Technology
BÉKÉSI	Tamás	Hungary	Teachers Trade Union (SZEF)
PÉTURSDÓTTIR	Björg	Iceland	Ministry of Education, Science and Culture
CANNON	Stacey	Ireland	Ministry for Education and Skills
DACREMA	Fabrizio	Italy	Consulta della Professioni - Confederazione Generale Italiana del Lavoro (CGIL professioni)
TAGLIATESTA	Pietro	Italy	Ministry of Labour and Social Policies
LĪCE	Anita	Latvia	Employers' Confederation of Latvia (LDDK)
ROMELE	Linda	Latvia	Free Trade Union Confederation
BULIGINA	Ilze	Latvia	Ministry of Education and Science
LEVICKIS	Vaidotas	Lithuania	Lithuanian Business Employers' Confederation
THOSS	Roger	Luxembourg	Chamber of Commerce
MEYER	Karin	Luxembourg	Ministry of Education, Children and Youth
FENECH	Pauline	Malta	General Workers' Union
HABER	Joan	Malta	Malta Chamber of SMEs (GRTU)
CARDONA	Mario	Malta	Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology (MCAST)
PERAZIC	Mladen	Montenegro	Chamber of Economy
KRSMANOVIC	Vladimir	Montenegro	Confederation of Trade Unions of Montenegro (CTUM/SSCG)
TINNLUND	Trude	Norway	Landsorganisasjonen i Norge (Lo-Norway)
BURTON	Fride	Norway	Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training
WILKIEL	Stefania	Poland	Ministry of National Education
DIONISIO	Hugo	Portugal	Confederação Geral dos Trabalhadores Portugueses - Intersindical Nacional (CGTP-IN)
VLASCEANU	Silvia	Romania	Federation of Associations of Energy Utility Companies
RADULESCU	Ana	Romania	Ministry of Labour and Social Justice
STROIE	Dana	Romania	Ministry of National Education
BAJIC	Vesna	Serbia	International Relations Trade Union Confederation Nezavisnost
JAKUBÍK	Karol	Slovakia	Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport
KORKOSOVA	Monika	Slovakia	Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport
KRAJNC	Barbara	Slovenia	Chamber of Commerce and Industry
ČERNOŠA	Slavica	Slovenia	Ministry of Education, Science and Sport
HERAS	Maria Angeles	Spain	Ministry of Education and Vocational Training
MANZANARES	María Asunción	Spain	Ministry of Education and Vocational Training
MORALES	Juan Carlos	Spain	Unión General de Trabajadores, Sector de las Comunicaciones (UGT)
OLSSON	Johan	Sweden	Confederation of Swedish Enterprise
LINDÉN	Carina	Sweden	Ministry of Education and Research
SAMUELSSON	Mattias	Sweden	Swedish Trade Union Confederation (LO)

BERTHOUD	Frédéric	Switzerland	State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI)
WEBER-GOBET	Bruno	Switzerland	Travail Suisse
JANEVSKA	Natasha	The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	Ministry of Education and Science
VAN IJSSELMUIDEN	Peter	The Netherlands	Ministry of Education, Culture and Science
ATAR	Recep	Turkey	HAK-IS Trade Union Confederation
MILLER	Ann	United Kingdom	Department for Education
KEKKI	Kirsi	United Kingdom	Trades Union Congress (TUC)

PLUMMER	Robert		BusinessEurope
BRUGIA	Mara		Cedefop
SCHMID	Eleonora		Cedefop
FETSI	Anastasia		ETF
ZISIMOS	Georgios		ETF
ROMAN	Agnes		ETUC
WEBER	Thiébaud		ETUC
VAN SCHALKWIJK	Rene		EUProVET
VAN DEN BOGAERT	Silke		SMEunited
VOLOZINSKIS	Liliane		SMEunited