

CONTENT

CONTEXT	2
A short history	2
Mission	3
Target groups	4
Members in 2017	5
INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION ABOUT THE EDUCATION POLICY IN THE EUROPEAN UNION	
A review of the main policy lines in education and training	7
EUNEC PARTICIPATES IN THE DEBATE ON THE EUROPEAN LEVEL	11
European events organized by the institutions	11
Other international or European events	12
THEME IN THE PICTURE IN 2017	
Making education more inclusive	14
MANAGEMENT OF THE NETWORK	17
Organisation of the network	17
Strategy for monitoring networking and impact	19
EUNEC annual account	21
ANNEX: STATEMENTS ON MAKING EDUCATION MORE INCLUSIVE	21

CONTEXT

Education and training are seen as key actors in the development of a knowledge society. Therefore, both the EU and the member states put forward daring targets to energize the sectors of education and training making them more performing.

A SHORT HISTORY OF EUNEC

In order to give these innovation policies a broad societal support, governments mobilize the educational and social-economic stakeholders such as representatives of school boards, teacher trade unions, parent and student organizations and social partners to participate actively in the conception and the implementation of policies and activities in education and training.

Therefore most of the member states have set up national or regional formal institutions of consideration and consultation, bringing together all these stakeholders or part of them, in some cases together with experts, to formulate their recommendations.

Education councils have diverse statutes, but they all function as an advisory body towards governments on future education policies.

In 1999, some councils decided to work together on European educational subjects, and, to encourage a closer and more intense cooperation, the education councils created in 2000 EUNEC, a **European network of national and regional education councils**, with the support and the help of the European Commission.

From 2008 until 2013, EUNEC was recognized and granted as European organisation acting at European level in the field of education and training under the Jean Monnet programme (DG EAC N° 28/07). Within this programme, EUNEC obtained two consecutive three year Framework Partnership agreements.

In 2014, EUNEC was granted under the new Erasmus+ programme, Key Action 3, for civil society cooperation in the field of education and training. This grant allowed the network to continue its efforts to enhance cooperation on education and training in Europe and to aim for more sustainable results.

From 2015, EUNEC was no longer granted under Erasmus+, because of changes in the eligibility criteria. EUNEC continues its works and pursue its objectives, supported by members' contributions.

MISSION

EUNEC is convinced that all those involved in education (the European Commission, the governments of the Member States, the education councils, the stakeholders and all European citizens) can benefit from this European network where major evolutions and reforms in educational systems can be discussed thoroughly and prepared for a successful implementation.

EUNEC aims to discuss the findings and recommendations of European policy documents in the field of education and training, to determine points of view and to formulate statements on these issues. EUNEC wants to disseminate these statements pro-actively towards the European Commission, relevant DGs and other actors at European level, and to promote action by EUNEC

members and participants at national level. EUNEC has the objective that the councils should put the main international policy lines high on the national agenda.

EUNEC wants to work in two directions:

EUNEC wants to disseminate and discuss – at the national and at the European level - documents, texts, studies... that are launched by the European Commission within the framework of the Europe 2020 Strategy, the Bologna process, the Copenhagen process, Education and Training 2020.

With sound and coherent statements, the members of EUNEC want to influence the discussions and the decisions on the major European issues in education and training both on the European and on the national level.

TARGET GROUPS

Through the members, education councils, EUNEC reaches stakeholders, experts and policy makers in the field of education and training in Europe.

EUNEC members are education councils. An education council must meet the following criteria (Statutes, Chapter II, Art. 6.1):

- The council operates as a permanent body;
- The council acts independently from any single interest through the presence of a range of members from different social groups, political affiliations and/or academic perspectives;
- The council has as principal goal to provide advice on educational and training policy;

- The advisory role is embedded in the policy making process at the level where the main competences on education and/or training policy are attributed.

If a council is competent for two or more education levels in the system or is operating at a national level, it will be given priority to become a member when candidates of the same EU member state also apply for membership.

Corresponding members can be accepted at the decision of the general assembly at the proposal of the executive committee (Statutes, Chapter II, Art. 6.2).

Corresponding members are permanent institutions with an advisory role in the policy making process on education and training.

The composition of the education councils guarantees the involvement of all the principal stakeholders in education in a region/country. This way, EUNEC wants to reach all stakeholders (policy makers, social partners, parents, students, teachers, providers...) in education throughout the European Union and beyond.

EUNEC MEMBERS IN 2017

Members are national councils, or regional councils, such as in Belgium where education and initial training are exclusively regional matters.

Members of the Executive Committee and of the General Assembly

Those members are entitled to take part in all the activities of the network. They have a full responsibility in the network as described in part III and IV of the Statutes (competences of the

general assembly and the executive committee).

- FLEMISH COMMUNITY (BELGIUM): Vlaamse Onderwijsraad (VLOR)
- FRENCH COMMUNITY (BELGIUM): Conseil de l'Éducation et de la Formation (CEF)
- THE NETHERLANDS: Onderwijsraad
- PORTUGAL: Conselho Nacional de Educação (CNE)
- LITHUANIA: Lietovous svietimo taruba (LST), the Lithuanian Education Council
- CYPRUS : Symvoulío Paideias, the Cyprus Education Council
- FRANCE: Conseil National de l'Évaluation du Système Scolaire (CNESCO)

Members of the General Assembly

Those members are entitled to take part in the general assembly, in the seminars and conferences and other initiatives they are invited to by the executive committee. They receive information produced by EUNEC on European, international and national policy lines.

- ESTONIA: Estonian Education Forum (EEF)
- IRELAND: General Teaching Council
- HUNGARY : National Council for Public Education
- CZECH REPUBLIC: Union of School Associations
- QUEBEC: Conseil Supérieur de l'Éducation
- ROMANIA: Institute of Educational Sciences (IES)
- MALTA: Curriculum Management Department

INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION ABOUT THE EDUCATION POLICY IN THE EUROPEAN UNION

The objective is

- To enhance the cooperation on these issues between the EUNEC members;
- To disseminate European proposals and tools on national/regional level; EUNEC disseminates European documents and initiatives to the members of its councils and tries to clarify them by summaries, comments or translations.

A REVIEW OF THE MAIN POLICY LINES IN EDUCATION AND TRAINING

In 2017, the EUNEC secretariat prepared three **overviews of the main policy lines in education and training**. These documents present an overview of the documents that education councils need to be able to integrate the European common policy lines and frameworks in their recommendations towards national Ministers of Education and governments.

These synthesis documents describe in a very concise and accessible way the new policy documents. They summarize the main lines of the documents and offer links to the full texts. They take into account all documents linked to education and training and transversal domains (youth, culture, welfare, employment..) by all relevant decision making organizations (Parliament, Council, Presidency, Commission). The main policy lines are also paying attention to other international organisations working in the field of education and training, such as OECD, World Bank, Council of Europe and UNESCO.

In 2017, the following themes were given major attention:

The EU institutional context

- Recent developments in the economic governance of the EU have a major impact on education and training policies. In the framework of the European Semester, attention is given to the Annual Growth Survey, the Alert Mechanism Reports, the Country-specific Recommendations, the Integrated guidelines for economic and employment policies, the Eurostat report with an overview of trends in the Europe 2020 headline indicators, the joint report on employment
- European Commission Work Programme 2017;
- Information about the programmes and the outcomes of the Slovak, Maltese and Estonian Presidency of the EU.

Education and Training 2020

- The EU Councils for Education, Youth, Culture and Sport (November 2016, February 2017, May 2017, November 2017) and the related conclusions, recommendations and communications.
- The EU modernisation agenda for higher education
- The New Skills Agenda for Europe, and the developments related to the ten actions under this Agenda;
- The follow-up of the Paris Declaration on tackling intolerance, discrimination and radicalisation received a lot of attention in 2017: Commission Communication Strengthening European Identity through Education and Culture; Council conclusions on inclusion in diversity to achieve high-quality education for all in response to the Commission communication.
- Eurydice publications

- Education and Training Monitor
- School Education Gateway
- Key data on teaching languages at school in Europe

Developments in other policy domains

- Commission Youth Initiative (December 2016) In his State of the Union (14 September 2016), president Juncker announced to renew efforts to support young people. The Bratislava Roadmap, agreed by the EU, has set out the need to provide better opportunities for youth. As a response, this Communication puts forward actions to invest more effectively in young people. The aim is to help them to seize opportunities, integrate well into society, become active citizens and pursue a successful professional career. As part of this package, the Commission launches the European Solidarity Corps and presents a Communication on improving and modernising education.
- Conclusions on investing in Europe's youth, focusing on the European Solidarity Corps as a political response to this Commission's Youth Initiative.
- Employment and Social Developments in Europe

UNESCO publications and policy documents

- The Sustainable Development Goals.
- Global Education Monitoring Report 2017: Accountability in education: meeting our commitments

Council of Europe

- Securing democracy through education. The development of a Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture

- Combating school segregation through inclusive education

OECD publications and policy documents

- Education at a glance 2017.
- Innovative Learning Environments
- School resources review
- Survey of adult skills

The IEA **International Civic and Citizenship Study**

The World Bank has published the '**World Development Report: Learning to Realize Education's Promise**'. (26 September 2017)

All these documents have been presented and discussed at meetings of the executive committee and/or general assembly. These discussions are important, as an instrument for in-service training of the presidents, secretary generals and members of national and regional education councils. They pull the attention to new developments, to possible links between EU and international frameworks and national policies, to new approaches for ongoing and future advisory work. They offer a basis for common work and collaboration on new recommendations.

These documents are also important for determining emerging themes and fixing the themes EUNEC will work on in the following years.

Education councils offer platforms to local, regional and national stakeholders such as education providers, school boards, school heads, teacher trade unions, student organizations, parents' organizations. **Through the channel of the council a lot of stakeholders get an insight in the European education**

policy. The states of affairs play an important role in raising the awareness and the understanding of advisers of Ministers and local, regional and national education stakeholders of the common European reference frameworks. By taking them into account in preparing national recommendations, the education councils contribute highly to the national implementation strategies of these frameworks.

These documents are also available for a broader audience: they are published on the website (www.eunec.eu) and in the newsletter reaching individual citizens as well as organizations

EUNEC PARTICIPATES IN THE DEBATE ON THE EUROPEAN LEVEL

EUNEC insists on the importance of (more) stakeholder involvement in European policies. For that reason, EUNEC uses every occasion to express its viewpoints on relevant matters in education and training on the European level.



Contributions of EUNEC representatives at EU conferences

European events organized by the institutions

EUNEC participated at the **meeting of the EU school policy**

networks on the review of the key competences framework, Brussels, Thon hotel, 4-5 April 2017. On day 1, parallel workshop focus on each of the 8 actual key competences. Discussions were based on the background paper prepared by the European Commission, and presented by Suzanne Conze .

On day 2, parallel workshops focused on the role of school organization and partnerships; the role of school curricula and assessment tools at system level; the challenge to face diversity.

EUNEC participated at the **Stakeholder Forum for the European Solidarity Corps** (ESC) in Brussels on 12 April. It gathered 700 participants from all Europe. The European Solidarity Corps is the new European Union initiative which creates opportunities for young people to volunteer or work in projects in their own country or abroad that benefit communities and people around Europe. The ESC aims to provide accessible opportunities for young people to express their solidarity through volunteering, a traineeship or a job responding to concrete societal challenges, to build a more inclusive society supporting vulnerable people. It offers an inspiring and empowering experience for young people who want to help, learn and develop. Many young people are keen to express their solidarity, but not all have this opportunity because the demands exceed the current possibilities on offers and enhanced opportunities could be provided.

EUNEC participated at the **Estonian presidency conference 'Contemporary Approaches to Learning and Teaching'**, Tallinn, 19-20 September.

Other international or European events

When EUNEC is invited to an international event or to an event organised by one of the members (conference, debate, workshop,

seminar, survey), the secretariat forwards the invitation to the members by e-mail.

In accordance to the members' expertise and interest, a EUNEC member or the secretariat represent the network at these events. Positions taken during these conferences are based on the common understanding laid down in the statements. At conferences and workshops, EUNEC representatives are the voice of the network.



The EUNEC representative spreads the information throughout the network. The executive committee insists on the multiplying effect of participation in conferences on behalf of EUNEC.

Every representative is expected to make a report and send it to the secretariat. The secretariat makes a compilation of these reports in a document 'attended events' that is presented and commented on executive committee meetings and published on the website www.eunec.eu.

Events attended in 2017:

- The Estonian Presidency of the EU and the 30 May 2017 package of the European Commission, Brussels;
- Summer University CNESCO (new EUNEC member): 'Quelles politiques scolaires pour former notre jeunesse?', August 2017;
- Quality education for all, Brussels, European Parliament, 7 September 2017, Organised by the CULT committee of the European Parliament (GUE/NGL);

- Is the vocational education and training system prepared for the future of work? 4th Cedefop Brussels-based Seminar, 8 December 2017;
- Education priorities Bulgarian EU Presidency: Key Competences for the 21st Century in the spotlight, Flanders European Liaison Agency), 14 December 2017.
- Success factors for equal chances at school, Flanders European Liaison Agency), Brussels, 17 December 2017.

THEME IN THE PICTURE IN 2017

MAKING EDUCATION MORE INCLUSIVE

The thematic seminar of EUNEC dealt with the theme of 'Making education more inclusive'. The event was hosted by the Institute of Education Sciences in Bucharest.

On 18 and 19 May 2017, EUNEC organized a seminar on 'Making education more inclusive'. Participants from 13 countries, experts and stakeholders in education and training, shared experiences. The stage was set by Luminita Costache, Education specialist, UNICEF Romania; by Professor Mark M. Alter, professor of Educational Psychology, New York University and by Paula Frederica Hunt, Inclusive Education Consultant at the UNICEF Central and Eastern Europe and Commonwealth of Independent States Regional Office (CEE/CIS). Then participants had the opportunity to visit school number one in Bucharest city center.

The second day of the seminar was dedicated to debate, after input from EUNEC members from Romania, Portugal and Lithuania.

During this seminar, EUNEC wanted to make a state of the art of policy concepts underpinning education for children with disabilities. There has been a clear evolution in those policy concepts during the last 50 years. This evolution is the result of a radical change in the way we look at the place of people with disabilities in society.

During the 1970s, awareness was raised that disabled people were entitled to education and development.

Before, learning and developmental disorders were not explicitly appointed. They were often seen by teachers only as a personal failure of the pupil.

During the last quarter of the last century, however, an explicit pedagogical vision came about dealing with children with disabilities. The development of orthopedagogy as a science supported these developments. There was a strong diagnostic practice that tried to describe and diagnose learning and developmental problems. As a result, in the 1970s and 80s, a network of specialized institutions provided education for pupils with disabilities. This was frequently based on a broad attestation, diagnostic and labeling of the pupils. Education for pupils with disabilities was categorical and segregated.

The UNESCO Salamanca statement (1994) has lead, among other things, to a change in this way of thinking. The Salamanca statement was the outcome of the World Conference on Special Needs Education, and called for inclusion to be the norm. The same vision was also expressed in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, including education (2006). Both statements are based on a non-discrimination principle as expressed in human rights treaties. They assume the

right of people with disabilities on inclusion in the 'regular' society. They are based on a new vision that sees disability as an inadequate alignment between the characteristics of a person and the environment (including the school structure).

The most recent evolution is the emergence of a link between education for pupils with special needs and the attention to diversity in education (a.o. education for children with problematic socio-economic backgrounds, education for children with different socio-cultural backgrounds). Some pupils have learning or developmental problems due to socio-cultural or socio-economic factors; for other pupils the problems are the consequence of mental, physical or psychological constraints. In reality, there is often an interference between the disability and the context in which the pupil is growing up. The new paradigms related to disability start from this finding. This interference remains one of the main questions in the debate: is it necessary that pupils with disabilities get a specific approach in education, or does a broad view on diversity in education offer enough guarantees?

EUNEC members adopted final statements , and a full report of the event was published.

MANAGEMENT OF THE NETWORK

Organization of the network

All the members of the organization are allowed to be represented in the **General Assembly**. The responsibilities of the General Assembly include the right to:

- amend the statutes;
- elect the President of the network;
- nominate and discharge the members of the Executive Committee
- determine the status of members and acceptance and exclusion of a member
- approve the budget and the annual account
- discuss and decide on matters concerning the operation, activities and working programme of the network;
- discuss and decide matters concerning the existence of the network;
- approve or amend the internal rules of procedure
- dissolve the organisation.

In 2017, the General Assembly met on 16 March (virtual meeting) and on 19 May in Bucharest and on 25 October (virtual meeting). The minutes of these meetings are published at www.eunec.eu (management section).

The **Executive Committee** is the board of the network. The executive committee has to prepare the proposals that are submitted to the General Assembly.

The Executive Committee must:

- implement the decisions of the General Assembly;

- announce the meetings of the General Assembly and the other network activities;
- approve new members
- appoint the auditor
- prepare the accounts after receiving the auditor's report
- decide on the budget
- take decisions in accordance with the statutes of the network, in accordance with the interests of the network or with the policy of the General Assembly;
- report to the General Assembly on its activities and its financial management
- nominate the general secretary
- decide on the annual fees

The executive committee is at the same time also the place of real exchanges and networking about the national and European priorities in the field of education, the place to discuss new European policy documents.

In 2017, the Executive Committee met on 16 March (virtual meeting), on 19 May in Bucharest and on 9 October (virtual meeting). The minutes of these meetings are published at www.eunec.eu (management section).

The **EUNEC secretariat** is composed by the President, the General Secretary, two experts and the secretary.

They coordinate the project and assume the daily management of the network; they keep the contact with the European institutions and the executive agency. They also represent the network in a lot of European events organized in Brussels, where the secretariat is based.

At the general assembly meeting of 29 May 2016, Mr Manuel Miguéns from the CNE (Portuguese Education Council) is

appointed as EUNEC president for the period June 2016 until June 2018 after unanimous agreement by the general assembly, at the proposal of the executive committee.

The General Secretariat and the secretariat are assumed by the Vlaamse Onderwijsraad (Belgium, Flemish Community).

Strategy for monitoring impact and networking

Following the recommendations after a field monitoring visit by EACEA, the EUNEC executive committee of December 2013 decided to implement, as from 2014, a strategy for monitoring impact and networking. The EUNEC strategy on enhanced networking and on follow up of impact is being monitored through a set of 10 indicators.

- 1 The feedback of participants at conferences and seminars (measured through feedback questionnaires)
- 2 The satisfaction of the member organizations about EUNEC as a network
- 3 The cooperation between EUNEC members on a specific topic
- 4 The number of main policy lines issued per year; and the number of policy documents related to education summarized in these documents.
- 5 The number of visitors at the website (number, geographical coverage, duration of visit, ...)
- 6 The number of readers of the newsletter (number, geographical coverage, number of clicks, ...)
- 7 The number of contacts with other EU organizations

- 8 The number of times that statements of EUNEC are used as input for working groups/consultations/studies at EU level
- 9 The number of times that statements/work of EUNEC has influenced recommendations of the member organizations
- 10 The number of times a EUNEC theme/document is at the agenda of member councils

Indicators 1-4-5-6-7-8 are being monitored centrally at the level of the secretariat thanks to the input by the members. Indicators 2-3-9-10 are being monitored by the members; the results ARE discussed at the occasion of the general assembly meeting in Bucharest.

Indicators 1 and 2 inform on the extent to which EUNEC is **appreciated** by the members. Indicators 5, 6 and 7 inform on the **dissemination** of EUNEC results. The overview of main policy lines in education and training is an **output** of the network that is very much appreciated by the members. Indicators 3, 9 and 10 inform on the **outcomes** of EUNEC. Finally, indicator 10 shows that EUNEC plays an agenda-setting role.

Results towards these ten indicators have been presented and discussed at the general assembly meeting of 29 May 2017.

EUNEC annual account 2017

earnings		20 998,96
	Membership fees	20 998,96
expenditure		17446,80
	Hosting and support website	1 754,50
	Seminar Bucharest May 2017	12 825,62
	Meetings and conferences	2 118,48
	Auditor	748,20
balance		3552,16
bank account balance 31/12/2016		29114,92
bank account balance 31/12/2017		32667,08

ANNEX: STATEMENTS ON MAKING EDUCATION MORE INCLUSIVE

The [statements](#) are published at the EUNEC website.