



5 June 2012

Eurydice key competences

Madou, Brussels, 5 June 2012

Presentation by Teodora Parveva and Isabelle De Coster (Eurydice EACEA), at the invitation of M. Gameiro, DG EAC, in the presence of L. Jakobsen, the new head of Eurydice.

Several recent reports of Eurydice illustrate in how far key competences are being taken seriously in Europe.

- Key data learning and innovation through ICT
- Teaching reading in Europe
- Mathematics education in Europe
- Science education in Europe
- Citizenship education in Europe
- Entrepreneurship education at school in Europe
- Key data on foreign languages

The work on key competences links up with the recommendation on key competences from 2006, with the benchmarks in ET 2020 (and Europe 2020) and with the European Commission Communication on 'Rethinking skills', now under preparation.

Mr Jakobson informs that the JAF Joint assessment framework will be used in the monitoring of the benchmarks. This JAF is developed for tracking progress and monitoring the Employment Guidelines under Europe 2020 jointly by the Employment Committee, Social Protection Committee, and the Commission.

The Europe 2020 governance structure suggested that the main components of JAF - inspired by the economic, social and demographic context and different starting positions in each Member State - should comprise:

- Quantitative and qualitative assessment tools for identifying key challenges,
- A device for tracking progress towards the Europe 2020 headline targets on employment and social inclusion
- An Employment Performance Monitor (EPM)

JAF has been designed to be an analytical tool for evidence based policy-making under the Europe 2020 Employment Guidelines. Its results should be considered as an instrument to promote multilateral surveillance and support an overall assessment of the situation at EU level.

Information in the report comes from Eurydice questionnaires, review of academic research, analysis of data from Eurostat and international surveys, mainly PISA and TIMSS.

Three main policy challenges are addressed:

- Raising performance in basic skills (reading, maths and science)

Only a few countries have achieved the 2020 benchmark of 15% more achievers in the three areas. Eurydice analyses how low achievement can best be tackled, formulates general recommendations and gives examples of good practice. An example: the national strategy to improve literacy and numeracy (2011-2020 – IE).

- Improving motivation and engagement

Students often don't see the relevance of the skills for their future lives. One way to address this is to provide guidance for instance to encourage careers in science. However, only few initiatives are taken. Again, Eurydice formulates general recommendations and gives examples of good practices. For instance: Platform Beta Techniek (NL).

- Implement transversal competences in teaching and assessment

Eurydice looked at how far they are integrated in the curricula: they feature in all countries. The three most common approaches (mostly combined):

- Cross-curricular
- Integrated in other subjects
- Separate subjects

Eurydice examines whether guidelines exist on assessing students transversal competences, for instance active participation, attitudes.