

## **2003: CONFERENCE ON MARKETISATION**

**28 February and 1 March 2003 in The Hague**

The European Network of Education Councils organised a conference on marketisation in education for members, observers and interested education councils. Following on the conference EUNEC held its General Assembly.

### **General Outline of the Theme**

The free market is starting to break through in the world of education. This can be illustrated in a number of processes: school sponsoring, partnerships between public institutions and private companies, schools and universities sliding into (international) competition, private companies offering courses, more private, non-funded schools enter the education market, etc.

At the same time education is confronted with new social developments and trends. There is the increasing individualisation with its need for flexibility and freedom of choice. New technologies offer new opportunities for learning strategies, for flexibility and tailor-made education, for world wide interaction and for the supply of information. The growing internationalisation is a third development which seriously influences the education sector. The European Union has put forward a number of ambitious objectives for the training and education systems of its member states.

Apart from these developments, the educational landscape of every country is varied with a range of education and training initiatives between purely commercial and public. There's private education that is integrated in the officially regulated system of a country; either because it delivers recognised certificates or is (partially) funded by the government. There are also private non-profit schools and there are public institutions which perform in ways we associate with the private sector (commercial spin-offs, merging ...)

The question that begs to be answered is whether these developments contribute to a higher quality, more accessible and effective education.

### **Intended Purpose and Results**

The EUNEC conference on Marketisation and the General Assembly focussed on three subjects

- What is the relation between commercialisation and the different forms of private and public education and what are the consequences?
- What will be the outcome of WTO negotiations on the General Agreement on Trade and Services (GATS)? What will be the consequences in the educational field? The European Union should take position by April 2003.
- The European education policy. A state of affairs of the recent

initiatives and developments. A discussion on EUNEC's position and role in the European education policy. The education councils are now hardly involved in the policy making process. In the run-up to the conference the councils could react.

[top](#)