



Brussels,

MEETING OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON VOCATIONAL TRAINING

4-5 June 2019, BRUSSELS

MINUTES

1. OPENING AND INTRODUCTORY REMARKS BY THE CHAIR

The Chair, Ms Manuela Geleng, Director for Skills, DG EMPL/E, welcomed the participants, in particular the members who were attending for the first time, including the new Secretary General of ETUC, Mr Ludovic Voet and Ms Montserrat Gomendio, Head of the Centre for skills in OECD.

The Chair provided a short update on the Leaders' meeting in Sibiu, which was preceded by a citizens' dialogue with 300 youngsters, also apprentices and VET learners. She informed the meeting about the negotiations for the ESF and the new InvestEU programme and the Industry 2030 strategy being prepared by DG GROW in cooperation with DG EMPL. She outlined the agenda for the meeting; no changes were requested by participants.

2. PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE POLICY AGENDA

The Chair highlighted that some of the information shared is to be considered provisional pending the new orientations given by the new Commission that will take office in November 2019.

Mr Luka Juros (DG EAC/A1) presented the state of play of the preparations for the possible successors of the **ET2020 Strategic Framework**, including the plans to launch a public consultation in the summer and the organisation of the Education Summit (26 September). The Commission proposal for the future would bring together the European Education Area and the ET Framework.

Trade Unions called for a strengthened consultation with social partners on the proposal and future priorities.

Ms Dana Bachmann, Head of Unit and Mr Jan Varchola, Team Leader for VET policies, instruments and evidence (DG EMPL/E3), presented the conclusions of the **ACVT Working Group on VET tools** (quality assurance and credit systems in VET). They underlined how the recent policy developments brought a more ambitious agenda on quality assurance and transparency (graduate tracking, mutual recognition, ESCO, EQF etc).

The governmental group stressed that more time was needed for consultations at national level on the scenarios presented in the paper. In general, on ECVET, they considered option 1 relevant for some countries while option 2 might be challenging as EUROPASS was not yet finalised. Concerning EQAVET most countries were in favour of option 2 while a question on

the compatibility of a peer review process with the current tool-box approach of EQAVET was raised. They underlined that funds are crucial for good implementation of the instruments.

The EE Governmental representative pointed out that, in their view, EQAVET and the relevant work on PLAs had brought major changes.

The BE trade union underlined the need to involve the social partners both at national and European level to achieve transparency. They asked clarifications on the links with EQF and the value of the units in the national certification system.

They wished that at EU level there would be a request to MS to fix objectives and monitor them closely. Finally, she underlined the necessity of connecting the tools to wider policy objectives; and defining precisely the specific roles for each of the tools. This was also echoed by the DK trade union.

Employers welcomed the reflection undertaken in the WG on the VET tools and the analysis (echoed by other participants). They highlighted their preference for option 2 for ECVET.

According to the German governmental representative mutual trust could be tackled through practitioners from different horizons participating in exchanges (like in the past the initiatives organised by Cedefop) to learn from one another.

The BE Government underlined the importance of tackling quality at system level.

The SE Government asked to clarify the term of peer reviews or possible alternatives and also the link of EQF for ECVET.

Mr Koen Nomden, Team Leader for Skills and Qualifications, recognition tools (DG EMPL/E2) replied to the question by BE trade union, that there is no restriction on units of learning outcomes related to qualifications and it is up to each country to decide which qualifications are included in its national qualifications framework; some countries for ex. NL and Scotland, have ‘small volume’ qualifications in the national framework. A single unit of learning outcome is normally assigned to a qualification level.

Ms Dana Bachmann explained that the term “peer reviews” for EQAVET should not be confused with a certification or validation procedure. At a VET provider level it aims to build capacity by engaging in peer reviews of their quality assurance systems. At a system level, a good example is being pursued with the bench-learning model for the Public Employment Services. Note was taken of the suggestions by participants that more options could be considered (such as a format similar to the former Cedefop study visits and more structured mutual learning activities). On ECVET, there was a general agreement to the proposed way forward on the flexibility and lifelong learning objective. Views on mobility were mixed: some preferred building on the results of ECVET in the future as a self-standing VET mobility tool while others were in favour of its full absorption within other instruments, such as Europass while some reservations about feasibility and timing were voiced.

ACVT members were invited to provide their further comments in writing by the end of June 2019. These discussions will feed into the preparations for the Commission proposal for post 2020.

Concerning the mapping of **indicators and possible benchmarks** in the field of VET and AL, Ms Dana Bachmann and Mr Mantas Sekmokas (DG EMPL E3), provided an update of the discussion in the Standing Group on Indicators and Benchmarks (also taking account of reliability and availability of data) and introduced the two mapping papers for VET and AL.

As regards concrete indicators and benchmarks included in the mapping papers, participants welcomed the proposed change of the reference period from 4 weeks to 12 months to measure adult participation of in learning.

ETUC underlined that the indicators need to be relevant for the labour market, be comparable and should tackle common challenges of Member States. A link could be drawn to different initiatives, like the Pillar of Social rights, various elements of the ACVT Opinion, in particular for social inclusion, or the criteria of the framework for quality and effective apprenticeships or, lastly, measuring social partners involvement in policy development.

BusinessEurope wished the indicators looked at relevance, employability and broadening the measurement of education attainment looking at the share of graduates who have attained either VET or HE qualifications.

It was clearly indicated by Governmental members that any indicators or benchmarks should not imply any new data collections and should utilise as far as possible the already existing instruments (surveys, experts networks, etc.)

Mr Joao Santos, Deputy Head of Unit EMPL/E3, gave an overview of the recent developments on the **Platforms of Centres of Vocational Excellence (CoVE)**. He gave an update on the mapping study undertaken by an external contractor to identify existing VET excellence initiatives, and summarised the results of the first Call for CoVE pilot projects that has attracted a large number of applications with all member states being covered, except for Hungary and Luxembourg.

3. EUROPEAN ALLIANCE FOR APPRENTICESHIPS (EAfA)

Mr Norbert Schoebel, Team Leader for ‘Skills for the Young’ provided an update on the activities related to the EAfA. He informed the ACVT about the 2019 EAfA events, which included one organised jointly with the European Parliament on 21-22 March 2019, focusing on the mobility of apprentices and another one in Prague on 20-21 March 2019 on the role of Chambers.

Mr Tamas Varnai (DG EMPL/E3) presented the state of play and progress made regarding the Apprenticeship Support Services under the steer of a stakeholders group, composed of the ACVT Bureau and additional representatives among the members of the EAfA (VET providers, chambers, regional authority, think tanks and youth organisation). In addition, he informed the Committee about the first meeting of benchlearning coordinators held on 17 May 2019. Twenty-two Member States were represented at this meeting to discuss the draft concept and the process regarding benchlearning.

A study had been undertaken on networks of apprentices and 68 structures representing apprentices had been identified, having each different set ups (learners, trade unions etc)

Mr Michael Fitzgerald, from the Irish company ESB networks - the winner of the 2018 EAfA award for large company - presented their apprenticeships offer, also for adults, that provides a national recognized qualification after 4 years. Their offer is in line with the European framework for quality and effective apprenticeships. They recruited 300 apprentices through a social media campaign, seeing an increase also in apprentices taken up by women.

The IE trade unions welcomed the ESNB presentation but reminded the audience that, outside of the ESNB, which is a good example in the field, challenges still existed in the area of apprenticeships and more work needed to be done.

The IE Governmental representative explained it is one goal of the government to increase female participation in apprenticeships. As it was highlighted in the presentation, it was crucial to target parents to convince them of the value of apprenticeships.

In response to questions following the presentation, Mr Fitzgerald commented that apprentice salary was in line with sectoral agreement (AT trade unions Q) and that apprentices mentors in ESNB are carefully chosen, trained and regularly supported (DK Gov Q).

4. ADULT LEARNING POLICIES

Ms Dana Bachmann (DG EMPL/E3) and Ms Martina Ni Cheallaigh, senior expert from the Team for Skills for Adults, provided an overview of the findings of the Staff Working Document on Member States' progress on implementation of the Upskilling Pathways Recommendation, and the recent adoption of Conclusions by the Education Council on 22 May 2019. Participants were informed that a new version of the note had been uploaded in circabc to correct a clerical mistake in the EASI projects mentioned.

ETUC asked for a stronger role for Social Partners in the implementation plans, which they felt should be broader and more ambitious. They regretted that Social Partners' role was not adequately highlighted in the Council Conclusions. They should also be involved in provision of data for monitoring purposes. Appropriate attention should be given to the legal frameworks that enable social partners' engagement on upskilling and reskilling (examples could be presented in future meetings). Finally, they mentioned the difficulty in reaching out to learners and the need to develop targeted, flexible offers.

Business Europe highlighted that the training employers provide needs to have a stronger focus on occupational skills and stressed the shared responsibility with buy-in from workers, while not forgetting people outside of work, and that preventive measures should be implemented, to avoid more youngsters becoming low skilled adults.

The BE governmental representative highlighted the importance of ensuring basic skills up to secondary level in order to set the foundations for lifelong learning.

The DK and CH Trade unions mentioned successful examples of tripartite agreements, providing basic skills linked to the work environment.

The FR Government informed the meeting about the preparation of an App for their initiative on Personal Training Account, which could be presented at a future meeting.

The FR trade unions mentioned an example of training at the workplace, which had proved very successful.

Cedefop reminded the meeting about the Policy learning Forum in Brussels on 21 May.

The Chair informed the meeting that the topics highlighted will be reviewed in the next Bureau meeting for a thematic discussion in the next ACVT meetings, illustrated by concrete examples from countries.

She also mentioned that the third round of the mutual learning exercise to support Upskilling Pathways will be launched towards the end of the year, to start in early 2020.

Attention was drawn to the deadline of 8 July for the [EASI Call on Upskilling Pathways](#), 'supporting the development of tailored learning provision.

The Commission also summarised the consultations undertaken with a view to preparing the future orientations of policy on adult learning .

Some Governmental members highlighted issues of outreach (DE), cooperation among stakeholders from different fields (BE, IT, ES), and the importance of citizenship education (DE).

Ms Martina Ni Cheallaigh acknowledged that the need for more effective integration and coordination of policies and provision for adult learning were significant challenges in many

Member States. One option might be for strengthened coordination efforts to be linked to funding requirements, in order to make the impact of funding more systemic.

Ms Montserrat Gomendio, OECD, stressed the importance of motivating low skilled adults by explaining the benefits of training; making the training offer clearer, and coordinating stakeholders would also make it easier for low skilled people to navigate the system.

The Slovenian Employers representative presented a Career platform for employees, as had been requested in the evaluation survey of the previous ACVT meeting. The platform, which is still under development, aims at forecasting future employee skills needs, based on the monitoring of global trends, and developments at national and regional level, in order to define the training needs for companies and VET providers.

5. EUROPEAN SEMESTER – COUNTRY SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS (CSRS)

Mr Filip Tanay (DG EMPL/A1) presented the country specific recommendations that had just been adopted by the Commission. Education and Skills were the main area of CSRs and also the Chapeau Communication had a strong focus on education and skills, human capital, skills shortages and mismatches.

The basis of the analysis for the CSRs were the priorities set in the Annual growth survey of last November (boosting investment, structural reforms and responsible fiscal policies), as well as the European Pillar of Social Rights.

6. PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN VET

Ms Lore Schmidt, Cedefop, presented an overview of statistical data from different sources (CVTS, Jobs and Skills survey, the Cedefop opinion survey) to show gender differences in VET participation, skills acquired and mobility. For example, data showed that female learners were less motivated in choosing their VET path by career or salary opportunities, compared to male learners.

Ms Ilaria Veronese, on behalf of the Italian Trade union UIL, presented a project on increasing awareness on gender stereotypes during transition from education to the labour market, or between careers. The project highlighted a waste of talent ongoing, due to these stereotypes and has developed training courses, a set of indicators to assess organisations, interesting video material and serious games.

7. ERASMUS+ 2019 LATEST NEWS

Ms Jacqueline Pacaud (DG EAC/B2) presented the latest results concerning applications on Erasmus+ mobility projects and strategic partnerships for 2019.

Ms Michèle Grombeer, from the Executive Agency EACEA, presented the KA3 projects (specific VET calls) funded since 2014, in order to highlight interesting results for policy making.

8. EUROPEAN VOCATIONAL SKILLS WEEK

Ms Sue Bird (DG EMPL/E3) gave an update on the European Vocational Skills Week in terms of national events organised by DGVTs, Ambassadors nominated, awards and the evaluation study that had been launched to assess the impact of the Week after the first 3 years.

The SE Governmental member thanked the Commission for the help provided to the

Ambassador and wished that for future editions the support services would be available earlier, also to promote the awards. They welcomed the early start of the site for registration of events and wondered if in the future it would be possible to have a fixed period every year for the Week.

The FR Government representative asked to allow registration of events taking place throughout the year from January not only from May.

The Commission took good note of these remarks and encouraged participants to promote the Week initiatives further.

9. 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.

OECD provided an oral overview of their publications.

Several clarifications were asked by participants on the ET2020 WG in VET, the joint session on Artificial intelligence during the European Vocational Skills Week and the Cedefop Community of learning providers.

Cedefop provided additional information on their upcoming publications, for example on Artificial intelligence, on digital platform workers and on adult refugees.

10. UPDATE BY THE UPCOMING FINNISH PRESIDENCY

The Finnish Governmental representative presented the programme of their upcoming Presidency.

In the field of education and training, the focus will be on the importance of investing in human capital and the future policy agendas, notably the successor of ET2020 and the future of VET, with a particular priority on continuous learning. They will organise a Joint ECOFIN and EYCS Council meeting on 8 November 2019 in Brussels to discuss the importance of investments in human capital.

CLOSING OF THE MEETING

The Chair informed participants that the next ACVT meeting would take place on **10-11 December 2019**

The PowerPoint presentations have been uploaded in circabc (already prior to the meeting, when available) <https://circabc.europa.eu>.

ACVT members are encouraged to propose good examples for projects in training of low skilled adults for next meetings, via the evaluation survey below.

<https://ec.europa.eu/eusurvey/runner/E3ACVTSurvey>.

The draft minutes of the meeting will be sent to the Committee for comments/approval in the coming weeks. Final minutes will be uploaded in circabc before the next meeting.

ANNEX – List of Participants’ at the meeting (4 and/or 5 June 2019)

Family Name	First Name	Delegation	Affiliation
HOCHWALD	Josef	Austria	Federal Ministry for Digital and Economic Affairs
OMISCHL	Nicole	Austria	Federal Ministry for Digital and Economic Affairs
STAUDECKER	Eduard	Austria	Federal Ministry of Science, Research and Economy
HORAK	Bernhard	Austria	Austrian Federal Chamber of Labour
MAYR	Thomas	Austria	Austrian Federal Economic Chamber
COENEGRACHTS	Sandra	Belgium	Federation of Enterprises Belgium
LOOP	Robert	Belgium	Emploi Formation Wallonie (FOREM)
MICHEL	Isabelle	Belgium	Centre d'Education Populaire André Genot FGTB Wallone
OP DE BEECK	Christel	Belgium	Flemish Department for Education and Training
ROGOV	Emil	Bulgaria	Union for Enterprise Initiative
CLARKSON	Lora	Bulgaria	Permenent Representation
BUIĆ	Nino	Croatia	Agency for Vocational Education and Training and Adult Education
HRVOJ-ŠIĆ	Vesna	Croatia	Ministry of Science and Education
MARTINOVIĆ	Jasminka	Croatia	Croatian Employers' Association in Education (CEA)
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)
SCHUSTER	Torben	Denmark	Ministry of Education
SMISTRUP	Morten	Denmark	Danish Confederation of Trade Unions (LO)
TANDERUP	Helene	Denmark	Confederation of Danish Employers (DA)
PALTS	Mait	Estonia	Eesti Kaubandus-Tööstuskoda (EKTK)
SIILIVASK	Rita	Estonia	Ministry of Education and Research
TOOMSAJU	Kaja	Estonia	Estonian Trade Union Confederation
FELT	Teija	Finland	Ministry of Labour
HANNULA	Mirja	Finland	Confederation of Finnish Industries (EK)
NOUSIAINEN	Riina	Finland	Finnish Confederation of Professionals (STTK)
TAMMILEHTO	Mika	Finland	Ministry of Education and Culture
NERGUISIAN	Nadine	France	Ministry of National Education, Higher Education and Research
PERRIN	Michele	France	Confédération française démocratique du travail (CFDT)
SAIDI	Siham	France	Mouvement des Entreprises de France (MEDEF)
SCHMITT	Christine	France	Ministère du Travail, Emploi, Formation Professionnelle et Dialogue Social
FABIAN	Barbara	Germany	German Chambers of Commerce and Industry (DIHK)
HESS	Erik	Germany	Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF)
BAMPANELOU	Despina	Greece	Greek General Confederation of Labour (G.S.E.E)

GOULAS	Christos	Greece	Greek General Confederation of Labour (G.S.E.E)
PRIFTIS	Dimitrios	Greece	ESEE
TAUSZIG	Judit	Hungary	Ministry for Innovation and Technology
PÉTURSDÓTTIR	Björg	Iceland	Ministry of Education, Science and Culture
CANNON	Stacey	Ireland	Ministry for Education and Skills
RIGNEY	Peter	Ireland	Irish Congress Trade Unions (ICTU)
MICHELETTI	Milena	Italy	Unione Italiana del Lavoro (UIL)
TAGLIATESTA	Pietro	Italy	Ministry of Labour and Social Policies
VERONESE	Ivana	Italy	Unione Italiana del Lavoro (UIL)
BULIGINA	Ilze	Latvia	Ministry of Education and Science
LĪCE	Anita	Latvia	Employers' Confederation of Latvia (LDDK)
ROMELE	Linda	Latvia	Free Trade Union Confederation
ARLAUSKAS	Danukas	Lithuania	Lithuanian Business Employers' Confederation
BABRAUSKIENE	Tatjana	Lithuania	Lithuanian Trade Union Confederation (LPSK) and Federation of Lithuanian Education and science Trade Unions (FLESTU)
THOSS	Roger	Luxembourg	Chamber of Commerce
CHIRCOP	Tatjana	Malta	Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology (MCAST)
FENECH	Pauline	Malta	General Workers' Union
KRSMANOVIC	Vladimir	Montenegro	Confederation of Trade Unions of Montenegro (CTUM/SSCG)
PERAZIC	Mladen	Montenegro	Chamber of Economy (CEM)
BREDESEN	Aina Helen	Norway	Confederation of Norwegian Enterprise (NHO)
BURTON	Fride	Norway	Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training
GRYCZAN	Tomasz	Poland	National Education Section of NSZZ Solidarność
WILKIEL	Stefania	Poland	Ministry of National Education
DIONISIO	Hugo	Portugal	Confederação Geral dos Trabalhadores Portugueses - Intersindical Nacional (CGTP-IN)
STROIE	Dana	Romania	Ministry of National Education
BAJIC	Vesna	Serbia	International Relations Trade Union Confederation Nezavisnost
ŠOŠ	Ivan	Slovakia	Trade Union of Workers in Education and Science in Slovakia - TUWES (OZPŠaV)
ČERNOŠA	Slavica	Slovenia	Ministry of Education, Science and Sport
KRAJNC	Barbara	Slovenia	Chamber of Commerce and Industry
HERAS	Maria Angeles	Spain	Ministry of Education and Vocational Training
MANZANARES	María Asunción	Spain	Ministry of Education and Vocational Training
TORRES	Gema	Spain	Confederación Sindical de CCOO (CCOO)
LINDÉN	Carina	Sweden	Ministry of Education and Research
OLSSON	Johan	Sweden	Confederation of Swedish Enterprise
LIPPUNER	Claudia	Switzerland	State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI)
PERRET	Laura	Switzerland	Schweizerischer Gewerkschaftsbund SGB – Union syndicale suisse USS
COENEN	Isabelle	The Netherlands	Federatie Nederlandse Vakbeweging (FNV)

IPENBURG-TOMESEN	Ellen	The Netherlands	Ministry of Education, Culture and Science
VAN IJSSELMUIDEN	Peter	The Netherlands	Ministry of Education, Culture and Science
ALTIN	Recep	Turkey	Ministry of National Education
ATAR	Recep	Turkey	HAK-IS Trade Union Confederation
MILLER	Ann	United Kingdom	Department for Education

PLUMMER	Robert		BusinessEurope
SCHMID	Eleonora		Cedefop
ZISIMOS	Georgios		ETF
ROMAN	Agnes		ETUC
VOET	Ludovic		ETUC
VAN DEN BOGAERT	Silke		SMEunited
GOMENDIO	Montserrat		OECD
FITZGERALD	Michael		ESB Networks
CANEVA	Silvia		Eurochambres