

# *European Stakeholders' Forum on Future EU Cooperation in Education and Training*

*Brussels - 20 May 2008*

## ***GENERAL REPORT***



Education and Culture DG



**EUCIS-LLL**

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## *1. INTRODUCTION*

The Commission plans to come forward in December 2008 with a proposal for an updated strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training (as part of its end 2008 Lisbon package). This follows up a request contained in the 2008 Joint Report as well as the Education Council's key messages which were endorsed by the 2008 Spring European Council.

The preparation of the updated framework will be based on discussions on the future perspectives for education and training and the experience made with the development and implementation of the Education & Training 2010 work programme to date. The Communication will be prepared through consultations with Member States and European stakeholders throughout 2008.

A Stakeholders' Forum took place for broad consultations of the European Stakeholders representing civil society on 20 May 2008 in Brussels. Around sixty stakeholders representing various organisations in education and training participated in the Forum. This report presents the main results of the discussions.

This Forum was organised by DG Education Culture in partnership with the European Civil Society Platform on Lifelong Learning (EUCIS-LLL).

## 2. AGENDA

9.30 – 10.00

**Welcome and keynote speech: preparation of the updated strategic framework for European cooperation.**

**Odile QUINTIN**, Director General, DG Education and Culture.

10.00 – 10.30

**Consultation of stakeholders, organisation of forum and follow-up.**

**Gina EBNER**, Vice-President EUCIS-LLL and **Gordon CLARK**, Head of unit DG Education and Culture.

10.30 – 12.30

**Workshops: Assessment of the situation and of the needs**

### *1. Citizenship and intercultural dialogue*

*Moderator:* Anne-Marie FALKOFT, ETUCE

*Rapporteurs:* Anthony CAMILLERI, European Students Union (ESU) and Nicolas SADOUL, representative of SOLIDAR France

### *2. Sustainability and resources*

*Moderator:* Gina EBNER, Secretary General of the European Association for the Education of Adults (EAEA)

*Rapporteurs:* Nia LEWIS, Policy Officer of the European Association of Regional and Local Authorities for Lifelong Learning (EARLALL) and Stelios MAVROMOUSTAKOS, Vice-president of the European Forum of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (EfVET)

### *3. Access and participation*

*Moderator:* Peter HODGSON, President of the European Forum of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (EFVET)

*Rapporteurs:* Werner VAN KATWIJK, Secretary General of the European Parents Association (EPA) and Lies FERON, European Forum for Freedom in Education

#### **4. Reference tools and instruments**

*Moderator:* Pat DAVIES, Representative of the European Universities Continuing Education Network (EUCEN).

*Rapporteurs:* Pauline VANDENBOSCH, Policy Officer of the European Vocational Training Association (EVTA) and Thomas MAYR, European Association of Craft, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (UEAPME)

12.30 – 13.30

**Lunch**

13.30 – 15.30

**Workshops (continued): Proposals and methods**

15.45 – 17.15

**Plenary session:**

- Syntheses of workshops from rapporteurs
- Discussion with panel:

Moderated by **David WHITE**, Director, DG Education and Culture

- European Youth Forum: **Monika NOVOSADOVA**, Bureau Member
- EUCIS-LLL: **Michel FEUTRIE**, General Secretary
- ETUCE: **Annemarie FALKTOFT**, Policy Coordinator
- Cedefop: **Eleonora SCHMID**, VET expert and assistant to the director
- EUAPME: **Thomas MAYR**

17.15 – 17.30

**Conclusions**

**Florent STORA**, Counsellor on Education, Sports and Culture for the Permanent Representation of France to the EU.

### *3. Keynote speech by Odile QUINTIN, General Director of DG Education Culture*



Dear participants,

I personally attach great importance to today's consultation with you, the European stakeholders and social partners in education and training. It is my direct experience over many years that the involvement of civil society stakeholders and social partners in supporting European policy development and implementation is valuable. It is particularly useful when preparing future policy initiatives. Stakeholders contribute their practical knowledge of the realities on the ground, the challenges that citizens face and what works in practice.

That is why the Commission and the Member States stressed in their Joint Report in February 2008 that the effectiveness and impact of the open method of coordination should be strengthened by giving particular attention to a stronger participation of civil society at both the European and national levels.

Today's forum follows up that political mandate and is very timely in terms of giving you as stakeholders and social partners the opportunity to influence the future strategic framework for European co-operation in education and training. We have prepared the Forum with the voluntary support of the European Civil Society Platform on Lifelong Learning (EUCIS-LLL). I would like to thank their representatives who have invested considerable efforts in this event.

We are very much in favour of "partnership" as an effective and inclusive way of working. I therefore would like us to develop together a dynamic partnership between the Commission, Member States and civil society stakeholders. What we can offer you is a stronger and more continuous



voice at the EU level. In addition to continuing the existing cooperation we have with you on specific initiatives, such as the schools' consultation, or on transversal measures such as the EQF, I suggest that we make the Stakeholders' Forum an annual event where we discuss broader policy initiatives.

But for this initiative to be a success, we need you, firstly, to be able to think strategically beyond your own particular sector – or put another way in relation to today's discussions– we should avoid, by the end of this forum, proposals for a future strategic framework which is a 'Christmas tree' where each of you have hung your specific area of interest as a contribution to its decoration. Today, we need you to take a larger perspective and tell us how your field can best contribute to the whole of lifelong learning and suggest which strategic priorities should be focussed on at the EU level.

Secondly, we need your active cooperation when it comes to promoting, at the national level, the actual implementation and delivery of agreed policy objectives and also your support in raising awareness of EU policy initiatives. You are in a unique position as representatives of the key actors, providers and learners and thus have a strong role to play.

The specific objective of today's meeting is to feed into the preparation of the Communication that the Commission will come forward with later this year. Our proposal for an updated framework for European cooperation in education and training will be presented in December as part of this year's Lisbon package. This Communication will propose a strategic agenda that will guide our work over a quite a few years.

Our discussions today will help us to gather ideas, to clarify our political objectives, and to better understand the needs of different education and training areas. This will help us to identify the most appropriate strategic priorities for European cooperation.



The preparation of an updated strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training offers a great opportunity to improve our way of working and its impact on lifelong learning policies and systems. We are not discussing this issue because the calendar imposes it or because 2010 is coming close. We actually have the opportunity to achieve something that the Council has repeatedly called for most recently last November. Namely, to place education and training at the centre of the Lisbon strategy and to make European co-operation more effective in tackling the major challenges our citizens and societies face. The conditions are currently quite conducive.

Just read the conclusions of this year's Spring European Council. They stress that the education element of the knowledge triangle research-innovation-education should be strengthened. The Commission is asked to come forward with a comprehensive assessment of future skills requirements. And the European Council also urged Member States to take concrete action to reduce the number of early school leavers, to improve achievement levels of learners with a migrant background and to attract more adults into education and training. This is an opportunity not to be missed.

We have prepared an Issues Paper for today's Forum which sets out the questions that we think are most pertinent at this early stage in the process:

- We have set out the main challenges we are facing.
- We have looked at our current framework of action.
- And we have indicated some ideas on what could be possible options for the way forward.

These are first ideas. They are not set in stone. We are here to discuss.

If you look at the challenges our economies and societies will face and which education and training systems must respond to during the next



decade, you will quickly realise that there is a great deal of continuity. Developing the knowledge society, handling demographic change and globalisation are as important now as they were in 2000.

But there are also new issues. Migration, sustainability and flexicurity are challenges which are also not completely new, but which have certainly risen significantly on the political agenda over the last years. These issues were also highlighted by our economics and social sciences experts whom we consulted when preparing today's paper. It will be interesting to hear whether you share this description of the main challenges.

Taking these challenges as our starting-point, we have to set out our framework of action and define our priorities. What we need is a framework that is both politically appealing and able to guide concrete work on implementing our objectives. We need something which links to the broader Lisbon and Social Agenda context and translates it into concrete objectives for education and training.

Par rapport aux grands objectifs liés à la compétitivité, l'équité ou le développement durable, il nous faut définir un nombre précis d'objectifs stratégiques auxquels la coopération européenne en éducation et formation pourrait particulièrement apporter une valeur ajoutée. Nous devrions également définir quelques principes que nous souhaitons appliquer de façon globale à nos systèmes d'éducation et de formation. Je pense, par exemple, que nous pourrions renforcer l'éducation et la formation tout au long de la vie en intégrant mieux l'efficacité et l'équité ou mettre davantage l'accent sur la place de l'apprenant au cœur des parcours de formation. Pour chacune de ces priorités générales, il nous faudrait dégager un certain nombre de finalités plus affinées. Ainsi conçu, cet ensemble formerait un cadre général qui resterait stable sur une plus longue période.

S'agissant de sa mise en œuvre concrète et ses développements politiques, nous devrions garder à l'esprit de ne pas tenter de tout entreprendre en même



temps. Au contraire, nous devrions nous concentrer sur quelques priorités spécifiques comme par exemple, la réduction du nombre de jeunes quittant l'école prématurément ou le développement de l'enseignement pré-primaire. Je doute personnellement que nous devions renouveler l'exercice de 2002 avec l'établissement d'un programme de travail aussi détaillé.

L'exemple des déscolarisations précoces et celui de l'école maternelle montrent que nous devons trouver le bon équilibre entre la recherche de la continuité en s'attendant, entre autres, aux objectifs que nous n'avons pas réussis à atteindre jusqu'à présent, et la volonté de répondre aux nouveaux défis et priorités, telles que la promotion de la créativité et de l'innovation.

Dans le document que nous vous avons transmis, nous n'abordons pas encore les points relatifs aux méthodes de travail spécifiques. En revanche, il nous serait très utile d'avoir vos suggestions sur le meilleur moyen d'impliquer davantage la société civile au niveau européen. Comme je l'ai mentionné au début de mon discours, la Commission et le Conseil se sont mis d'accord sur l'objectif d'une participation renforcée de la société civile dans la méthode ouverte de coordination.

J'espère que vous allez réfléchir aujourd'hui sur la façon dont vous souhaitez être mieux impliqués dans la coopération européenne. En plus des consultations habituelles et de la tenue d'un forum annuel des acteurs de la société civile, avons-nous besoin de nouvelles méthodes de sensibilisation des acteurs à tous les niveaux? Comment pouvons-nous faciliter la contribution des acteurs de la société civile à l'apprentissage par les pairs?

Comme je l'ai déjà souligné, je considère que nous avons besoin d'une implication plus structurée et systématique des acteurs de la société civile dans la future méthode de coordination. Dans ce contexte, je suis heureuse de constater que des avancées ont été réalisées vers le développement d'une large plateforme de tous les acteurs réunissant les différentes dimensions de "LLL" et qui pourrait inclure la plupart des organisations ici présentes.



Pour conclure, je tiens à vous assurer que nous tiendrons compte évidemment du fruit de vos réflexions d'aujourd'hui. En premier lieu, vos réflexions seront exploitées lors de la réunion du groupe de haut niveau des représentants des Etats membres et de la Commission qui se tiendra à Reims les 16 et 17 juin pour discuter du futur cadre stratégique.

En outre, vous avez déjà reçu un questionnaire qui contient les questions qui figuraient également dans le document préparatoire à cette discussion, ainsi que d'autres questions sur les méthodes de travail. Cette consultation écrite vous donne la possibilité de nous faire part de vos idées de manière plus approfondie, en tenant compte éventuellement des débats d'aujourd'hui, ainsi que des leçons que vous pouvez tirer des expériences menées avec "Education et Formation 2010".

Les résultats de ces différentes formes de consultation seront repris dans l'analyse d'impact qui devrait accompagner la proposition de la Commission pour un nouveau cadre stratégique. Et ils contribueront bien sûr à la préparation de la Communication elle-même qui sera présentée en décembre, avec le paquet Lisbonne.

Merci de votre attention. Je me réjouis par avance du débat que viendront enrichir vos commentaires et suggestions.



#### *4. Speech by Regina EBNER, Vice-president of the European Civil Society Platform on Lifelong Learning*



Good morning ladies and gentlemen and welcome to this Forum,

First of all, as the representative of the European Civil Society Platform on Lifelong Learning (EUCIS-LLL), I would like to thank the European Commission, in the name of Gordon CLARK and Odile QUINTIN, for having involved the platform in the preparation of this first Forum of stakeholders.

Most of you have heard about the European Civil Society Platform on Lifelong Learning (EUCIS-LLL) and may have participated in some of its events. I would like to introduce a little more this structure to you.

EUCIS-LLL aims to gather the different actors working in education or training in order to build a collective voice to weight on EU political decisions. This is crucial for us notably in the context of the follow up of the “Education and Training 2010 programme” and of the renewed Lisbon strategy. Of course, this does not mean that the platform is a substitute to all the networks but rather a tool to build synergies based on each networks’ specificities. Officially created in 2005, the platform has grown in numbers and gathers today 16 European networks active in education or training.

The platform is not a classic network and does not aim to talk for all civil society. Each of its networks has indeed its own approaches and dialogue with the institutions whilst sharing a common vision of lifelong learning within EUCIS-LLL. It is indeed the only place where initial, vocational and continuing education, adult education and non formal education work together.



Our main goal is to promote a common vision on lifelong learning, to create bridges between actors in education and training and to promote civil dialogue. I will present you briefly these actions.

### 1. Shared vision of lifelong learning

EUCIS-LLL members share a common position on lifelong learning as a continuous process from the “cradle to the grave” that is not excluding for individuals. Lifelong learning represents all the learning processes that enable the emancipation and progression of the “learning citizens” as well as social cohesion.

Its goal is social, cultural and personal; it is not limited to the sole economic dimension. The platform’s members have decided to join forces to watch that education is not subordinated to objectives only determined in terms of employability or economic growth but also as a framework for the intellectual and civic emancipation of all European citizens.

Its ambition is that each individual be endowed with the capacities that are likely to help him or her become effectively an “apprentice of lifelong learning”, who knows how to take the best of formal, informal and non formal apprenticeships that come out from the educative, professional and personal situations in which he or she is immersed. Here again, the transectoral dimension is essential.

Its approach is not limited to initial education but integrates all the ages of life at a same level of esteem and involvement, which supposes the mobilisation of important means notably towards publics that are further away from training and qualification.

### 2. Promoting transversality

EUCIS-LLL pleads for coherent lifelong learning strategies at local, regional, national and European levels. Despite a number of declarations, the implementation of reform in the field of education and training within

Member states is too slow, and this reform is still insufficiently integrated. Throughout Europe, access to lifelong learning continues to be unequal. The platform has thus proposed, notably in the frame of the Liaison Group opinion to the *EESC contribution to the renewed Lisbon Strategy 2006-2008* adopted on the 19th December that lifelong learning must be made a constitutional right throughout the EU, that actions should be implemented to promote the concept of education and lifelong learning (*LLL weeks, LLL day*) and finally that a European Institute for lifelong learning should be set up. This Lifelong learning Institute would have the objective to promote the implementation of coordinated and responsible policy on lifelong learning at European level and should be organised and administrated with the full cooperation between all partners concerned, including the representatives of civil society.

If public authorities need to be more coherent, civil society organisations have also to work together. Via its members, EUCIS-LLL embodies an integrated approach to lifelong learning. Its 16 member networks are active in formal, non formal and informal education, in vocational training or in initial and continuing education. More and more cross-sectoral projects are built between its different members at European and national levels.

### 3. Lifelong Learning Weeks

EUCIS-LLL is a platform of European networks, the synergies resulting from the encounter of the different education and training actors should also be possible at national and local levels. Since its creation, EUCIS-LLL promotes the organisation of “Lifelong Learning Weeks” with the support of European Commission and the competent national authorities throughout Europe. The goal is to raise awareness amongst the larger number of citizens about the impact and the opportunities linked to the convergence of education and training systems in their learning pathways and beyond, in their every day life as European citizens. It is also a moment for education

and training actors to work together for a greater civic appropriation of lifelong learning.

#### 4. Promotion of civil dialogue

EUCIS-LLL aims to make civil society's voice heard in public debates and policies on educative issues and to propose concrete solutions. It represents a tool to exchange and reflect on the future perspectives of educative and training systems in Europe for its members and partners. We are thus very happy to participate in the organisation of this first Forum of stakeholders and wishes that it becomes an annual event. If progresses have been made in the Education and Training 2010 programme, a lot remains to be done in terms of civil society involvement in the conception, implementation and dissemination of policies. If this has been recognised notably in the Joint Report in February 2008, it is time now to implement a more structured and regular dialogue between the institutions and civil society organisations.

Furthermore, while efforts are being made in all the European countries to adapt the education and training systems to the knowledge-driven society and economy, the reforms undertaken are not up to the challenges and their current pace will not enable the Union to attain the objectives set. In particular, the level of take-up by Europeans of lifelong learning is low and the levels of failure at school and of social exclusion, which have a high individual, social and economic cost, remain too high. These reforms will only be successful if public authorities strengthen their education and training systems in a coherent way and take into account stakeholders' points of view and experience.

#### Conclusions

Let me conclude by saying that EUCIS-LLL encourages all the organizations represented today to work together during this Forum to exchange ideas and positions about the most appropriate strategic priorities for EU cooperation in Education and Training. Each participant will be



invited to participate in one thematic workshop. The results of this collective work will be presented during the High Level Group on 16-17 June 2008 and will contribute to the preparation of the European Commission's updated strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training.

Parallel to this Forum, each organization will be invited to answer the Commission's questionnaire.

The importance of lifelong learning within the Lisbon strategy is now widely accepted. In this period of evaluation and prospective for after 2010, it is essential that civil society work together. Let's use this Forum to confront our ideas!



## *5. Presentation “Lifelong Learning policies and the Open Method of Cooperation”, Gordon CLARK, Head of Unit, DG Education Culture*

### **Education & Training 2010: main elements of the OMC**

- Common objectives
- Peer learning
- Monitoring of progress (indicators and benchmarks, biennial joint reports)
- EU reference tools supporting national reforms

### **Common reference tools and principles**

- Common objectives and LLL criteria
- Lifelong guidance
- Validation of non-formal learning
- Europass (transparency/self-assessment)
- Key competences
- European Qualifications Framework for LLL

### **Education & Training 2010: 2008 Joint Report**

- Dual function: progress report and setting priorities for immediate future
- Based on national reports, indicators and benchmarks, peer learning results
- LLL perspective - covers all E&T - formal and non-formal

### **“Delivering lifelong learning for knowledge, creativity and innovation”**

- Raising skill levels
- Lifelong learning strategies
- Strengthen the knowledge triangle

### LLL strategies – essential features

- covering all systems and levels
- coherent set of priorities, evidence-based
- flexible pathways and transition points: avoid dead-ends
- implementation and dissemination: partnership with stakeholders at national and regional levels

### 2008 Joint Report: LLL strategies

- Progress in establishing strategies
- Most MS develop national qualifications frameworks
- Progress on validation of non-formal learning

#### *But*

- implementation, partnership with all relevant stakeholders at national and regional levels and funding remain main challenges

### Progress achieved since 2000

#### **Benchmark already achieved:**

- Mathematics, science and technology graduates

#### **Constant, but not sufficient progress:**

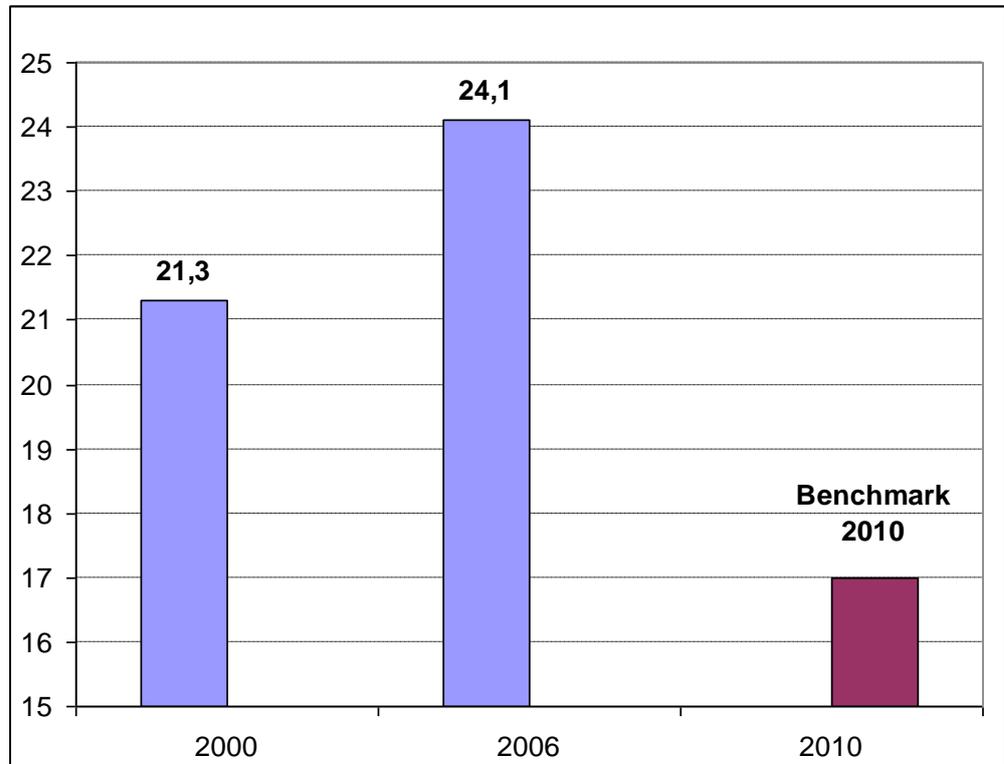
- Early school leavers
- Upper secondary attainment
- Lifelong learning participation

#### **Deteriorating results:**

- Low achievers in reading literacy



## Low achievers in Reading - PISA



In %	2000	2006
EU average (19 countries)	21,3	24,1
Best performer (Finland)	7	4,8
Worst performer (Romania)	41,3	53,5

### 2008 Joint Report: way forward: LLL to achieve efficiency and equity

- improving the knowledge base
- sustainable funding
- raising skills levels



- addressing socio-economic disadvantage
- using the potential of migrants
- high quality teaching

### **2008 Joint Report: Improved Governance**

- Joined-up E&T policy within LLL perspective
- Ensuring that PLA results reach policy-makers
- Stronger participation of Civil Society
- National and regional LLL
- Use of European common reference points and recommendations for national reforms

### **Current initiatives**

- EQF adopted (22/04/08)
- ECVET and Quality Assurance package (04/08)
- Adult learning action plan and Council Conclusions (5/08)
- High Level Group on Mobility
- Green paper on Education + Migration (6/08)
- Communication on schools (6/08)

### **Forthcoming initiatives**

- Peer learning on early childhood education
- French presidency: guidance, Copenhagen process, mobility
- New skills for new jobs communication (12/08)
- 2009 Year of Creativity and Innovation
- Proposal for updated strategic framework in 12/08



### Post-2010 Strategic Framework

- Consultation with MS in April and June
- Survey by questionnaire
- Consultation of Stakeholders at Brussels Forum on 20/05
- Agreement by Education Council in May 09
- Future of Bologna Process: Leuven/Louvain-La-Neuve (4/09)



## 6. KEY MESSAGES from the workshops

### Strategic goals

A balanced approach to lifelong learning should be promoted (civic, social and economic dimensions):

- Lifelong learning does not only serve economic goals and competitiveness but generally the quality of life; it should be both a tool and a goal in itself;
- The role of education in promoting social cohesion should be recognised and reinforced.

### Global approach & basic principles

- Integrated lifelong learning systems should be implemented:
  - flexible learning pathways should be promoted;
  - exchange of information between stakeholders should be developed;
  - barriers between sectors should be suppressed.
- A long-term investment in education and training is needed.
- Education and training systems should be learner centred.
- Global plea to go from concepts and ideas to implementation.
- Better communication and promotion of lifelong learning at all levels should be supported (LLL days, LLL weeks, etc.)

### Actors' responsibilities and involvement

To reach the objectives, it is essential to involve the different actors. We recommend that:

- A global consultation strategy be implemented at local, national and EU levels. At EU level, the Stakeholders' Forum could become a regular event parallel to specific consultations.
- More cooperation between policy makers, social partners and civil society organisations is needed on a regular and structured basis.
- More transparency and a clear identification of policy makers at all levels is required.
- The role of the learning community should be recognised: involving and supporting parents, role of associations and other co-educators.

### Areas of focus for EU cooperation

- Early childhood education (and not “pre-primary”)
- Removing obstacles to equity
- Removing barriers to mobility
- Removing assessment instruments that lead to learning for the test
- Teacher education: initial and continuing education, social status, attractiveness of the profession
- Development and evaluation of competences
- Safe and attractive learning environments
- Funding and resources
- Quality and governance
- Guidance and counselling as a tool for lifelong learning
- Validating/recognising non-formal/informal learning
- Using and sharing innovation and creativity
- Addressing demography and migration
- Implementing evidence based policies

- Translating research and EU publications / tools into “general public” language.
- Consolidation, implementation and evaluation of existing European tools before proposing new ones. More coherence between the instruments is needed.

### Benchmarks and objectives

There is a general approval on the need for continuity. But:

- The goals behind the benchmarks should be more explicit and better linked to the objectives
- New benchmarks and indicators could be implemented on:
  - early childhood education
  - resources / financial dimension
  - equity/equality
- Benchmarks should be considered as tools for action and not for ranking.
- Benchmarks could be brought back to reachable steps for countries that are farther away from the target.
- Links should be established with other policies' benchmarks.

### Links with Lisbon

- The E&T programme serves the Lisbon goals but also a number of other goals.
- More coherence is needed between different policy areas in order to reach the Lisbon goals.
- A balanced approach to lifelong learning should be promoted in the Lisbon strategy (civic, social and economic dimensions).



## 7. WORKSHOPS

In this section you will find a synthesis of the different workshop's discussions. This extract from the report of workshop 3 could be used for the four workshops:

*“Participants discussed on a very high level and went in depth on different issues. Probably more than a hundred issues were raised even including references to research results, etc. A synthesis of such discussions will never honour this. Every point mentioned deserved a better and larger discussion. We witnessed that there is a need for more debate between stakeholders groups. We ask the Commission to stimulate more meetings like this”*

The themes of the four workshops were:

1. Citizenship and intercultural dialogue
2. Sustainability and resources
3. Access and participation
4. Reference tools and instruments



## WORKSHOP 1

### “CITIZENSHIP AND INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE”

#### Moderator

Anne-Marie FALKOFT, ETUCE

#### Rapporteurs

Anthony CAMILLERI, European Students Union (ESU)

Nicolas SADOUL, representative of SOLIDAR France

#### A. Report

##### *Stakeholder's consultation is key*

Stakeholders acknowledged that progress is being made in involving civil society organisations but remains insufficient. A **global consultation strategy is needed** including:

- consultations at national and local levels (i.e. ETCG Members);
- stakeholder's Forum as a major event with significant preparation;
- parallel consultations on specific issues.

It is **essential that stakeholders (across LLL), social partners and policy makers sit at the same table** to discuss issues. The Bologna Process can be seen as an example in this cooperative process.

Indeed, a regular remark we hear within the networks of the participants is “*we don't know what's happening in Brussels*” and this is particularly true for peer learning groups. Stakeholders plea for **more transparency** and for a **clear identification of decision makers** at European, national and local levels.



There is also a strong need for an expanded role for citizens' initiatives.

On the other hand, social partners and civil society organisations need to cooperate further.

*Should there be a stronger focus on current benchmark areas?*

Progress is measured in terms of achievement of specific objectives, as well as benchmarks. The participants outlined the **need for continuity**.

Concerning the objectives:

**Obstacles to mobility** remain prevalent despite 20 years of efforts. An objective could be 20% mobility by 2020.

The **lack of an integrated LLL system** remains, it concerns notably the barriers between formal and non-formal & informal systems, higher education and education and vocational training (e.g. ECTS vs. ECVET).

In terms of benchmarks:

The participants unanimously **recognised the social nature of the benchmarks, they supported such focus and outlined the need for continuity**.

It was also suggested that a **new benchmark be set on early childhood education** as this stage is key to form lifelong learners.

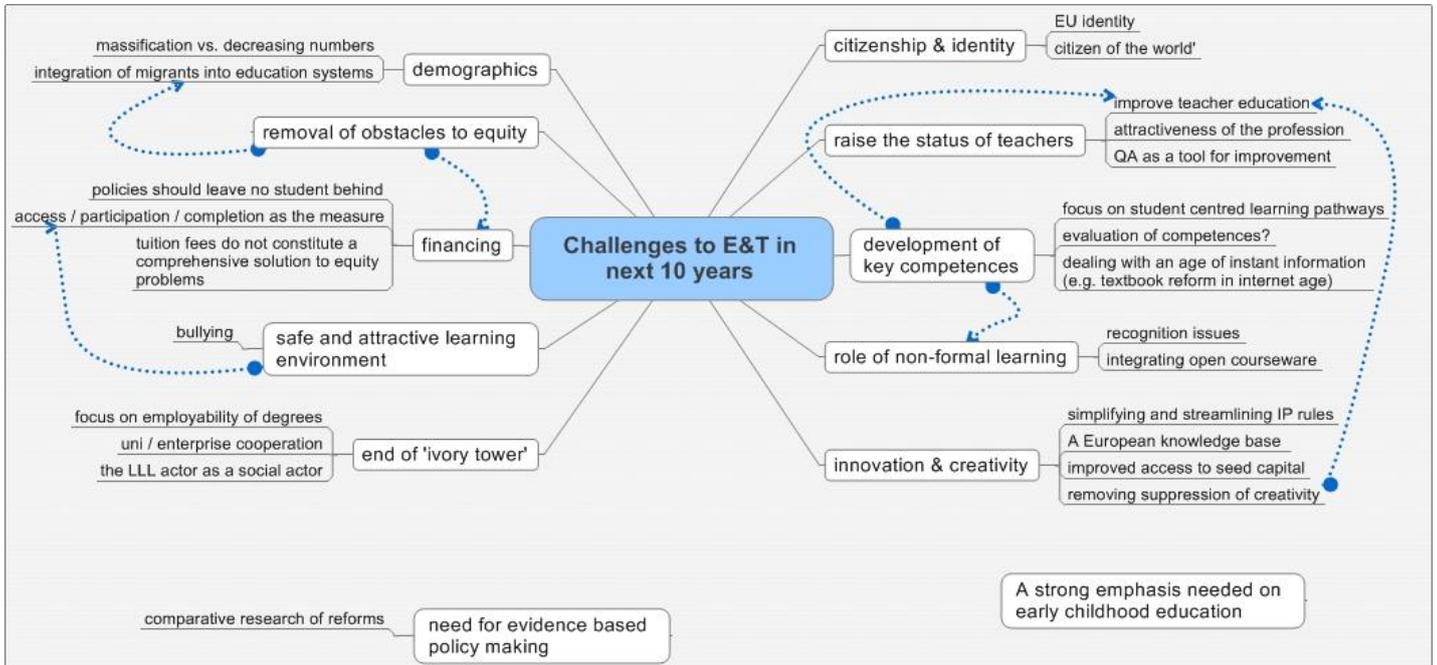
The question is *“Do the objectives sufficiently address the social nature of the benchmarks?”*



*What should a future programme look like?*

<b>Lifelong Learning</b> <i>A process reaching from “cradle to grave”</i>		
<b>LLL as a goal in itself with societal scope rather than as a utilitarian tool to serve the economy</b>		
<b>QUALITY</b> <i>Instead of competitiveness</i>	EQUITY	SUSTAINABILITY / OPENNESS
Transversal issues: including integration of migrants, vulnerable groups (low socio-economic backgrounds), human rights, interculturalism		
Areas needing specific focus: recognition of non-formal / informal learning; early childhood education		

*Challenges in E&T to be addressed at EU level by 2020*



### *E&T serving the Lisbon Goals*

Education & Training must be a standalone programme. It contributes towards achieving the Lisbon objectives, but also serves a number of other goals in the areas of critical thinking, socialisation, ethics, etc.

Within the EU institutions:

- **education must continue to form part of the Lisbon Strategy discussion, however this must not constitute the entirety of EU education policy;**
- **a discussion on education in terms of general quality of life, as complementary to within the frame of economic policy, is needed at EU level.**

### **B. Panel remarks**

David White addressed panel members with specific questions and invited them to react spontaneously to the workshop presentation.

Monika NOVOSADOVA (Forum européen de la jeunesse) a marqué son accord sur les propositions présentées dans le cadre de l'atelier 1 en termes de transparence et de consultation. Il est **nécessaire que les parties prenantes soient davantage consultées et qu'elles puissent travailler et échanger ensemble**. Le lifelong learning doit être un but et non un outil.

Anne-Marie FALKOFT (ETUCE) ajoute que comme le mentionne le rapport conjoint de 2008, beaucoup de pays doivent encore faire des efforts en ce sens.

Michel FEUTRIE (EUCIS-LLL) a remercié la Commission européenne pour cette initiative réussie et pour y avoir associé la plate forme EUCIS-LLL. Il invite celle-ci à renouveler l'expérience à l'avenir en tant qu'outil de concertation et de consultation. Il rappelle **l'évolution essentielle qui**

consiste à mettre l'apprenant au cœur du système avec le glissement de la formation à l'apprentissage. Cette évolution a des implications sur le fonctionnement des institutions, sur le rôle des enseignants comme organisateurs du savoir et suppose la mise à disposition de ressources notamment en terme de guidance des apprenants.

As for the request to **recognise non-formal and informal learning**, Eleonora SCHMID (Cedefop) underlined its importance for lifelong learning. **Validation** is one of the priorities in countries' cooperation on vocational education and training and has become a transversal theme. More and more countries are introducing validation to improve access to education and training or progression, in particular for adults. As implementing appropriate mechanisms and methods is important, she drew attention to the **common principles** for validation and the guidelines currently being developed in the cluster on recognition of learning outcomes with Cedefop support.

Thomas MAYR (EUAPME) supported the idea of implementing a new benchmark on early childhood education. Benchmarks are very useful to evaluate the reality of the situation.



## WORKSHOP 2

### SUSTAINABILITY AND RESOURCES

#### **Moderator**

Gina EBNER, Secretary General of the European Association for the Education of Adults (EAEA)

#### **Rapporteurs**

Nia LEWIS, Policy Officer of the European Association of Regional and Local Authorities for Lifelong Learning (EARLALL)

Stelios MAVROMOUSTAKOS, Vice-president of the European Forum of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (EfVET)

#### **A. Report**

##### **5 priority areas emerged:**

- Systems should be learner centred.
- The role of education in promoting social cohesion should be recognized and reinforced.
- Continuity is needed between different levels of education. Transitions points should be created to avoid dropouts.
- "Competitiveness" in the Commission's strategy paper (p.5) should be replaced by "Ensuring that each learner reaches his/her full potential"
- A long term investment in education is needed.



### 5 recommendations:

- Central role of educators: recognition, reward and parity.
- Guidance and counselling at all levels: lifelong learning should be explained and promoted.
- Need to disseminate the results of educational research so that it reaches policy makers.
- New indicators should be developed, for example, on creativity and innovation. Benchmarks should be used as tools for action not for ranking.
- Systematic structured dialogue with stakeholders both at national and local level should be implemented.

### Key messages:

- The European Commission and other Institutions should stop referring to pre-primary education and instead to early childhood.
- Pressure for early formal learning that could be detrimental to a development in early childhood.

### B. Panel remarks

David White invited the panel to discuss about the role of teachers.

Michel FEUTRIE (EUCIS-LLL) a souligné le glissement d'activité de l'enseignement à l'apprentissage. Il faut avoir une **approche large du terme d'éducateur** qui peut être le professeur mais aussi un animateur d'association, de l'entreprise, etc. Cela implique une certaine **articulation pour assurer la continuité de l'apprentissage tout au long de la vie**.

Anne-Marie FALKTOFT (ETUCE) outlined that the demands on teachers has raised and that it is problematic today to attract teachers in the profession. ETUCE believes it is necessary to **raise the level of teacher**



**education to master level.** She also outlined the need to **upgrade teachers' social status.**

Eleonora SCHMID (Cedefop) underlined that the role of teachers and trainers is changing in many countries with broader roles and increasing tasks and the focus on learner centred and learning outcomes approaches. Their roles and tasks also vary depending on the characteristics of the sectors they are working in. Parity of esteem is important to ensure the attractiveness of the profession across sectors, as some countries are facing problems with recruiting VET teachers and trainers. **Continuing training to support teachers and trainers in their multifaceted tasks is crucial.**

Michel FEUTRIE (EUCIS-LLL) ajoute que la démarche est plus exigeante et nécessite à la fois la maîtrise de son domaine moins sur la discipline que dans un contexte plus vaste.

David WHITE also invited the panel to deal about guidance and counselling as a tool to lifelong learning.

Eleonora SCHMID (Cedefop) outlined that guidance and counselling **is high on the agenda in countries' priorities for vocational education and training.** Guidance and counselling is also specifically relevant in the context of validation of non-formal learning. It is important to offer comprehensive but individualised and well targeted guidance to support people in their learning and career pathways, rather than fragmented services. This is where progress is still needed.

Thomas MAYR (EUAPME) confirmed that it was a crucial issue for lifelong learning especially in schools. Most of the teachers never leave the education system. In order to reach out to the “real world” and in line with the concept to see teachers as learning facilitators it is necessary to **use**

**other resources, local partners, etc.** This should be strengthened especially at young ages.

Monika NOVOSADOVA (European Youth Forum) added that sometimes youth associations could play such a role and guide young persons. **Non formal education is very important** in that perspective.



## WORKSHOP 3

### ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION

#### Moderator

Peter HODGSON, President of the European Forum of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (EfVET)

#### Rapporteurs

Werner VAN KATWIJK, Secretary General of the European Parents Association (EPA)

Lies FERON, Coordinator of the European Forum for Freedom in Education (EFFE)

#### A. Report

##### 1. Lisbon strategy and lifelong learning

Participants support the fact that ‘Lisbon’ brought education and training higher on the agenda. Education and training is being discussed more widely than a few years ago. This is also evident from the Copenhagen process and the consultation on the European qualifications framework. Nevertheless, there is still a lot to do, as participants outlined in the discussion:

- **Education and training must be learner centred**, learning needs to be “fun” and useful. Individuals need to understand their benefits.
- Education and training is not a product from a “school factory” but it is **a process composed of a lot of different elements**.
- **Education and training policy has to be connected to other policies** for instance labour market’s. *“What’s the use of pushing people in*



*higher education if the student do not find enough employment opportunities?”.*

- More attention should be given to the **complementarity of education and training, employment and social policies**.
- **Policy makers must have a balanced vision of education and training.** Lifelong learning has three main goals, learning for a profession, preparing for society and personal development. Policy makers have to prevent focusing too much on one of these elements.
- **Policy makers must have a long-term vision of education and training.** Policy makers should therefore concentrate on HOW learning takes best place and HOW people become Lifelong Learners.

## 2. Benchmarks

Participants discussed about the vision and purpose of benchmarks. They felt the need to make their goals more explicit. Some doubted if these benchmarks could be reached and outlined that some were too vague. So far, there has for instance not been any indicator on the quality of training in lifelong learning. Furthermore, as the 5 benchmarks are strongly connected, there is a risk that if the countries do not reach one of them, the others would also be impossible to be reached.

### **Main proposals:**

- **Benchmarks have to be brought back to reachable steps for countries that are farther away from the target.**
- **The working group suggests to set up a financial benchmark.** This is also linked to the question of access to education and training. **The working group proposes to set up an equity indicator to make this priority visible** (access and retainment). It seems useful to focus on specific target groups and take **data on related issues, e.g. social support into consideration. Links to benchmarks used in other**

**policies would be helpful, in particular in terms of access and equity.**

- Benchmarks should not only focus on ‘technical problems’ but also include a **more qualitative approach** and pave the way to an **evaluation culture**. A more wider discussion on benchmarks and the methodology could stimulate all actors to become more active in the process and buying into it (ownership).
- The **benchmarks cannot be reached without the cooperation of parents/families and other co-educators - the learning community**. This partnership is a key element in the learning process. Skills, attitudes, values and virtues are even more important than knowledge. But many education and training establishments would need more support to be able to focus on these outcomes of learning. The recognition of this important role is missing in the issue paper.
- **The working group** pleas for a **better participation of the wider stakeholders at all levels, including the clusters at European level**. Communicating the goals behind the benchmarks and making people understand why lifelong learning is important, is crucial. The achievements of the Education and Training 2010 work programme are vital to make stakeholders active in this process.

### 3. Key issues to be addressed:

The Commission should have a **holistic approach** in policy making in education and training.

The following **specific topics** should be dealt with at European level:

#### **Guidance**

- **Policies to support the parents are needed**. Indeed, they remain the most important guides/advisers when children and young people choose

an educational pathway or a job. But most of them do not have sufficient knowledge/competence to provide the best possible advice.

- **Training of teachers and trainers needs improving to support them in their roles as learning facilitators.** This includes assessment, guidance and evaluation of learners' competences.

### Teaching methods

- European institutions should send a strong message to the Member States. Investment in teacher training is paramount to encourage professionalism and to ensure that all learners get the support they need to develop their competences. **Innovation in teaching and learning and competence-based approaches need stimulating.** There is notably a very strong need to improve the quality of schools and the implementation of new strategies.

### Making learning pathways more flexible and recognising non formal and informal learning

To ensure all learners can tap their potential and develop their competences, education and training needs to instil confidence. Mobility within the system with multiple entry, exit and re-entry points should be possible to accommodate different learning styles. There is more than just one pathway which should be equally valued. Education and training should also be recognized as something that is much broader than schooling. Non formal education and training is equally important. It should be recognized and validated (assessment methods should focus on people's competences). Self-assessment tools need to be better embedded in education and training and validation. The use of Europass could be more promoted.

## Mobility and migration

A lot of social and economical barriers still impede stronger mobility. But we also need to reflect more on

- what kind of mobility we have or we want to achieve by 2020
- how education and training can contribute to achieve this goal

This might require a stronger policy.

Mobility is not only an education and training but also a labour market/economic issue. Migration for economic and labour market purposes has its specific characteristics and implications. The European and national qualifications frameworks can help to make mobility and recognition of acquired competences easier.

However, we need to know what kind of migration we will have/intend to have in 2020 to be able to analyse its effects on education and on society as a whole and to devise more coordinated policies.

### B. Panel remarks

David WHITE invited the panel to reflect on the growing demands on teachers and the need for learner centred approaches and adequate teacher education.

Thomas MAYR (EUAPME) underlined that closer links to the world of work could help teachers to guide and advise learners better. Cooperation between schools and the world of work could be helpful for learners already at an early age.

Reflecting on the idea that young people's educational attainment is linked to their parents' educational background/attainment, and educational choices are largely influenced by them, David WHITE supported the idea to help parents through more information and advice. If we cannot change where they come from, we can input on what they can do.



As for the idea of setting a **financial benchmark**, **Thomas MAYR** (EUAPME) advised caution. The correlation between investment and quality is not clear cut. It is **also important to look at efficiency and outcomes, i.e. also at countries' governance systems, and to learn from each other.**



## WORKSHOP 4

### REFERENCE TOOLS AND INSTRUMENTS

#### Moderator

Pat DAVIES, Representative of the European Universities Continuing Education Network (EUCEN)

#### Rapporteurs

Pauline VANDENBOSCH, Policy Officer of the European Vocational Training Association (EVTA)

Thomas MAYR, European Association of Craft, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (UEAPME).

#### A. Report from the workshop

The participants focussed mainly on the European instruments like EQF and ECVET: the existing experiences, the needs and the recommendations for the future.

Main issue: although the European Commission published European tools as ECVET and EQF, a lot of work still remains to be done. There are pilot projects, experiments, etc. but, until now, there is no or little impact. Instruments are still not commonly known and used by everybody. **This pleas for a strategy that strongly focuses on consolidation, valorisation and implementation!**

#### Consolidation

- **From experimentation to development**: public authorities should not propose more tools but work on the improvement and finishing of the existing ones. For example, some instruments could address other target groups such as handicapped persons and migrants.



- **Create coherence:** instruments should be placed in a complete picture and be related to the other instruments (ECVET and ECTS, ECVET, EQF and validation for example). Until now, there is a lot of information and documents about each instrument but no “complete picture”.
- Start/continue the **dialogue between stakeholders**. For example, between sectors (VET and adult education and higher education, etc.) but also between formal and non-formal and informal learning.

### Implementation, valorisation

- Let us learn from each others’ **experiences** and use them!
- Try to be **innovative in valorisation!** There are projects which facilitate valorisation activities, but too many remain “traditional” and do not lead to sustainability and impact. Besides, good partnerships, valorisation of activities at horizontal (towards others sectors) and vertical (towards policy making authorities) levels in projects, are necessary.
- **Motivation** of all levels: if we want to get everybody involved in the implementation of the European instruments, documents have to be **“translated” to a practical language** which is used on the working floor. For example, why not work with local “ambassadors” which help people to understand the purpose and use of the instruments?
- From **policy to strategy:** turn words into practice. Try to find situations/challenges where ECVET and EQF can contribute to solutions. For example, in finding a common language in the definition of national and European qualifications and a common language for companies and employment purposes in transnational mobility and in the improvement of the quality of human resources like in the development of the workforce.



### **B. Panel remarks**

In his reaction to the reports, David WHITE raised the issue of migration which in his view seemed to have been somewhat neglected.

Eleonora SCHMID (Cedefop) referred to some discussion in working group 3 on this multifaceted issue. The question of validation and the purpose of European tools to foster mobility and recognition of prior learning had been raised in this context. Given the demographic developments, migration will move even more to the fore, as also indicated in the NESSE report that participants had received. In the context of its own work, Cedefop is looking into examples of how vocational education and training can help people from migrant backgrounds to develop their skills and competences and better integrate into the labour market.



## 8. CONCLUDING REMARKS from the panel

*Michel FEUTRIE, EUCIS-LLL*

Le principal problème à clarifier aujourd'hui est la notion de « **lifelong learning** ». Celle-ci a été définie en 2000 par la Commission européenne dans son Mémorandum sur l'apprentissage tout au long de la vie. Elle est aujourd'hui utilisée un peu partout mais ne recouvre pas le même sens pour tous. Cela nuit à la **continuité des parcours personnels et professionnels tout au long de la vie**. Quelles articulations entre secteurs ? Quels lieux d'apprentissage (formels, informels, non formels) ?

*Thomas MAYR, EUAPME*

**Demographic change is a main challenge**, middle aged and older people need to have access to learning processes. The work at European level of the past years concerning concepts and instruments for LLL, transparency etc. has been very successful. We have now the **right concepts on the table, the main challenge is to put them into practice**. We need to consolidate and implement the instruments so that they can deliver results.

*Anne-Marie FALKTOFT, ETUCE*

We should ensure the continuity and long term planning of education and training strategies and it should be **evidence and partnership based**. We shall focus on the implementation of the recommendations as well as on the tools. Some challenges remain such as the **evaluation of key competences, teacher continuing education and equity and efficiency**.

*Monika NOVOSADOVA, EUROPEAN YOUTH FORUM*

Lifelong learning should be provided by different sectors and should be considered as a goal and not a tool. Innovation already exists, it should be better shared and used. A better **complementarity between actors and resources should be provided**.

***Eleonora SCHMID, CEDEFOP***

Flexibility and lifelong learning imply mobility and transition between education and training and the world of work. This is a growing reality in and also an important element of the flexicurity approach. New challenges are linked to securing excellence of education and training as well as equity between and within education and training systems. Equity and sustainability are in fact main elements of the renewed Lisbon strategy.

***David WHITE, EUROPEAN COMMISSION***

Concluded by reminding the main long term challenges that are demography and migration, a globalised world, creativity and innovation and sustainability. Equity was also mentioned in all the workshops.



## 9. GENERAL CONCLUSION by Florent STORA, French Representation to the EU



Florent STORA a remercié les participants pour les riches débats de la journée. L'ensemble des enjeux ont bien été posés. Ce type de consultation est tout à fait positive notamment avant la publication de communications. La France est favorable à la pérennisation de telles rencontres. Pendant longtemps, celle-ci s'est insuffisamment appropriée ces questions, les choses ont changé depuis et l'intention est d'y associer la communauté éducative française.

Le programme de la future présidence française représente un travail collectif avec la Suède et la République Tchèque, ses priorités sont les suivantes :

- **mobilité** : reste un des axes fondamentaux de la construction européenne. Un texte opérationnel visera à améliorer la mobilité en luttant contre les obstacles notamment identifiés par la présidence portugaise.
- **transition entre formel et non formel et informel** : un enjeu majeur car les secteurs restent trop cloisonnés. Le concept de « lifelong learning » est très utilisé mais n'a pas le même sens pour tous. Une priorité sera notamment donnée à l'orientation tout au long de la vie notamment concernant l'accès à l'enseignement supérieur pour les adultes.
- **les enseignants** : il est nécessaire de rompre avec l'idée du professeur au centre mais d'y mettre l'apprenant. Le savoir reste essentiel mais il faut sortir du pédagogisme qui se met au niveau de l'élève qui doit être entendu comme liberté en construction, comme héritier critique.
- **l'éducation repose sur 3 piliers** : le marché de l'emploi, des hommes et des femmes capables de s'épanouir et des citoyens appartenant à un monde commun. La compétitivité et l'emploi restent un enjeu majeur. Les autres



dimensions également, comme l'instruction civique des migrants, le rappel des valeurs communes, etc.

- **l'orientation** est très importante et fera l'objet d'une conférence de la présidence française.



## 10. LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

### Civil Society Organisations

Jorgen	OLSEN	ACC - Association for Community Colleges
Anna	GABRIEL	AEGEE - European Students' Forum
Irena	ZOGLA	ATEE - Association of Teacher Education in Europe
Regina	EBNER	EAEA - European Association for the Education of Adults
Nia	LEWIS	EARLALL - European Association of Regional and Local Authorities for Lifelong Learning
Christopher	CLOUDER	ECSWE - European Council Steiner Waldorf Schools
Werner	GOVAERTS	ECSWE - European Council Steiner Waldorf Schools
Lies	FERON	EFFE - European Forum for Freedom in Education
Peter	HODGSON	EfVET - European Forum of Technical and Vocational Education and Training
Allan	PILKINGTON	EHFA - European Health and Fitness Association
Jean-Ann	MARNOCH	EHFA - European Health and Fitness Association
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Jolanta	ZYSKO	ENSSEE - European Network of Sport Science, Education & Employment
Aurélien	FAVRE	EOSE - European Observatoire of Sport and Employment
Brigitte	HAIDER	EPA - European Parents Association
Werner	VAN KATWIJK	EPA- European Parents Association
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Anthony	CAMILLERI	ESU - European Students' Union
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Véronique	BERTRAND	ETDF - European Training and Development Federation



Stelios	MAVROMOUSTAKOS	EFVET- European Forum of Technical and Vocational Education and Training
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Anne-Marie	BOONEN	EUROPACE - e-learning network of universities, educational organisations and their networks
Andrea	MRLIANOVA	EVTA - European Vocational Training Association
Ignacio	CAVERO	EVTA - European Vocational Training Association
Astrid	MECHEL	JA-YE EUROPE - Junior Achievement Young Enterprise
Gotzone	MORA	Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions of Europe
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### Social Partners

Gerald	BOGARD	CEEP - European Centre of Enterprises with Public Participation and of Enterprises of General Economic
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### Agencies

Isabelle	LE MOUILLOUR	CEDEFOP – Centre européen pour le développement de la formation professionnelle European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training
Eleonora	SCHMID	CEDEFOP – Centre européen pour le développement de la formation professionnelle European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training

