

# Newsletter

June 2011

## EUNEC is granted by the Jean Monnet programme for the next three years

*"Our mission is to enhance participation of stakeholders in regional, national and European policy making"*

(from the EUNEC work programme)

EUNEC submitted an application to the call of proposals EACEA/24/10 under the Jean Monnet programme.

The purpose of this call for proposals is to support the existence of high-quality European Associations active in the field of Education and training contributing to the implementation of the objectives of the strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training (ET 2020) and/or increasing knowledge and awareness on the European integration process through education and training.

A panel of experts assisted the Executive Agency in the evaluation of our application.

We were glad to receive the good news that our application has been selected for a Framework Partnership Agreement (2011-2013) including an EU co-financing for an annual operating grant for 2011.

The Agency considers our *"activities and proposed work plan fully relevant to the objectives contributing to the improvement of the quality and efficiency of Education and training, increasing the exchange of experiences and ideas, facilitating the cooperation between Education councils and other organizations"*.

The strategic long term objective of EUNEC is, as it was before, to enhance participation of stakeholders

within national/regional and European policy making and/or to enhance evidence-based policy including experts.

EUNEC wants to be a learning network of education councils.

In 2011-2013 the network will focus on six themes. 'Bildung from a lifelong learning perspective' and 'New skills for new jobs' in 2011; 'Excellence in Education' and 'Education for migrants' in 2012; finally, in 2013, we will organize events around the themes of 'Schools as innovative learning environments', including the pivotal role of teachers and trainers, and on strategies to reduce early school leaving.

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*Prof. Edward Melhuish, at work with EUNEC representatives from Hungary and Lithuania during the seminar on 'Bildung' in Budapest*

## The Hungarian Presidency of the EU: EUNEC involved

EUNEC president, Ms Simone Barthel, was invited to participate at the conference on **Early Childhood Education and Care**, that took place in Budapest, under the Hungarian Presidency of the EU.

The conference was opened by Rozsa Hoffmann, Minister of State for Education of the Ministry of National Resources. Most important themes on the agenda were the institutional frameworks for early childhood education and care, the existing financing models in the Member States, teacher training and implication of parents.

Androulla Vassiliou, European Commissioner for Education, Culture, Multilingualism and Youth, pointed out that early childhood education plays a key role in meeting the Europe 2020 objective of reducing early school leaving.

Adam Pokorny, head of unit at the European Commission, DG EAC, presented the Commission communication on the subject.

Main messages from the event, according to Ms Barthel, have to do with the importance of creating partnerships, and the need for quality training of staff.



*"It's especially important for disadvantaged children, to receive education as early as possible".*

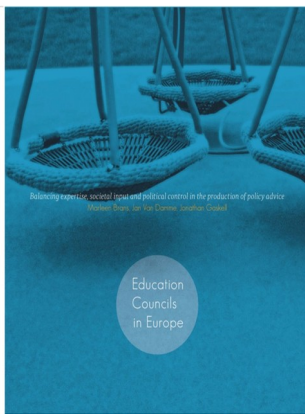
Rozsa Hoffmann, Minister of State, Hungary

*"Early Childhood Education and Care is the essential foundation for successful lifelong learning, social integration, personal development and later employability"*

From the European Commission Communication,



## EUNEC executive committee meeting in Budapest



At the executive committee meeting in Budapest on Sunday 8 May 2011, EUNEC members discussed the implementation of the three year work programme, taking into account the evaluation by the agency, by the members and by participants at our events.

More specifically, the executive committee brainstormed around the theme of the conference to be held in Lisbon on 24-26 October 2011 that will work on 'New skills for new jobs'.

Another important item are the plans for a new logo and a more accessible website. Offer demands will be launched before Summer.

Participants reported on relevant developments in the field of education and training in their countries or regions, with a special focus on themes that have been discussed recently during EUNEC activities.

On the other hand, members discussed the main policy lines at European level, in the field of

education and in related areas such as employment, economy, welfare, youth and culture.

Participants reported on how the results of the study on education councils in the EU are being disseminated and discussed in their country, within the council and possibly outside the council, with stakeholders in education.

They also reported on the use their council is making of the self evaluation tool for education councils, developed by the researchers.

## EUNEC seminar on 'Bildung from a lifelong learning perspective' on 9 and 10 May in Budapest



The seminar on 'Bildung from a lifelong learning perspective' was hosted by the Hungarian Education Council and took place under the Hungarian Presidency of the EU. EUNEC welcomed 20 participants, coming from 12 different European countries.

During former meetings, EUNEC members expressed the need to think and discuss about the foundations of education and training, at a time when European documents tend to stress measurable outcomes and economic return from education.

Without denying the importance and relevance of European texts, we wanted to gather in order to try to develop a common understanding of the notion of Bildung.

The methodology of this seminar consisted in constructing a common understanding in a progressive way, starting from each one's individual understanding of the concept.

The first expert input came

from Hans Van Crombrugge, who made a presentation under the challenging title: 'Who's afraid of Bildung?' He sees Bildung as a regulatory principle guiding the construction of a pedagogical curriculum. At the core of Bildung, there are three principles defined already by Comenius: "Omnes, omnia, omnitudo."

The second expert was professor Edward Melhuish, with exciting information about the importance and impact of early childhood Education and care on the future lifelong learning. Once again, the importance of the returns of investing in ECEC was demonstrated.

Zoltan Loboda, permanent representative of Hungary at the EU, reported on the informal ministerial meeting of ministers for Education held in Budapest, insisting on the importance of citizenship education.

These expert presentations allowed participants to enrich their original understanding of the concept of Bildung,

In the afternoon, participants shared experiences from the work of their own council on the subject, reacting mainly on a powerful presentation of the recent recommendation of the Dutch Education Council by Drs Adrie Van der Rest: Adrie insisted on the pivotal role of teachers.

On the second day of the conference, Mr Richard Deiss, from the European Commission, DG EAC, Studies and Analysis, explained how Bildung can find its place in the ongoing work of the European Commission on benchmarks and indicators for education and training.

The final session was again an interactive one: participants, in two groups, tried to sum up the main elements that are part of the common understanding of Bildung.

More about EUNEC statements on Bildung in a next newsletter.

For more information about this event, please contact [eunec@vlor.be](mailto:eunec@vlor.be)

A full report of this seminar will be available in August



Presentation of Mr Richard Deiss, DG Education and Culture, Studies and Analysis



EUNEC general secretary Mia Douterlungne, in discussion during a workshop with representatives from the Netherlands, Cyprus and Estonia,



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*The Parliament along the Danube in Budapest*

## Overview of main policy lines in education and training

At the Executive Committee meeting of 8 May 2011 in Budapest, the EUNEC secretariat presented a new overview of recent developments in policy lines in education and training in Europe.

This document contains summaries and links to European policy lines. We insisted on the contribution of education and training to the new European semester. This 'European semester' is a cycle of economic policy coordination launched in 2011: a six month period every year during which the Member States' budgetary and structural policies are reviewed to detect inconsistencies and imbalances, aiming to reinforce coordination. Heads of State

adopted the Euro Plus Pact, that will strengthen the economic pillar of EMU and achieve a new quality of economic policy coordination.

Furthermore, the document provides information on new policy lines in specific fields within education and training: The Bruges Communiqué on enhanced European cooperation in Vocational Education and Training 2011-2020; a Council Recommendation on policies to reduce early school leaving; a Communication on Early Childhood Education and Care.

The document also gives an overview of recent international studies and reports. An important number of those studies deal with the theme of new ways to learn new skills for future jobs

including forecasts from Cedefop and an inventory of policy initiatives in this field by Eurydice.

Recent OECD publications are presented: at the forefront are the PISA results, of course, with an emphasis this time on reading competences.

Finally, we pay attention to the new UNESCO Education for All Global Monitoring Report, focussing on armed conflicts, one of the greatest barriers facing the EFA goals.

We refer to the website of the World Bank, who strongly endorsed the new Education Strategy: Learning for All.

Read the full document at [www.eunec.eu](http://www.eunec.eu)

## EUNEC participates at international events

EUNEC participated at the Round table on the social dimension of Education and training, hosted in the European Parliament by Maria Badia i Cutchet, organized by EUCIS-LLL and SOLIDAR. Education and training and lifelong learning figures prominently in the Europe 2020 strategy as a method of promoting smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. However, in times of crisis and change, the austerity measures put in place by EU Member States are having an adverse effect by acting on investment in Education and training. Greater

political commitment is needed; to that end EUCIS LLL hopes to set up an informal network with members of the European Parliament and to establish a more structured dialogue with civil society.

EUNEC participated at the Conference on Quality Assurance of Lifelong Learning, organized on 19 April 2011 by the European Youth Forum. The conference gathered around the table different stakeholders, aiming to see how different providers can work together to develop standards in quality assurance mechanisms for lifelong learning.

Dr Manuel Miguéns, secretary general of the Conselho Nacional de Educacao, represented EUNEC at the VIII Encuentro Nacional de Participación Social en la Educación, in Cancun (Mexico). More news about this event in our next newsletter.

A full report of the EUNEC conference on 'Participation and stakeholder involvement in Education policy making' is now available. Please find it at [www.eunec.eu](http://www.eunec.eu) or ask a copy at [eunec@vlor.be](mailto:eunec@vlor.be)