



3 December 2010
EUN/EC/DOC/039

Main policy lines of international organisations, relevant for education councils

State of affairs September – November 2010

I. The EU

1. New work programme of the European Commission for 2011

27 October 2010

The work programme reflects the Commission's determination to lead Europe out of the crisis and towards a future of prosperity, security and social justice.

The priorities for 2011 fall under five main headings:

- Sustaining Europe's social market economy out of the crisis and beyond
- Restoring growth for jobs
- Pursuing the citizens' agenda: Rights, Freedom and Justice
- Europe pulling its weight on the global stage
- From input to impact: making the most of EU policies

The Commission work programme is accompanied by annexes:

- A list of 40 strategic initiatives which the Commission commits to deliver in 2011
- A list of more than 140 other possible initiatives under preparation until the end of the mandate
- A list of simplification proposals and withdrawals.

http://ec.europa.eu/atwork/programmes/docs/cwp2011_en.pdf

A '**Communication on Modernization of higher education**' is in the first list.

The purpose is to revise and propose new objectives for the future of this policy agenda. This may include possible proposals for a transparency and ranking system for higher education institutions.(3rd quarter 2011)

Two other initiatives are in the second list:

A 'Commission Communication on a New Competences Initiative'

The Communication is linked to the New Skills for New Jobs initiative and seeks to develop the key competences approach in the fields of vocational training, adult learning and higher education, building on the 2006 Key Competences Recommendation but going beyond. It supports efforts in Member States to modernize these other areas of education and training provision, looking especially at assessment and validation questions and the development of a common language on competences between the worlds of education/training and of work, including the proposals for a High Level Forum on basic skills and for a European Skills Passport.

A 'Recommendation on the promotion and validation of informal and non-formal learning'

Part of the Youth on the Move initiative; it will address how national qualifications frameworks should facilitate the promotion and validation of non-formal and informal learning outcomes and provide permeability between VET and higher education, as well as how to promote professionalism and recognition of those delivering such learning experiences, in particular in the youth field.

Roadmaps about this initiatives on

http://ec.europa.eu/governance/impact/planned_ia/roadmaps_2011_en.htm#educ_cult

2. Education and Training 2020

Education, Youth, Culture and Sport Council, 18-19 November 2010

Council conclusions on

- Education for sustainable development
- Priorities for enhanced European cooperation in VET 2011-2020
- Youth on the move – an integrated approach in response to the challenges young people face
- Increasing the level of basic skills in the context of European cooperation on schools for the 21st century
- A work plan for culture
- The role of culture in combating poverty and social exclusion

Council resolution on Youth Work

Summaries and links in the chapters below.

The role of education in combating poverty and social inclusion

The Council debated the role of education in combating poverty, inequality and social exclusion. All ministers agreed on the critical importance of education in breaking the vicious cycle of poverty. Many delegations highlighted what they saw as prerequisites for successful policies in this area: early childhood education, commitment by parents to the educational success of their children, teacher training, increased language learning. However, all delegations underlined that education policies alone are not enough and wider measures are needed (collaboration with health, culture, employment, town planning).

http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/educ/117839.pdf

3. Specific policy lines within Education and Training

3.1 Common framework for making diversity of HE more transparent

Brussels, September 2010

At a meeting in Namur on 13 – 14 September, the Directors General for higher education of the Member States made the commitment to take action in order to promote greater transparency, particularly through the potential development of a common reference framework.

'U-map' and 'U-multirank' projects are promising tools; they offer information on a large number of aspects of higher education, and they are designed with the users in mind.

The meeting revealed a very clear willingness on the part of the DG to contribute proactively to the issue of transparency, particularly by expanding the scope of activity beyond rankings, and exploring the possibility of developing a common framework for the transparency and accountability of European higher education institutions.

Published on www.eutrio.be.

3.2 Agenda for new skills and jobs: A European contribution towards full employment

Communication from the Commission, 23 November 2010

This is the Commission's contribution to reaching the EU employment rate target of 75% for the 20-64 years by 2020; it also highlights the EU targets to reduce the early school leaving rate to under 10% and increase the number of young people in higher education of equivalent VET to at least 40%.

The agenda proposes 13 key actions in the fields of

- Flexicurity
- Skills upgrading and matching (the Commission will propose a new benchmark on education for employability, to stimulate a new focus on preparing young people for the transition to the labour market)
- Quality of work and working conditions
- Supporting job creation

The Commission will revise the Agenda's priorities in 2014 and adopt them. Till then, it will report on progress in the Annual Growth Surveys within the Europe 2020 Strategy.

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=6328&langId=en>

3.3 Priorities for enhanced European cooperation in vocational education and training for the period 2011-2020

Conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting within the Council, 18-19 November 2010

The conclusions set out a global vision for VET in 2020, aiming at a more attractive, relevant, career-oriented, innovative, accessible and flexible European VET system than in 2010. The establish 4 long-term strategic objectives which reflect those adopted under the overarching ET 2020 strategic framework:

- Improving quality and efficiency of VET
- Making LLL and mobility a reality

- Enhancing creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship
- Promoting equity, social cohesion and active citizenship.

The conclusion will feed the discussions at the informal ministerial meeting specially devoted to VET in Bruges on 7 December and serve as a basis for a special communiqué to be adopted at that meeting.

http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/educ/117849.pdf

3.4 Youth on the move – an integrated approach in response to the challenges young people face

Conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting within the Council, 18-19 November 2010

The conclusions establish underlying principles for the implementation of this flagship initiative, such as close collaboration between relevant policy areas and full use of EU programmes and budgets. The text includes contributions from both youth and employment sectors.

http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/educ/117851.pdf

3.5 Increasing the level of basic skills in the context of European cooperation on schools for the 21st century

Conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting within the Council, 18-19 November 2010

The conclusions recognize that more effective action needs to be taken to achieve the benchmarks on reading and numeracy skills set for 2020 and highlight areas where attention should be paid (including curriculum design, motivation for reading literacy, impact of new Technologies and the gender dimension). The Commission is invited to set up a high-level expert Group to examine the most effective ways of supporting reading literacy.

http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/educ/117853.pdf

3.6 Education for sustainable development

Conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting within the Council, 18-19 November 2010

This is the first time the Council has tackled the issue of ESD, integrating economic, social and environmental perspectives. The conclusions stress that sustainable development aspects should be mainstreamed into all areas of education and training. The Council invites member states to support ESD by featuring it in national LLL strategies and by equipping teachers and trainers with the knowledge, skills and attitudes required.

http://consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/educ/117855.pdf

4. Developments in other policy domains

4.1 Youth

4.1.1 Youth on the move. An initiative to unleash the potential of young people to achieve smart, sustainable and inclusive growth in the EU

Communication from the Commission,
15 September 2010

Youth on the Move will be instrumental in achieving the Europe 2020 headline targets of reducing the share of early school leavers from 15% to 10 % and increasing the share of young people with tertiary education or equivalent from 31% to at least 40% by 2020. Youth on the Move actions will also help Member States reach the EU headline target for 75% employment over the next ten years by helping to ensure that young people have the right skills for the jobs of tomorrow.

Studies show that more than 40% of employers attach importance to the experience gained from study and work abroad. The Commission has a long tradition of supporting mobility; Youth on the Move aims to extend opportunities for learning mobility to all young people in the EU by 2020.

Text of the communication:

http://ec.europa.eu/education/yom/com_en.pdf

Citizens' summary:

http://ec.europa.eu/education/yom/cs_en.pdf

4.1.2 Proposal for a Council Recommendation on learning mobility

15 September 2010

The proposed Recommendation is part of the Youth on the Move initiative. In conjunction with the adoption of the Youth on the Move Communication, the Commission is proposing a Council Recommendation on Learning Mobility, as a basis for a new campaign among Member States to finally remove obstacles to mobility. Monitoring of progress will be reflected in a 'Mobility Scoreboard'.

This Council Recommendation provides specific guidance with regard to administrative, institutional and legal obstacles to the learning mobility of young people. It complements the wider Europe 2020 Integrated Guidelines.

The Council recommends that Member States undertake action in the following fields:

- Information and guidance on mobility opportunities
- Motivation to participate in transnational mobility
- Preparation of mobility opportunities, particularly regarding foreign language skills
- Legal and institutional obstacles relating to the learning period abroad
- Portability of grants and loans
- Quality of mobility
- Recognition of learning outcomes
- Disadvantaged learners
- Partnerships and funding
- Role of multipliers
- Monitoring progress

http://ec.europa.eu/education/yom/rec_en.pdf

The results of the 2009 public consultation on learning mobility are published as an accompanying document to the proposal for a Council Recommendation on learning mobility http://ec.europa.eu/education/yom/wpconsult_en.pdf

4.1.3 Resolution on youth work

Council resolution, 18-19 November 2010

The text recognizes the crucial role of youth work as provider of non-formal learning; it invites the Commission to develop a study to map the diversity, coverage and impact of youth work in the EU. In this context, the Commissioner announced her intention to propose during 2011 a Council recommendation on the recognition of non-formal and informal learning outcomes.

http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/educ/117874.pdf

4.2 Culture

4.2.1 Work plan for culture

Council conclusions, 18-19 November 2010

The plan addresses the following priorities:

- Cultural diversity, intercultural dialogue and inclusive culture;
- Cultural and creative industries; skills and mobility;
- Cultural heritage, including mobility of collections;
- Culture in external relations;
- Culture statistics.

http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/educ/117795.pdf

4.2.2 Role of culture in combating poverty and social exclusion

Council conclusions, 18-19 November 2010

The conclusions argue that it is important for a cultural dimension to be incorporated into policies against poverty and social exclusion.

http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/educ/117797.pdf

4.3 Employment

4.3.1 Recent developments in the EU 27 labour market for young people aged 15-29

15 September 2010

This report is a statistical overview prepared by DG Employment as a background document for the Youth on the Move Communication.

The main messages of the report:

- The effect of the recession on young people (15-24) has remained dramatic, despite recent stabilisation.
- Low-skilled continue to show the highest unemployment rates among all youth, but there is a marked increase in the unemployment rates for medium and high-skilled youth (end 2008 until end 2009)

- The EU average rate of involuntary part time employment in 2009: 27.6 % of all young part-time workers
- In the EU in 2009: 40 % of young employees held a temporary contract, which can be cause of vulnerability.
- In 2009, 12.4 % of youth (15-24) were NEET (neither in employment, neither in education and training).

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=951&langId=en>

4.4 Internal Market

4.4.1 Evaluation of the Professional Qualifications Directive (Directive 2005/36/EC)

October 2010

The European Commission published the first ever report on how the Professional Qualifications Directive (Directive 2005/36/EC) works in practice. The Commission publishes simultaneously more than 170 reports on recognition of professional qualifications from Member State authorities.

One main conclusion is that automatic recognition of qualifications is overall a positive achievement for professionals and for authorities but a number of issues merit further considerations such as extending the implementation of the proactive alert mechanism on malpractice between Member States and the training requirements in general.

The next steps are an extensive public consultation on the rules that are in place (end 2010), an evaluation report (autumn 2011) and a Green Paper (2012).

http://www.ec.europa.eu/internal_market/qualifications/evaluation_en.htm

5. Studies and Conferences

5.1 Developing coherent and system-wide induction programmes for beginning teachers: a handbook for policy makers.

April 2010

The development of this handbook started for a peer learning activity in Tallin in October 2008 for experts on teacher education, nominated by Member States. Its purpose is to offer practical and reasonable advice for policymakers wishing to introduce, or to make more effective, a system of induction for new teachers.

http://ec.europa.eu/education/school-education/doc/handbook0410_en.pdf

5.2 L'Europe de l'enfance

Antwerp, 9 September 2010 (Belgian Presidency)

Experts in the fields of children's rights and youth worked together on the three priority themes: the European and international policy agendas on children, youth and children's rights; the upcoming EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child; Early Childhood Education and Care services.

Key messages on <http://www.youth-eutrio.be/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=464F76656763634E4374733D&tabid=96&language=nl-BE&stats=false>

5.3 Breaking the cycle of disadvantage: social inclusion in and through education.

Ghent, 27-28 September 2010 (Belgian Presidency)

There are still large differences in the field of social inclusion within the European Union. Therefore, the reduction of inequality, poverty and social exclusion is a major challenge and must remain a priority. This challenge applies to all policy areas, but education has a crucial role. Policy makers, social partners, experts, researchers, education and formation providers debated on this topic. This two-day conference wants to examine the European, national and regional policies, and take a close look at good practice models. The central focus is on equality and inclusion on all education levels.

<http://www.education2010.be/en/calendar/social-inclusion>

5.4 Youth on the Move. Achieving mobility for all.

Antwerp, 5-6 October 2010 (Belgian Presidency)

Mobility of European citizens, youth and adults, is essential to their personal development and to increase their employability on the labour market. In cooperation with the European Commission's Directorate General for Education and Culture, the Belgian EU Presidency organized a conference that examines the challenges in the field of European and global mobility. The Europe 2020 flagship initiative "Youth on the Move" received ample attention.

<http://www.education2010.be/en/calendar/learning-mobility>